



*The Impact of
Parent/Family Involvement
on Student Outcomes:*



*An Annotated Bibliography
of Research from the
Past Decade*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	1
STUDIES THAT EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS INTENDED TO PROMOTE PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT ON STUDENT OUTCOMES.....	6
ART.....	9
CULTURALLY DIVERSE POPULATIONS.....	9
EARLY CHILDHOOD.....	10
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.....	11
HOMEWORK.....	15
MATHEMATICS.....	15
MIDDLE SCHOOL.....	17
READING.....	18
SCIENCE.....	19
SECONDARY EDUCATION.....	20
SOCIAL STUDIES.....	20
WRITING.....	20
STUDIES THAT EVALUATE FAMILY BEHAVIORS AND CHARACTERISTICS AND THEIR EFFECT ON STUDENT OUTCOMES.....	21
CULTURALLY DIVERSE POPULATIONS.....	21
EARLY CHILDHOOD.....	24
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.....	25
FATHER INVOLVEMENT.....	25
HOMEWORK.....	26
MATHEMATICS.....	26
MIDDLE SCHOOL.....	27
MUSIC.....	29
SCIENCE.....	29
SECONDARY EDUCATION.....	30
STUDIES THAT ANALYZE PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT RESEARCH.....	32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“When parents become involved, children do better in school, and they go to better schools.”

—Anne T. Henderson

Author of *The Evidence Continues to Grow*

Three decades of research have demonstrated that parent/family involvement significantly contributes, in a variety of ways, to improved student outcomes related to learning and school success. These findings have remained fairly consistent despite the fact that families have undergone significant changes during that time, and schools “operate in very different times than those of a decade or two ago” (Drake, 2000, p. 34). One of the eight goals included in the 1994 Goals 2000 legislation was dedicated to this critical area: “Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children” (U. S. Department of Education, 1994). The importance of parent/family involvement was reaffirmed in 1997 when the National PTA, in cooperation with education and parent involvement professionals, developed six National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs (White, 1998).

Although family involvement has reached a “new level of acceptance” today as one of many factors that can help improve the quality of schools, “acceptance does not always translate into implementation, commitment, or creativity” (Drake, 2000, p. 34). Much remains to be done. “Our society has simply become too complex for support entities to continue to function individually” (Buttery & Anderson, 1999). Schools, communities, and parents/families must cooperate and work collaboratively to improve the learning experience of all children.

The challenges that students in America’s public schools face cannot be solved by educators alone; nor can these problems be solved by parents or families alone. Students in schools across this nation are confronted by critical social, emotional, and environmental problems. More collaboration between the school and home will need to be focused on dealing with these problems. (Drake, 2000, p. 34).

Schools that recognize the “interdependent nature of the relationship” between families and schools and value parents as “essential partners” in the education process will realize the full value of this collaboration.

Such an approach recognizes the “significance of families” and the “contributions of schools” as a “necessary framework” for working together in “complementary efforts toward common goals” to maximize success for students as learners (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001).

In this bibliography of research published during the past decade, we have grouped studies into three related areas: studies that evaluate the effectiveness of school-based programs and interventions

intended to promote parent/family involvement on student outcomes; studies that evaluate family behaviors and characteristics and their effect on student outcomes; and studies that analyze parent/family involvement research. From this research, we have distilled the following twelve key findings:

1. *Parent/family involvement has a significant positive impact on student outcomes throughout the elementary, middle school, and secondary years.*

Several of these studies indicate that parent/family involvement has a lasting effect throughout the K-12 educational careers of students (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993; Trusty, 1999). Simon (1999) found that although study habits, attitudes, and behavior patterns may be set by a student's senior year, an adolescent's success is influenced by his or her family even through the last year of high school.

2. *While in general parent/family involvement improves student outcomes, variations have been found according to students' family cultures, ethnicity, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds.*

Several studies during the past decade have examined the relationship between student outcomes and factors such as family culture, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Griffith (1996) and Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, and Bloom (1993) reported that student outcomes were largely unaffected by these factors. Shaver and Walls' (1998) study of Title I students found that outcomes in mathematics and reading achievement for students of all socioeconomic levels were significantly affected by parent/family involvement, although students from higher socioeconomic families experienced the greatest improvement. Desimone's (1999) study found that the effectiveness of particular parent-involvement practices does differ according to race/ethnicity and family income. This author recommends that these differences be considered by educators and policy makers if parent involvement is to be utilized as a resource to help schools respond more effectively to the nation's growing income and educational disparities. Studies by Keith, Keith, Quirk, Sperduto, Santillo, and Killings (1998) and Shaver and Walls (1998) researched the effect of student gender on parent/family involvement and indicated no significant difference in parent/family involvement between boys and girls who participated.

3. *Parent/family involvement at home has a more significant impact on children than parent/family involvement in school activities.*

The ways in which parents/families can be involved in their children's education have broadened considerably over the past three decades beyond the traditional "big three"— volunteer, homework helper, and fund-raiser (Christenson and Sheridan, 2001). What parents/families do in the home environment, however, remains significantly more important to student outcomes than what parents/families do in the school setting (Christenson and Sheridan, 2001; Hickman, Greenwood, and Miller, 1995; Izzo, Weissberg, Kaspro, and Fendrich, 1999; Trusty, 1999).

4. *The nature of the parent/family involvement that is most beneficial to children changes as they reach adolescence.*

In their interviews with students, teachers, and parents in four high schools, Sanders and Epstein (2000) found that although adolescents need more independence than younger children, the need for guidance and support of caring adults in the home, school, and community during this time in their lives is very important. Other studies reinforce the value of parents/families expressing confidence in adolescents and supporting autonomy as significant contributors to achievement among high school students (Christenson and Christenson, 1998; Deslandes, Royer, Turcotte, and Bertrand, 1997; and Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, and Bloom, 1993).

5. *Parent/family involvement in early childhood programs helps children succeed in their transition to kindergarten and elementary school.*

Numerous early childhood programs that include parent/family involvement have shown significant positive results in helping children transition to kindergarten and succeed during the primary grades, especially among disadvantaged children and those at risk of school failure (Kreider, 2002; Marcon, 1999; Miedel and Reynolds, 1999; Starkey and Klein, 2000).

6. *Parent/family assistance with homework can be beneficial; however, parents may need guidance and assistance in order to work effectively with their children.*

Many studies have documented the significance of parent/family involvement in homework (Balli, Demo, and Wedman, 1998; Callahan, Rademacher, and Hildreth, 1998; Cooper, Lindsay, and Nye, 2000). The nature of that involvement, however, determines the value of the assistance. Cooper, Lindsay, and Nye (2000) found that an active teaching role for parents may be most appropriate for elementary children experiencing difficulty in school. But with older students doing well in school, it is best to reinforce autonomy and not directly intervene so that students learn time-management and study skills. Other studies (Balli, 1998; Balli, Demo, and Wedman, 1998) indicate that educators need to help parents understand homework concepts and developmentally appropriate practices in order to best help their children.

7. *The ways in which culturally diverse families are involved in their children's education may be different from those of other families. These family practices are nonetheless valuable and should be respected and capitalized on when planning parent/family involvement programs.*

Several researchers (Espinosa, 1995; Lopez, 2001; Scribner, Young, and Pedroza, 1999) have found that Hispanic parents and families may be very involved in their children's educational lives, although they may not participate in their children's schooling in ways expected by school personnel. Educators must identify new ways of partnering with families that respect and validate the cultures of their homes.

8. *Promising outcomes have been documented in both mathematics and literacy when children's parents/families are involved in the educational process.*

Several studies have documented the significant impact of parent/family involvement on student achievement in literacy (Faires, Nichols, and Rickeman, 2000; Hara and Burke, 1998; Quigley, 2000; West, 2000) and mathematics (Balli, Demo, and Wedman, 1998; Epstein, 2001; Galloway and Sheridan, 1994). These interventions ranged from teachers' notes home to formal trainings offered to parents on how to implement the program at home and work effectively with their children. The positive impact of parent/family involvement has also been documented in the areas of music (Zdzinski, 1996), art (Epstein, 2001), and writing (Chavkin, Gonzalez, & Rader, 2002; Epstein, 2001).

9. *The most promising opportunity for student achievement occurs when families, schools, and community organizations work together.*

The effectiveness of families, schools, and communities working together has been documented in several studies (Christenson & Christenson, 1998; Jordan, Orozco, & Averett, 2001; Sanders & Epstein, 2000). To promote these comprehensive partnerships, schools must provide a variety of opportunities for schools, families, and communities to work together (Rutherford & Billing, 1995). These programs must be based upon "mutual respect and interdependence of home, school, and community" (McAfee, 1993).

10. *To be effective, school programs must be individualized to fit the needs of the students, parents, and community.*

There is no one model that has proven effective in building parent/family involvement programs in schools. Researchers document evidence that programs must be based upon the individualized needs of the families, teachers, students, and community members involved (Brough & Irvin, 2001; Christenson & Sheridan, 2001).

11. *Effective programs assist parents in learning how to create a home environment that fosters learning and how to provide support and encouragement for their children's success.*

It cannot be assumed that parents instinctively know how to involve themselves in their children's education. In fact, many parents feel inadequate in teaching roles. Effective programs have taught parents how to create a home environment that encourages learning and how to provide support and encouragement that is appropriate for their children's development level (National Council of Jewish Women, 1996; Quigley, 2000; Simmons, Stevenson, & Strnad, 1993).

12. *Teachers must be trained to promote effective parent/family involvement in children's education.*

It cannot be assumed that teachers will naturally know how to promote effective parent/family involvement. Professional and in-service training for teachers that focuses on working with families is not yet widely available; nor do many preservice programs across the country offer training for future teachers in the development of school-family relationships (Kessler-Sklar & Baker, 2000; National Council of Jewish Women, 1996). This component is also critical for the development of effective school, family, and community partnerships.

SOURCES

Buttery, T. J., & Anderson, P. J. (1999, Fall). Community, school, and parent dynamics: A synthesis of literature and activities. *Teacher Education Quarterly* 26(4) 111-22.

Christenson, S. L., & Sheridan, S. M. (2001). *Schools and families: Creating essential connections for learning*. New York: Guilford Press.

Drake, D. D. (2000). Parents and families as partners in the education process: Collaboration for the success of students in public schools. *ERS Spectrum*, 34-35.

McAfee (1987, February). Improving home-school relations: Implications for staff development. *Education and Urban Society*, 19, 195-99.

U. S. Department of Education (1994). *The Goals 2000 Act: Supporting community efforts to improve schools*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

White, L. J. (1998, Jan/Feb). National PTA standards for parent/family involvement programs. *High School Magazine*, 5, 8-12.

**STUDIES THAT EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS
INTENDED TO PROMOTE PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
ON STUDENT OUTCOMES**

“When schools and families work together, a partnership of support for children develops. Education becomes a shared venture, characterized by mutual respect and trust in which the importance and influence of each partner is recognized. Although children, families, teachers, and schools benefit individually, their partnership enhances the entire process of education.”

—Rebecca Crawford Burns

“Parent Involvement: Promises, Problems, and Solutions”
in *Parents and Schools: From Visitors to Partners*

Haynes, N. M., Emmons, C. L., Gebreyesus, S., & Ben-Avie, M. (1996). The School Development Program evaluation process. In *Rallying the whole village: The Comer process for reforming education* (pp. 123-144). New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

This chapter describes the evaluation process and results for the School Development Program (SDP), a program that seeks to create a “healthy, positive, and supportive school climate” utilizing a nine-element design: three teams — a school planning and management team, a student and staff support team, and a parent team; three operations — a comprehensive school plan for staff development, monitoring, and assessment; and three guiding principles — consensus, collaboration, and no-fault. Evidence of significant SDP effects on achievement in mathematics, reading, and language has been documented. Positive changes in attendance, teacher ratings of classroom behavior, attitude toward authority and group participation have also been shown, compared to students in non-SDP schools. The self-concept of students in participating schools has also improved significantly, and dropout rates have decreased. The program trained parents to develop skills needed to “become more meaningful members of the school community” and encouraged them in a number of ways to participate in their children’s education.

Kessler-Sklar, S. L., & Baker, A. J. L. (2000). School district parent involvement policies and programs. *Elementary School Journal*, 101 (1), 101-18.

This study surveyed 200 superintendents in 15 American states concerning their districts' parent involvement policies and programs. More than 90% of the school districts responding to the survey indicated having at least one policy in place that addresses parent involvement. The survey found that the two most commonly reported policies were to communicate with parents about their children's progress and school programs and to provide parents with opportunities to be decision makers. Districts were least likely to indicate they had policies to train teachers to work with families. The survey also found that districts with greater percentages of at-risk students were more likely to report adopting parent involvement activities. The authors note that very few districts reported adopting such model programs, although there are many nationally recognized parent involvement programs. Based on the survey results, the authors make seven recommendations to school districts: 1) adopt district-level policies to promote parent involvement; 2) evaluate policies for effectiveness, especially in reaching diverse families; 3) examine opportunities for parents to be informed about and become involved in decision making; 4) evaluate school-home communication; 5) inform parents about ways to "enrich the home learning environment and increase opportunities for learning at home;" 6) evaluate the need to train teachers to work with families; and 7) research current model parent involvement practices and programs.

Lopez, E. (2002, Spring). When parents assess schools. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 8 (1), 16-17.

This article explores how school data can be used to "deepen parents' understanding of issues and widen the scope of their engagement" in school reform efforts. The author describes four ways of "empowering parents through data": 1) data can be used to inform parents about school-related issues; 2) data can be used to help prepare parents to participate in decision making (for instance, to help determine priorities and increase school accountability); 3) when parents collect and analyze their own data, it can empower them and help change parent/school relationships; and 4) data can be used by parents to promote change. While data can "lead to big questions," it also can "help people determine how to address issues." Researchers can help parents understand educational concerns "from a systems perspective through the use of well-designed data presentations" that demonstrate how to utilize data as an effective tool to promote change.

**National Council of Jewish Women. (1996). *Parents as school partners: Research report*.
New York: ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education/Columbia Teachers College.
http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/families/NCJW_child/index.html**

This report summarizes conclusions reached by the Parents as School Partners, a project conducted by the National Council for Jewish Women to consider policies, programs, practice, and research related to parent involvement in schools. The research project included a survey of 200 school district superintendents (see Kessler-Sklar & Baker, 2000), 33 focus groups, a compilation of replicable school-based programs, and a literature review of more than 200 articles on the impact of parent involvement. Highlights of the project include four major conclusions:

- There are few parent involvement programs for parents of children older than elementary school-age;
- Few parent involvement programs have been rigorously evaluated;

- Most parent involvement programs aim to change parents' behavior; and
- There are few parent involvement programs for training teachers or changing the way that schools and parents interact.

Ten major themes were also identified from analysis of the data:

1. There is widespread consensus among parents, educators, practitioners, policy makers, and researchers that parent involvement is critical to children's school success;
2. While parents and schools share a common mission of educating children, they do not share the same vision of how to accomplish this goal. This results in inherent tensions in the roles and responsibilities of parents and teachers;
3. Parent involvement theory and exemplary parent involvement programs recognize the value of creating meaningful partnerships among homes and schools in order to enhance parent involvement. These partnerships recognize and value the unique contribution of both homes and schools to the education of children;
4. More open dialogue is needed between homes and schools, especially interactions that are positive and not problem-focused. Both parents and teachers want more opportunities to talk about their experience of parent involvement and how it can be enhanced;
5. Professional and in-service training for teachers on how to work with families is not yet widely available;
6. Parent involvement requires effort on the part of teachers and parents who do not have regularly scheduled time in their daily routines for parent involvement;
7. There are many institutional and personal barriers to effective home-school partnerships;
8. There are few opportunities for personal and individualized contact between parents and teachers;
9. Most model parent involvement programs require parents to conform to school practice rather than training educators to accommodate to the cultures of the families or to incorporate the views of the parents; and
10. Less is known about the effectiveness of specific types of parent involvement for enhancing children's school achievement than has commonly been assumed.

The 26 school-based programs intended to improve parent involvement that were examined by this project were grouped into five categories: 1) curriculum models; 2) parent workshops; 3) multi-component programs; 4) home-school partnerships; and 5) other programs. Descriptions of each of these 26 programs are included on the project web site.

ART

Epstein, J. L. (2001). Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS): Volunteers in social studies and art. In J. L. Epstein (Ed.), *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (pp. 543-62). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

The Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) Volunteers in Social Studies and Art program is described in this chapter. The three-year program integrates art appreciation into the social studies curriculum by engaging volunteer parents in the presentation of important artwork “to increase students’ knowledge and appreciation of art and to demonstrate connections of art with history, geography, and social issues.” A 1995 evaluation of the program in an urban middle school serving 80% African American and 20% White students indicated that students increased their awareness of art while developing “attitudes and preferences for different styles of art.” Student comments indicated movement from concrete to abstract thinking and development of critical thinking about art. They began to identify major artists and their works and to “describe and discuss art with greater insight and sophistication than they had done before.” The evaluation concluded that the TIPS program is a “useful tool for meeting the diverse goals of involving families, integrating subjects, and providing students with experiences in art awareness, appreciation, and criticism.”

CULTURALLY DIVERSE POPULATIONS

Chavkin, N. F., Gonzalez, J., & Rader, R. (2002). A home-school program in a Texas-Mexico border school: Voices from parents, students, and school staff. *The School Community Journal*, 10 (2), 127-37.

This article reports on evaluation results from a home-school program instituted in a Texas-Mexico border district in Lyford, Texas. In this district 95% of the students are Hispanic, many have parents who are migrant workers, and all students qualify for free and reduced lunches. Teachers, parents, and students selected the MegaSkills program, tailored it to fit their community’s needs, and used it “as a tool to focus their school reform efforts.” Elementary and middle school students showed significant gains in reading and mathematics achievement. High school students showed significant improvement in mathematics, reading, and writing. Attendance also increased while discipline problems decreased in the district.

Martinez, Y. G., & Velazquez, J. A. (2000). *Involving migrant families in education*. National Parent Information Network. Retrieved April 20, 2002, from <http://npin.org/library/2002/n00644/n00644.html>

This article explores cultural differences in migrant families that affect their attitude toward and involvement in education. Children of migrant farm workers, more than their less mobile peers, face a number of risk factors for school failure, including mobility, poverty, and lack of access to school facilities. The authors point out that efforts to involve migrant parents in their children’s education must address issues such as “social inequalities, educational ideologies, educational structures, and interpersonal interactions, as well as the interplay of these

factors. Such diverse influences inevitably shape educational outcomes for migrant children.” Family intervention programs for migrant parents must be based on an understanding, appreciation, and respect for the dynamics, values, and beliefs of these families. Suggested involvement strategies include bilingual community liaisons; provision of child care, transportation, evening and weekend activities, and refreshments for school activities; a curriculum that reflects the culture, values, interests, experiences, and concerns of migrant families; flexible instructional programming that recognizes mobility; coordinated “second-chance” opportunities for education and training; distance learning opportunities; agriculture industry partnerships; parent-teacher conferences to allow migrant families to communicate about how they can contribute to their children’s education; and social and health outreach opportunities.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Kreider, H. (2002). *Getting parents “ready” for kindergarten: The role of early childhood education*. Amherst, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. Retrieved April 20, 2002, from <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/research/kreider.html>

Starting with the hypothesis that positive experiences with early childhood programs can help prepare parents to build relationships with their children’s elementary schools, researchers conducting this study found that parents who were involved in early childhood programs read to their children more, were more likely to visit their children’s kindergarten classrooms, and were more likely to network with other parents than those not involved in early childhood programs. In conducting the study researchers interviewed more than 200 low-income and ethnically diverse parents in both rural and urban areas whose children attended kindergarten during the 1995-1996 school year. Authors recommend that schools and early childhood programs adopt strategies to respond to parents’ feelings of anxiety and excitement, promote “feelings of welcome and familiarity” with schools, provide information about their children and how to promote a smooth transition into school, and work to promote parents’ confidence in themselves and their ability to recognize opportunities for involvement.

Marcon, R.A. (1999). Positive relationships between parent school involvement and public school inner-city preschoolers’ development and academic performance. *School Psychology Review*, 28, 395-412.

The author of this study found that increased parental involvement was associated with positive development in communication, daily living, and motor skills for preschool children, especially boys. Children whose parents were more involved also showed greater mastery of basic school skills in this study of 708 predominantly low-income, urban four year olds attending public pre-kindergarten or Head Start programs. Results were significant for both passive (parent-teacher conferences, home visits, and other forms of communication) and active (volunteering and class visits) parent involvement. The study’s findings suggest that increased contact between home and school can contribute to school readiness for at risk children.

Miedel, W. T., & Reynolds, A. J. (1999). Parent involvement in early intervention for disadvantaged children: Does it matter? *Journal of School Psychology, 37* (4), 379-99.

This study investigated the relation between parents' involvement in an early intervention program and school achievement for inner-city children. Findings of the study involving 704 parents of children participating in the Chicago Longitudinal Study indicated that higher frequencies of school participation among parents with children in preschool and kindergarten and greater participation in activities resulted in higher reading achievement, lower rates of grade retention, and fewer years in special education among children until age 14. Researchers conclude that parents are "crucial in helping to sustain the immediate positive effects of early intervention." They outline three implications of this study: 1) parent involvement should be an important part of early childhood programs; 2) beginning parent involvement activities during early childhood can provide a "strong foundation for family-school relations" that can ensure successful transitions to first grade; and 3) parent involvement can be a "protective factor in counteracting risk conditions that may lead to school underachievement." With these implications in mind, researchers stress that encouraging parent involvement is especially important in schools serving large numbers of children from low-income families.

Starkey, P., & Klein, A. (2000). Fostering parental support for children's mathematical development: An intervention with Head Start families. *Early Education and Development, 11*, 659-81.

See abstract under Mathematics on page 27.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Comer, J. P., & Haynes, N. M. (1991). Parent involvement in schools: An ecological approach. *The Elementary School Journal, 91* (3), 271-77.

This article reports on the experience of two elementary schools that sought to increase parent involvement by participating in the School Development Program in New Haven, Connecticut in low-income neighborhoods. The researchers conclude that parent involvement programs "are most effective when they are part of an integrated ecological approach to school enhancement." They attribute the success of the program to these distinctive features:

1. Three levels of involvement are identified, each with different tasks and responsibilities for parents;
2. The three levels enable parents to participate at the level at which they are "comfortable and effective;"
3. Each level allows for different degrees of responsibility;
4. All levels allow parents to play "meaningful roles" in the school "with clear direction and purpose;" and
5. The program engages a high percentage of the school's parents.

Faires, J., Nichols, W.D., & Rickelman, R.J. (2000). Effects of parental involvement in developing competent readers in first grade. *Reading Psychology*, 21, 195-215.

See abstract under Reading on page 19.

Galloway, J., & Sheridan, S. M. (1994). Implementing scientific practices through case studies: Examples using home-school interventions and consultation. *Journal of School Psychology*, 32(4) 385-413.

See abstract under Mathematics on page 16.

Hara, S. R., & Burke, D. J. (1998). Parent involvement: The key to improved student achievement. *School Community Journal*, 8 (2), 9-19.

This study of 175 third-grade inner-city elementary students examined the effects of a broad-based parental participation program that was researched, planned, implemented, and evaluated by a Chicago elementary school. Utilizing Epstein's (1995) parent involvement model and input from parents, teachers, and the community, the school began a multi-faceted parent/family involvement program. Results indicated significant student achievement gains were made in reading for students involved in the project, compared to those who were not included. Parent involvement over the course of the two years increased by 43%, and parents reported three significant outcomes:

1. Parents' interest in and appreciation for education, teachers, and learning increased;
2. Parents reported that their children's interest in and attitudes toward school improved; and
3. Parents' respect for teachers and their roles "changed dramatically."

An additional outcome noted was parents' renewed interest in learning for themselves as well as for their children.

Mapp, K. L. (1997, December). Making family-school connections work. *The Education Digest*, 63, 36-39.

This study of a family-involvement program at Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School in Boston, Massachusetts involved interviews with 20 families "from economically distressed circumstances." The diverse urban school of 215 students has a 90% parent involvement rate. Two themes emerged from the study that are key to parent involvement at this school:

1. Members of the "O'Hearn community" (including everyone from the principal to custodians) connect with parents through activities and programs that are welcoming and that help families build a trusting relationship with the school and feel that they are a part of the school community; and
2. Staff members work to "honor" families by validating any level of involvement or contributions they make.

Parents also reported feeling “empowered” by the fact that the staff respects their opinions and takes their concerns seriously. Parents were particularly pleased with O’Hearn’s Family Outreach Program, which links parent volunteers with new families to welcome them and answer questions. The school also has developed a family center where families can gather to meet other parents and attend educational workshops.

Researchers suggest that schools interested in improving family involvement start by asking parents the following questions:

- What do parents experience when they walk into the school building?
- Are they greeted in a friendly, welcoming manner?
- Who or what is their first point of contact when they enter the building?
- How are parents contacted about school events? Do they rely on flyers, or are families contacted personally?
- Are parents truly involved in school decision-making?

National Center for Education Statistics. (1998). *Parent involvement in children’s education: Efforts by public elementary schools*. Washington, DC: US Department of Education. Retrieved April 20, 2002, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/98032.pdf>

This report presents findings from the Survey on Family and School Partnerships in Public Schools, K-8 conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics. The study was intended to provide information on the ways that schools engage parents in their children’s education and how parents respond to opportunities for involvement. The survey, sent to a nationally representative sample of 900 public schools, addressed five issues: parent communication; parent information activities; volunteer activities; inclusion of parents in decision making; and other factors that influence school efforts to increase parent involvement. Findings indicated that schools are making an effort to encourage parental involvement in a number of ways: communicating regularly with parents; providing interpreters for families with limited English proficiency; providing information on learning at home and on parenting and child development issues through newsletters, workshops, and parent resource centers; and sponsoring activities to encourage parental participation. To a lesser extent, the survey found parents involved in decision making. Parental response to these school efforts varied depending upon the activity and school characteristics. In general, schools with a higher concentration of poverty and minority enrollment reported less parent involvement than schools with lower poverty and minority populations.

Quigley, D. D. (2000, April). *Parents and teachers working together to support third grade achievement: Parents as learning partners*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

This paper reports results of the Parents as Learning Partners (PLP) Project operating in 29 Los Angeles area schools. The project focused on three primary areas in which parents and teachers can work together to support children’s academic progress: communication, parenting, and learning at home. Schools receiving

PLP funding offered parent training workshops and professional development to increase parent involvement. They also installed voicemail systems to increase and improve communication between parents and teachers. The PLP initiative had a positive impact on third graders' behavior, homework, and academic performance; on the communication patterns of their parents and teachers; and on children's interactions with their parents concerning learning in the home. Evaluation results indicated higher reading achievement among students attending PLP schools than for a comparison group of students attending non-PLP schools. Teachers and parents of children attending PLP schools also showed a higher acceptance of responsibility for their part in the joint endeavor of educating compared to teachers and parents of non-PLP schools.

Shaver, A. V., & Walls, R. T. (1998). Effect of Title I parent involvement on student reading and mathematics achievement. *Journal of Research & Development in Education*, 31(2), 90-97.

See abstract under Mathematics on page 16.

Simmons, R. K., Stevenson, B. A., & Strnad, A. M. (1993). Stewart Community School: A pioneer in home-school partnership. In R. C. Burns (Ed.), *Parents and schools: From visitors to partners* (63-76). Washington, DC: National Education Association.

This chapter profiles a successful home-school partnership program in Stewart Community School, a prekindergarten through sixth grade urban school with 496 diverse students. Parents are involved as decision makers, teachers, and learners. All parent involvement activities are based upon these principles:

- Parents will be taught and encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education;
- Parents and teachers will have consistent communication as part of a strong partnership of adults working in support of a child;
- Parents and community members will have educational opportunities, linked to the goals of the school, in parenting, mentoring, and teaching/learning;
- All children, especially children who do not have strong parent models or support, will have a community-based mentoring program; and
- Parents will be actively involved in the decision-making and governance structure of the school.

Outcomes of this successful program include:

- Parents have greater knowledge of child development and parenting skills;
- Increased interaction between home and school fosters understanding of and support for the role of education in career choices;
- Workshops in academic areas help parents to assist their children with homework; and
- A shared partnership between parents and school staff increases parents' self-esteem and leads to improved student achievement and attendance.

**West, J. M. (2000). *Increasing parent involvement for student motivation.*
Armidale, New South Wales, Australia: University of New England
(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 448411)**

This report describes an elementary classroom teacher's exploration of the effect of increased parent-teacher communication as a motivating factor to increase student success in reading. Parents and children participating in the study took turns reading to each other for a minimum of five minutes per night, three times per week, for a total of eight weeks. Students participating did more of their homework and received satisfactory quiz and test scores. Parent comments on surveys were also positive.

HOMEWORK

Callahan, K., Rademacher, J. A., & Hildreth, B. L. (1998). The effect of parent participation in strategies to improve the homework performance of students who are at risk. *Remedial and Special Education, 19* (3), 131-41.

This article reports the results of a homework intervention study of 26 at-risk sixth and seventh grade students (20 boys and 6 girls from lower-middle and middle class predominantly White households). Parents of participating students received training and implemented home-based self-management and reinforcement strategies aimed at improving their children's homework performance. Results indicated that homework completion and quality increased significantly for the students whose parents were consistent in implementing the 10-week program. Additionally, mathematics achievement increased for these students. The study results indicate that homework may be an important facet of the academic program of at-risk students and that parents may "play a primary role in the homework process."

MATHEMATICS

Balli, S.J., Demo, D.H., & Wedman, J.F. (1998). Family involvement with children's homework: An intervention in the middle grades. *Family Relations, 47*, 149-57.

This study was designed to determine the effectiveness of a middle grade mathematics homework intervention in the Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) program intended to increase family involvement in homework. Participants included 74 sixth-grade students and their families in three classes taught by the same teacher. In the first class, there were no homework involvement prompts; in the second class, students were prompted to involve family members in completing homework assignments; in the third class, students were prompted to involve family members, and family participation was directly requested by the teacher. Families with students in the two classes that were prompted were significantly more involved in mathematics homework activities than those who were not prompted, although the level of family involvement did not predict student achievement. Families of diverse educational levels reported similar levels of involvement in their children's homework assignments,

although feedback from participating family members indicated that parents with less education may need guidance from schools in order to help their children effectively. Family involvement was shown to be a continuum with the amount and quality of help offered varying in degrees and effectiveness. The study also showed that two-parent families are more likely to help with homework than single-parent families.

Chavkin, N. F., Gonzalez, J., & Rader, R. (2002). A home-school program in a Texas-Mexico border school: Voices from parents, students, and school staff. *The School Community Journal*, 10 (2), 127-37.

See abstract under Culturally Diverse Populations on page 9.

Galloway, J., & Sheridan, S. M. (1994). Implementing scientific practices through case studies: Examples using home-school interventions and consultation. *Journal of School Psychology*, 32 (4) 385-413.

This article presents the results of two case studies, both intended to improve “task completion and accuracy in mathematics for primary grade students who had demonstrated performance difficulties despite adequate intellectual ability and academic skills.” The first case study involved the use of a home-school note implemented by parents and teachers in conjunction with a self-instruction manual. The other case study used the home note and manual but in consultation with parents and teachers. Both interventions were successful in increasing students’ completion of math assignments and accuracy on daily assignments.

Mendoza, Y. (1996). *Developing and implementing a parental awareness program to increase parental involvement and enhance mathematics performance and attitude of at-risk seventh grade students. Masters Final Report. Ft. Lauderdale, FL: Nova Southeastern University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 400971)*

This program sought to increase parental involvement in order to enhance mathematics achievement among seventh-grade at-risk students enrolled in an alternative education program. The objectives of the program were to increase parental involvement by 40%, to increase knowledge and reverse negative attitudes toward mathematics among parents by 40%, to improve student attitudes toward mathematics and motivation by 40%, and to increase student achievement by 35%, all of which were met. Parents and students were involved in evening workshops supplemented by additional motivational strategies used in the classroom.

Shaver, A. V., & Walls, R. T. (1998). Effect of Title I parent involvement on student reading and mathematics achievement. *Journal of Research & Development in Education*, 31(2), 90-97.

This study examined the impact of parent involvement on the reading and mathematics achievement of 74 Title I students in second through eighth grade, taking into consideration the effect of student gender and socioeconomic status. Parents attended instructional sessions to learn about effective parent involvement. The study showed that parent involvement, regardless of the student’s gender or socioeconomic status, was a significant factor influencing students’ academic success in reading and mathematics. The younger children and those from higher socioeconomic households made the greatest improvement. The author recommends that schools for at-risk children offer a variety of strategies to involve families.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Balli, S.J., Demo, D.H., and Wedman, J.F. (1998). Family involvement with children's homework: An intervention in the middle grades. *Family Relations*, 47, 149-57.

This study was designed to determine the effectiveness of a middle grade mathematics homework intervention in the Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) program intended to increase family involvement in homework. Participants included 74 sixth-grade students and their families taught in three classes by the same teacher. In the first class, there were no homework involvement prompts; in the second class, students were prompted to involve family members in completing homework assignments; in the third class, students were prompted to involve family members and family participation was directly requested by the teacher. Families with students in the two classes that were prompted were significantly more involved in mathematics homework activities than those who were not prompted, although the level of family involvement did not predict student achievement. Families of diverse educational levels reported similar levels of involvement in their children's homework assignments, although feedback from participating family members indicated that parents with less education may need guidance from schools in order to help their children effectively. Family involvement was shown to be a continuum with the amount and quality of help offered varying in degrees and effectiveness. The study also showed that two-parent families are more likely to help with homework than single-parent families.

Epstein, J. L., Herrick S. C., & Coates, L. (1996). Effects of summer home learning packets on student achievement in language arts in the middle grades. *School Effectiveness & School Improvement*, 7(4), 383-410.

This case study examined one Baltimore, MD middle school's effort to involve middle school students and their families in learning activities at home over the summer vacation. Results indicated that language skills scores at the end of the summer project were primarily explained by students prior achievement, gender (female), and attendance. However, some students, especially those with marginal language skills, performed better in the fall if they had worked on activities included in the Summer Home Learning Packets. Overall, study results showed that students of all abilities who worked with a parent were more likely to complete packet activities than those who worked alone.

Epstein, J. L. (2001). Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS): Volunteers in social studies and art. In J. L. Epstein (Ed.), *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (pp. 543-62). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

See abstract under Art on page 9.

Mendoza, Y. (1996). *Developing and implementing a parental awareness program to increase parental involvement and enhance mathematics performance and attitude of at-risk seventh grade students*. Masters Final Report. Ft. Lauderdale, Florida: Nova Southeastern University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 400971)

See abstract under Mathematics on page 16.

Sanders, M. G., and Epstein, J. L. (2000). Building school-family-community partnerships in middle and high school. In M G. Sanders (Ed.), *School students placed at risk: Research, policy, and practice in the education of poor and minority adolescents* (pp. 339-61). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

This study reports the results of interviews with 22 educators, parents, and students in two urban middle schools and two urban high schools that are members of the National Network of Partnership Schools. Respondents emphasized the importance of family participation in the education of students. Although they recognized that adolescents need more independence than elementary aged children, they also voiced the opinion that adolescents need the guidance and support of caring adults in the home, school, and community. Those who responded agreed that high school is a difficult time in students' educational careers and that support from significant adults can help students "successfully navigate this period." The respondents also agreed that communication and cooperation among home, school, and community increased students' opportunities to successfully transition to college or the workplace. Additionally, the study pointed out that professional educators and parents felt that their time to build relationships was limited. With the "right support, a framework of involvement, and a team approach," however, these respondents felt that parents, educators, and community members could build effective partnerships.

Epstein, J. L. (2001). Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS): Interactive homework in math, science, and language arts. In J. L. Epstein (Ed.), *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (pp. 510-28). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

This chapter describes the successful TIPS interactive homework program for middle school students that involves parents and students in learning activities at home with the focus on students. Applications to different subject areas are discussed, and guidelines are provided on how to develop a TIPS program in any subject, including examples of homework. Studies of both the science and math TIPS programs indicated higher achievement for students involved in the interactive program as opposed to peers who were not. In the language arts TIPS program, students' writing skills increased with family involvement, and their language arts grades improved.

Van Voorhis, F. L. (2001). Interactive science homework: An experiment in home and school connections. *NASSP Bulletin*, 85 (627), 20-32.

See abstract under Science on page 19.

READING

Chavkin, N. F., Gonzalez, J., & Rader, R. (2002). A home-school program in a Texas-Mexico border school: Voices from parents, students, and school staff. *The School Community Journal*, 10 (2), 127-37.

See abstract under Culturally Diverse Populations on page 9.

Faires, J., Nichols, W.D., & Rickelman, R.J. (2000). Effects of parental involvement in developing competent readers in first grade. *Reading Psychology*, 21, 195-215.

This study of eight first-grade students reading below grade level sought to determine if parental training and involvement in the teaching of selected reading lessons would increase children's reading levels. Parents in the experimental group received training three times per week on selected parts of the Reading Recovery program, which they implemented with children at home during the five-week study. Parents of students in the control group did not have access to the program. Informal assessments used by the teacher to evaluate reading levels indicated significant gains made by students in the experimental group.

Hara, S. R., & Burke, D. J. (1998). Parent involvement: The key to improved student achievement. *School Community Journal*, 8 (2), 9-19.

See abstract under Elementary Education on page 12.

Shaver, A. V., & Walls, R. T. (1998). Effect of Title I parent involvement on student reading and mathematics achievement. *Journal of Research & Development in Education*, 31(2), 90-97

See abstract under Mathematics on page 16.

West, J. M. (2000). *Increasing parent involvement for student motivation*. Armidale, New South Wales, Australia: University of New England (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 448411)

This report describes an elementary classroom teacher's exploration of the effect of increased parent-teacher communication as a motivating factor to increase student success in reading. Parents and children participating in the study took turns reading to each other for a minimum of five minutes per night, three times per week, for a total of eight weeks. Students participating did more of their homework and received satisfactory quiz and test scores. Parent comments on surveys were also positive.

SCIENCE

Van Voorhis, F. L. (2001). Interactive science homework: An experiment in home and school connections. *NASSP Bulletin*, 85 (627), 20-32.

This quasi-experimental study of 253 diverse students participating in the Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) program in a suburban middle school compared interactive homework assignments with non-interactive assignments in terms of their effects on family involvement in homework, student homework completion and accuracy, student science achievement, and student attitudes toward science. The study showed that well-designed, teacher-generated homework assignments in science can help students practice skills, prepare for class, participate in learning activities, and develop responsibility, as well as promote parent-child relationships and develop better parent-teacher communication. More than 80% of students in the interactive

group said their families were sometimes, frequently, or always involved in science homework assignments. By contrast, more than 80% of students in the non-interactive group said their families were never, rarely, or sometimes involved in science homework assignments over the 18 weeks of the study.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Sanders, M. G., and Epstein, J. L. (2000). Building school-family-community partnerships in middle and high school. In M G. Sanders (Ed.), *School students placed at risk: Research, policy, and practice in the education of poor and minority adolescents* (pp. 339-61). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

This study reports the results of interviews with 22 educators, parents, and students in two urban middle schools and two urban high schools that are members of the National Network of Partnership Schools. Respondents emphasized the importance of family participation in the education of students. Although they recognized that adolescents need more independence than elementary aged children, they also voiced the opinion that adolescents need the guidance and support of caring adults in the home, school, and community. Those who responded agreed that high school is a difficult time in students' educational careers and that support from significant adults can help students "successfully navigate this period." The respondents also agreed that communication and cooperation among home, school, and community increased students' opportunities to successfully transition to college or the workplace. Additionally, the study pointed out that professional educators and parents felt that their time to build relationships was limited. With the "right support, a framework of involvement, and a team approach," however, these respondents felt that parents, educators, and community members could build effective partnerships.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Epstein, J. L. (2001). Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS): Volunteers in social studies and art. In J. L. Epstein (Ed.), *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (pp. 543-62). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

See abstract under Art on page 9.

WRITING

Chavkin, N. F., Gonzalez, J., & Rader, R. (2002). A home-school program in a Texas-Mexico border school: Voices from parents, students, and school staff. *The School Community Journal*, 10 (2), 127-37.

See abstract under Culturally Diverse Populations on page 9.

STUDIES THAT EVALUATE FAMILY BEHAVIORS AND CHARACTERISTICS AND THEIR EFFECT ON STUDENT OUTCOMES

“Schools and families can no longer remain “separate but equal” if they are to solve the complex problems facing children today. Schools must become family places where parents are involved in many aspects of school life.”

—Barbara A. Fleming

“From Visitors to Partners:

A Summary of Effective Parent-Involvement Practices”

in *Parents and Schools: From Visitors to Partners*

CULTURALLY DIVERSE POPULATIONS

Desimone, L. M. (1999). Linking parent involvement with student achievement: Do race and income matter? *The Journal of Educational Research*, 93 (1), 11-30.

This study examined the effects of students’ race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status on parent involvement.

Data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 were used to determine the relationship between 12 types of parent involvement and mathematics and reading scores of eighth grade students. Results of this study indicated that there were “statistically significant and substantively meaningful differences in the relationship between student achievement and parent involvement according to the student’s race-ethnicity and family income.” The findings also indicated that there were “potentially important differences in the relationship of parent involvement to student achievement according to the type of involvement, whether it was reported by the student or parent, and how achievement was measured.” This study concludes that the effectiveness of particular parent-involvement practices differs according to race/ethnicity and family income, and these differences must be considered by educators and policy makers if parent involvement is to be utilized as a resource to help schools respond more effectively to the nation’s growing income and educational disparities.

Espinosa, L. M. (1995). *Hispanic parent involvement in early childhood programs*. Champaign, Illinois: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (ERIC Digest EDO-PS-95-3)

Although schools' efforts to involve parents in their children's education have increased during the past few years, the author points out that simply increasing parents' school involvement does not necessarily lead to positive outcomes, especially for Hispanic families. Educators need to develop a greater understanding of how Hispanic culture influences child rearing and socialization practices, communication styles, and attitudes toward formal education in order to effectively reach Hispanic parents. Although Hispanic subgroups differ in terms of communication styles and socialization practices, as a whole, members of this culture have strong family ties, family loyalty, and a collective orientation supporting community life. Hispanics indicate a preference for warm, personalized styles of interaction, a relaxed sense of time, and an informal atmosphere for communication—preferences that may present a “culture clash” with the style of many American teachers. Recommended strategies for involving Hispanic parents include: a “personal touch,” with face-to-face communication rather than written communication, even when translated into Spanish; nonjudgmental communication that supports parents for their strengths, rather than not judging their “perceived failings”; perseverance in maintaining involvement; bilingual support for both written and oral communication; strong leadership and administrative support, including flexible policies, a welcoming environment, and a collegial atmosphere; staff development focused on Hispanic culture to foster understanding; and community outreach, including family literacy programs, vocational training, English as a second language programs, health services, and other community-based social services.

Goldenberg, C., Gallimore, R., Reese, L., & Garnier, H. (2001). Cause or effect? A longitudinal study of immigrant Latino parents' aspirations and expectations, and their children's school performance. *American Education Research Journal*, 38(3), 547-82.

This longitudinal study of 81 Latino children and their immigrant parents produced three significant findings: 1) parent's educational aspirations remain high throughout the elementary school years; 2) children's school performance influences their parents' expectations, but expectations do not influence performance; and 3) immigrant Latino parents place a high value on formal schooling. Although researchers found no significant correlation between Latino children's achievement and their parent's expectations during kindergarten, during the children's passage through the elementary grades they found that the parents' expectations became increasingly associated with how well their children were doing in school. This was in strong contrast to parental aspirations, which seemed to be independent of student achievement. Parents aspired to high levels of formal schooling for their children, regardless of how well they were doing academically. The fact that children's achievement was not limited by parents' educational expectations or aspirations challenges the belief of many educators that low parental expectations and aspirations explain the generally low achievement levels among immigrant Latino students.

Halle, T. G., Kurtz Costes, B. E., & Mahoney, J. L. (1997). Family influences on school achievement in low-income African-American children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89, 527-37.

This study of 41 low-income African-American children and their caregivers found that parents' expectations for their children's future success in school and parents' perceptions of their children's academic skills were positively correlated with their children's achievement scores. The study also showed that children who had more books at home read at a higher level than those with fewer books.

Keith, P. B., & Lichtman, M. V. (1994). Does parental involvement influence the academic achievement of Mexican-American eighth graders? Results from the National Education Longitudinal Study. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 9 (4), 256-72.

This study utilized data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 to measure the influence of parent involvement on the academic achievement of 1,714 eighth-grade Mexican-American students. Researchers developed and tested a "structural equations model" that considers and controls for diversity of family backgrounds and values, students' previous achievements, and other factors. The study found that parental involvement did significantly influence children's academic achievement.

Lopez, G. (2001). *On whose terms? Understanding involvement through the eyes of migrant parents.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

This study included observations and indepth interviews with four migrant families in the Texas Rio Grande Valley whose children had been identified by school personnel as highly successful in school by both academic and nonacademic standards. The researcher found that these families perceived themselves as highly involved in their children's educational lives, although they did not participate in their schooling in traditional ways. Although parents participating in the case study recognized traditional forms of involvement (attending PTA meetings, having parent-teacher contact, volunteering for school activities) as positive, they did not necessarily view these as important forms of involvement that would affect their children's academic development. Lopez theorizes that different types of parent involvement have the potential to impact student achievement, especially in "marginalized" families. He recommends that schools identify new ways to involve these parents in their children's educational lives.

Lopez, G. (2001). The value of hard work: Lessons on parent involvement from an (im)migrant household. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71 (3), 416-35.

In this study Lopez describes how a Hispanic immigrant family's perception of parent involvement differs from traditional American views of parent involvement. The Padillas parents exposed their children to their manual labor jobs, which simultaneously taught them "real life" lessons and demonstrated the value of an education in order to be qualified for better jobs. Lopez recommends that schools make a greater effort to "effectively 'partner' with parents on the parents' own terms," to "identify the unique ways that marginalized parents are already involved in their children's education, and search for creative ways to capitalize on these and othersubjugated forms of involvement." By adopting this strategy, schools will "recognize and validate the culture of the home" of their students.

Peng, S. S., & Wright, D. (1994). Explanation of academic achievement of Asian-American students. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 87, 346-52.

This study examined factors that explain why Asian-American students generally experience greater academic success than students who are members of other minority groups. Using data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, the authors conclude that home environmental and educational activities contributed significantly to the differences in achievement. Asian-American students were more likely than students of other minority groups to live in intact, two-parent families, to spend more time doing homework, and to participate in lessons outside of school. The study also indicated that Asian-American parents held higher expectations for their children, although they did not spend more time than other parents in helping their children with homework.

Scribner, J. D., Young, M. D., & Pedroza, A. (1999). Building collaborative relationships with parents. In P. Reyes, J. D. Scribner, & A. P. Scribner (Eds.), *Lessons from high performing Hispanic schools: Creating learning communities* (pp. 36-60). New York: Teachers College Press.

This 1993 Texas study involved three elementary, three middle, and two high schools that were designated as "high performing Hispanic" on the basis of: a) student populations being predominantly Hispanic; b) standardized test scores being "well above average;" and c) state and national recognition for being outstanding schools. Study methodology included visits, interviews, observations, case studies, and data collection and analysis in several educational areas. In the area of parent involvement, results indicated that parents were primarily interested in assisting their children academically and socially and strengthening home-school relations. Volunteering for school activities was a secondary concern. Topics deemed of value to parents included enhancing the school environment by becoming involved; building and strengthening relationships with schools; showing concern for the development of their children; providing role models for their children; and deriving personal benefits such as meeting new friends, establishing neighborhood networks, and becoming more informed.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Izzo, C.V., Weissberg, R.P., Kasprow, W.J., & Fendrich, M. (1999). A longitudinal assessment of teacher perceptions of parent involvement in children's education and school performance. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 27, 817-39.

This claims to be one of the few studies that has assessed the relationship between parent involvement and school performance longitudinally, while also controlling for previous student achievement. Teachers reported on parent involvement and school performance for 1,205 urban kindergarten through third grade students for three consecutive years. Parent involvement was rated in four areas: frequency of parent-teacher contact, quality of parent-teacher interactions, participation in educational activities at home, and participation in school activities. Every parent variable studied correlated moderately with school achievement, with "participation in educational activities at home" predicting academic success significantly more strongly than the other three variables. Researchers found that the frequency of parent-teacher contacts, quality of parent-teacher interactions, and parent participation at school declined from years one to three of the study.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Griffith, J. (1996). Relation of parental involvement, empowerment, and school traits to student academic performance. *Journal of Educational Research*, 90, 33-41.

School data on parent perceptions and various characteristics of 41 elementary schools in a large suburban school district located in a metropolitan area were analyzed in this study. The responses of 11,317 diverse parents who responded to a survey indicated that positive relationships of parental involvement to student achievement were largely unaffected by school characteristics or the socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic composition of the student population. Parental involvement was consistently correlated with student performance when school resources and the composition of the school's student population were controlled. Parental involvement (participating in volunteer activities and attending parent-teacher and school activities) and empowerment (parents' perception of schools' efforts to accommodate parent participation in school activities and to communicate with parents) combined contributed most significantly to student performance.

FATHER INVOLVEMENT

Nord, C. W. (1998). *Father involvement in schools*. Champaign, Illinois: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (ERIC Digest EDO-PS-98-3)

This digest analyzes data from the 1996 National Household Education Survey that contrasts the involvement of fathers in two-parent and "father-only" families with mothers in two-parent and "mother-only" families. Findings for K-12 students indicate that fathers can be a positive force in their children's education, and that when they are involved, children have a better chance to succeed in school. Students in two-parent families are more likely to get "As," participate in extracurricular activities, enjoy school, and not fail a grade if their fathers are involved in school compared to students whose fathers are not involved, taking into account factors such as mothers' involvement, fathers' and mothers' education, household income, and children's race/ethnicity. Children living in father-only households perform less well than children living in two-parent families. However, those living in father-only households also do better in school, are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, enjoy school more, and are less likely to have been suspended or expelled if their fathers are involved in school compared with those whose fathers are not. The results, the author points out, should encourage fathers to become more involved and also encourage schools to welcome the involvement of fathers.

HOMEWORK

Cooper, H. M., Lindsay, J. J. , & Nye, B. (2000). Homework in the home: How student, family, and parenting-style differences relate to the homework process. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*(4), 464-87.

In this study of 709 parents, four dimensions of parental involvement were studied: autonomy support, direct involvement, provision of structure, and elimination of distractions. Survey results showed that as parent support for autonomy increased, the achievement of children also increased. The study also revealed that direct parent involvement showed the opposite relationship. Additionally, the study showed that parents provided more support for autonomy as children aged and homework assignments became more difficult. Implications of this study include a caution that teachers use care in requesting that parents provide active instruction to their children because outcomes may be affected by a combination of the family's economic, time, and skill resources. Researchers also advise teachers and parents to consider the ability levels of students before determining the roles their parents should play in homework. This study indicated that an active teaching role for parents may be most appropriate for elementary students experiencing difficulty in school. However, with older students doing well in school, parents should be encouraged not to interfere with self-study, but to reinforce autonomy so that students develop time-management and study skills that will enable them to become autonomous, lifelong learners.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Bhattaito, A. C., Walker, J. M. T., Reed, R. P., DeJong, J. M., and Jones, K. P. (2001). Parental involvement in homework. *Educational Psychologist, 36* (3), 195-209.

This article reviews research on parent involvement in homework specifically related to parents' motivation to become involved in their children's homework, activities and strategies used in the involvement, and student outcomes associated with this involvement. Among the findings on parent motivation is the fact that parents become involved when "they believe they have a role to play, believe their involvement will make a difference, and perceive that their children and teachers want their involvement." Another conclusion drawn by the author is that parents' homework involvement influences student success most by supporting "student attributes related to achievement (e.g., attitudes about homework, perceptions of personal competence, self-regulatory skills)." Additionally, the literature also suggests that "parents' involvement activities influence student outcomes through modeling, reinforcement, and instruction."

MATHEMATICS

Balli, S. J. (1998). When Mom and Dad help: Student reflections on parent involvement with homework. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 31*(3), 142-46.

This study of 67 sixth grade students examined their perceptions about parents helping with homework assignments. The students completed 20 mathematics homework assignments that involved parents and then responded to a survey. Results indicated that a significant number of students believed their success was increased with help

from their parents; however, students reported mixed perceptions about the experience of working with their parents on homework assignments. These perceptions were based upon whether parents helped or confused their children and whether the interaction between parent and child was positive or negative. The author recommends that educators “explore ways to support parents’ understanding of homework concepts and use of developmentally appropriate strategies for helping their children with homework.”

Starkey, P., & Klein, A. (2000). Fostering parental support for children’s mathematical development: An intervention with Head Start families. *Early Education and Development, 11, 659-81.*

This article describes two studies investigating the effectiveness of mother-child intervention in mathematics: one studied 28 low-income African-American families, and the other focused on 31 low-income Latino families. In both cases the interventions proved effective in improving children’s “informal mathematical knowledge,” but literacy was not improved.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Balli, S. J. (1998). When Mom and Dad help: Student reflections on parent involvement with homework. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 31 (3), 142-46.*

See abstract under Mathematics on page 26.

Marchant, G. J., Sharon, E. P., & Rothlisberg, B. A. (2001). Relations of middle school students’ perceptions of family and school contexts with academic achievement. *Psychology in the Schools, 38 (6), 505-19.*

This study analyzed the relationship between middle school students’ perceptions of both their family and school environments with their academic achievement. It included 230 fifth and sixth grade students from three Midwest schools; 92% of the students were White, and approximately half the students were from middle class households and half were from working class households. School context factors included in the study were teacher responsiveness, teacher control, school responsiveness, and support in the social environment. Family context factors included parental expectations, parental responsiveness, parental values, and parental involvement in school functions. Results indicated that although parenting, teaching, and school factors were significant in predicting academic achievement, the students’ perceptions of their motivations and competence were stronger predictors of success. The authors conclude:

Apparently it is the values conveyed to students by their most significant relationships (parental values, teacher caring, and peer support) that become internalized, more so than the behavioral characteristics of parents (parenting style and parental involvement) and teachers (teacher control). Additionally, school responsiveness significantly predicted students’ motivations but not their academic competence. It makes sense that students’ perceptions of a positive school environment would enhance their motivations to achieve, but it is the more personal messages delivered by individual relationships with parents and teachers that enhance student’ sense of being academically capable. (p. 516)

McNeal, R. B. J. (1999). Parental involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievement, truancy, and dropping out. *Social Forces*, 78 (1), 117-44.

See abstract under Science on page 29.

Sui-Chi, E. H., & Willms, J. D. (1996, April). Effects of parental involvement on eighth-grade achievement. *Sociology of Education*, 69, 126-41.

This study of a representative sample of nearly 25,000 middle school students across the country indicated that discussing school-related activities at home and helping children plan their educational programs had the most significant relationship to student achievement among the factors studied, including parent-teacher communication, parent involvement at school, and home supervision. Parents' involvement at school, such as volunteering and attending parent-teacher association meetings, had a moderate impact on reading achievement, but a negligible impact on mathematics achievement. Findings of the study indicated that parent involvement was associated with gender and whether a child had a learning or behavior problem. Parents generally discussed school issues more with girls than boys. However, parents tended to have more contact with school regarding boys' experiences than girls'. The study showed that parents of children with learning and behavioral problems were less likely to participate in school and discussed school issues less with their children, but they were more likely than other parents to communicate with teachers concerning their children's progress. The study did not support the argument that parents with higher socioeconomic backgrounds are more involved in their children's education than parents from working-class backgrounds, although it did show that children scored significantly higher in mathematics and reading if they attended a middle school in a high socioeconomic area, irrespective of their individual family backgrounds.

Trivette, P., & Anderson, E. (1995). The effects of four components of parental involvement on eighth grade student achievement. *School Psychology Review*, 24 (2), 299-317.

This study analyzed data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 to determine the effects of four different kinds of parent involvement (parent aspirations for children's education, parent-child communication about school, home structure, and parental participation in school-related activities) on the academic achievement of 21,823 eighth grade students. Of the four, only parent aspirations were significantly related to student achievement. Home structure had a "slight negative effect" on student achievement, interpreted by the authors as meaning that a "highly structured environment" could negatively affect achievement during this stage in adolescents' development. Researchers controlled for variables such as prior student achievement and socioeconomic status.

Wang, J., & Wildman, L. (1995). An empirical examination of the effects of family commitment in education on student achievement in seventh grade science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 32(8), 833-37.

See abstract under Science on page 29.

MUSIC

Zdzinski, S. F. (1996, Spring). Parental involvement, selected student attributes, and learning outcomes in instrumental music. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 44, 34-48.

This study of 406 music students in grades four through twelve in rural New York and Pennsylvania examined the relationship of parental involvement to the “cognitive, affective, and performance outcomes of instrumental music students.” The study concluded that parental involvement was a factor in overall performance, affective, and cognitive musical outcomes. Other findings include: parental involvement was related only at the elementary level for cognitive musical outcomes and musical performance outcomes; for affective outcomes, the strength of parental involvement increased as students aged; issues such as parents attending concerts, providing materials, participating in parent groups, and tape-recording student performance were all positively related to outcomes.

SCIENCE

McNeal, R. B. J. (1999). Parental involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievement, truancy, and dropping out. *Social Forces*, 78(1), 117-44.

This study, based on a sample of 17,049 parents of students in eighth and tenth grade from the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study, conceptualized parent involvement as social capital and examined how various dimensions of parent involvement affect science achievement and behavioral outcomes. The study found that parent involvement was associated with increased student achievement and decreased behavioral problems among traditionally advantaged students. Comparable levels of parent involvement in less privileged families resulted in comparatively smaller results. A second finding was that specific parent-teacher contact and interaction did not significantly improve achievement or reduce behavioral problems among students, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Wang, J., & Wildman, L. (1995). An empirical examination of the effects of family commitment in education on student achievement in seventh grade science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 32(8), 833-37.

The researchers analyzed data from the 1988 Longitudinal Study of American Youth to determine the effect of family commitment in education on student achievement in science among 3,000 seventh grade students over a period of four years. Variables of “family educational commitment” included parent education, parent support, and parent expectation. Parents’ education and their confidence in student performance both had significant positive effects on student achievement in science. Negative correlations with student achievement were found in the following parent variables: helping children with homework, talking about school, rewarding good grades, and purchasing games and books. Analyses by the authors suggest that parent education and encouragement are important factors in student achievement in science. Teachers and parents should use caution in how they help students with homework and how they reward students for good grades. Science educators can help parents promote achievement by encouraging them to a) express confidence in their children’s ability; b) encourage

children to do their homework themselves; c) take time to talk with children about school activities; and d) “promote students’ intrinsic interest in science whereby learning science becomes its own reward.”

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Deslandes, R., Royer, E., Turcotte, D., & Bertrand, R. (1997). School achievement at the secondary level: Influence of parenting style and parent involvement in schooling. *McGill Journal of Education, 32, 191-207.*

This study of 525 Canadian adolescents examined the influence of parenting style and involvement in school on the academic achievement of secondary students. Findings indicated that parents have substantial influence over adolescents’ school performance. Three parenting factors were demonstrated to be “statistically significant determinants of adolescents’ grades-behavioral control, psychological autonomy granting and warmth-acceptance.” The combination of parental support, infrequent communication with teachers, parental supervision, and psychological autonomy granting proved to be the best combination for maximizing student performance among the students sampled.

Hickman, C.W., Greenwood, G. & Miller, M.D. (1995). High school parent involvement: Relationships with achievement, grade level, SES, and gender. *Journal of Research & Development in Education, 28, 125-34.*

Researchers in this study examined the relationship between the achievement of high school students and the types of involvement of the primary caregiving parent. The study also included an analysis of student gender, socioeconomic status, and grade level. Participating parents were interviewed using the Parent Participation Interview (PPI). The analysis indicated that the only type of parental involvement positively related to achievement was the “home-based type” (monitoring homework, editing reports, etc.) as opposed to school-based involvement. The study also indicated that parents of average and low-achievement students are not actively involved in their children’s education.

Keith, T. Z., Keith, P. B., Quirk, K. J., Spurduto, J., Santillo, S., & Killings, S. (1998). Longitudinal effects of parent involvement on high school grades: Similarities and differences across gender and ethnic groups. *Journal of School Psychology, 36 (3), 335-63.*

This study sought to determine the longitudinal effect of parent involvement on the grade point average of tenth grade students and whether the effect varied by gender and ethnic group. Results indicated that parent involvement “has continuing and powerful effects on high school learning, as measured by grades, at least through the tenth grade level” with no significant differences between boys and girls. Among ethnic groups, stronger effects were noted for Native American adolescents, underscoring the value of parent involvement programs for these groups. The researchers recommend that school programs include “efforts to nurture high aspirations and expectations for parents and to foster communication between parents and students about school activities and future plans.”

McNeal, R. B. J. (1999). Parental involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievement, truancy, and dropping out. *Social Forces*, 78(1), 117-44.

See abstract under Science on page 29.

Patrikako, E. N. (1997, Fall). A model of parental attitudes and academic achievement of adolescents. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 31, 7-26.

This study utilized data from the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study to apply a model in an effort to better understand academic achievement among adolescents in four sample ethnic groups. The author concludes that the strongest direct impact on achievement was prior achievement, followed by student expectations. The greatest indirect effects were related to perceptions of parental expectations: “The findings support the position that parental expectations and perceptions of parental expectations are essential in raising the academic expectations and, thus, the achievement of adolescents.”

Simon, B. S. (2001). Family involvement in high school: Predictors and effects. *NASSP Bulletin*, 85 (627), 8-19.

Reports from parents of 11,000 high school students and more than 1,000 high school principals included in the 1988 National Education Longitudinal Study were analyzed by this researcher to determine interactions among high school, family, and community partnerships. Results indicated that — after controlling for race and ethnicity, family structure, gender, and the influence of students’ prior achievement and socioeconomic status — various forms of parent involvement resulted in adolescents earning higher grades in English and mathematics, completing more course credits in English and mathematics, having better attendance and behavior, and coming to class more prepared to learn. Although study habits, attitudes, and behavior patterns are typically set by students’ senior year, this study showed that even through the last year of high school, families continue to influence adolescents’ success. The study also indicated that while families participate in various ways to support student learning, schools can influence the ways in which families guide adolescents’ school success.

Trusty, J. (1999). Effects of eighth-grade parental involvement on late adolescents’ educational expectations. *Journal of Research & Development in Education*, 32(4), 224-33.

The researcher used data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 to examine the influences of parent involvement (defined as parent-reported school organization involvement, parent-reported home-based involvement, student-reported school organization involvement, and student-reported home-based involvement) on their children’s postsecondary educational expectations. Trusty assessed parent involvement among 9,929 students during eighth grade in relation to their educational expectations six years later. Of the factors studied, student-reported home-based parental involvement (discussing programs, school activities, and class content being studied with children) most strongly predicted high educational expectations.

STUDIES THAT ANALYZE PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT RESEARCH

“It takes a village to raise a child.”

—African folk saying

Brough, J. A., & Irvin, J. L. (2001). Parental involvement supports academic improvement among middle schoolers. *Middle School Journal*, 32(5), 56-61.

The authors reviewed research on the effect of parent involvement on middle school student achievement. Although the research proved “contradictory and relatively inconclusive,” none of the studies discouraged parent involvement for middle school students. As the authors found no one model to be effective for parent involvement, they recommend that educators do action research and devise action plans based upon their findings that will fit their particular school’s needs.

Christenson, S. L., & Christenson, J. C. (1998). *Family, school, and community influences on children’s learning: A literature review. (Report No. 1). Live and Learn Project. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Extension Service.*

These authors reviewed 200 studies that focused on family, school, and community influences on children’s learning in grades K-12. Indicators of positive student outcomes identified by the review included: “standardized tests, grades, teacher ratings of academic performance, and measures of school adjustment, including improved attendance, fewer suspensions, increased classroom participation, and improved self-esteem and motivation to learn.” Correlations between family, school, or community influences on positive school performance ranged from low to “strong,” but most were in the “low-moderate to moderate range.” Authors concluded that students performed well when the following six factors were in place in three locations—at home, in school, and within the community:

1. Standards and expectations
2. Structure
3. Opportunity to learn
4. Support
5. Climate/relationships
6. Modeling

Christenson, S. L., & Sheridan, S. M. (2001). *Schools and families: Creating essential connections for learning*. New York: Guilford Press.

A section of the chapter “Approach: The Framework for Interaction with Families” in this book, entitled “Empirical Base for Family Involvement”, summarizes research in the area of parent involvement in children’s learning. Following their analysis, the authors reach the following conclusions:

1. Definitions for parent involvement have broadened — “family” has replaced “parent” because of the significant adults in the lives of children, and options for involvement have moved beyond the “big three” (volunteer, homework helper, and fund-raiser);
2. We know that home environmental influences are positive correlates of students’ academic achievement and school performance;
3. The distinction between family status and family process variables is critical; what parents do to support learning has a greater impact than who families are;
4. The specific actions families take to facilitate their children’s educational success, referred to as the “curriculum of the home” by Walberg (1984), chart a course for intervention;
5. The power of out-of-school time, which includes community and peer influences for school learning, is also important;
6. Programs that improve student performance are comprehensive, well-planned, and provide options for family involvement that allow schools to be responsive to family diversity; and
7. The degree of match between home and school contexts is a contributing factor for students’ school success.

The authors contend that the literature supports their conclusion that “families are essential, not just desirable” to the educational success of their children. They indicate that policies addressing family involvement are often lacking in schools, and that programs that do exist are often “viewed as an appendage rather than an integral part of school practices.” They recommend an approach to family involvement that: “1) focuses on the relationship; 2) recognizes that collaboration is an attitude and not just an activity; 3) creates a vehicle to co-construct the bigger picture about children’s school performance and development; 4) shares information and resources; and 5) establishes meaningful co-roles for the partners.” These authors contend that effective family-school partnerships can be developed without any specific model, but that a careful analysis of the “goodness of fit” must be made to meet the needs of the student, parents, and teachers involved. The authors agree with McAfee (1987) that partnerships based upon “mutual respect and interdependence of home, school, and community are essential to children’s development.”

Epstein, J. L., Croates, L., Salinas, K. C., Sanders, M. G., & Simon, B. S. (1997). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook in action*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press.

The chapter, entitled “A Comprehensive Framework for School, Family, and Community Partnerships”, includes an analysis of research related to school-family partnerships. Conclusions drawn by the authors from this analysis include:

1. Partnerships tend to decline across the grades unless schools and teachers work to develop and implement appropriate practices of partnership at each grade level;
2. Affluent communities currently have more positive family involvement, on average, unless schools and teachers in economically distressed communities work to build positive partnerships with their students’ families;
3. Schools in more economically depressed communities make more contacts with families about the problems and difficulties their children are having unless they work at developing balanced programs that include contacts about positive accomplishments of students;
4. Single parents, parents who are employed outside the home, parents who live far from the school, and fathers are less involved, on average, at the school building unless the school organizes opportunities for families to volunteer at various times and in various places to support the school and their children;
5. Just about all families care about their children, want them to succeed, and are eager to obtain better information from schools and communities so as to remain good partners in their children’s education;
6. Just about all teachers and administrators would like to involve families, but many do not know how to go about building positive and productive programs and are consequently fearful about trying. As a result, educators get stuck in a “rhetoric rut,” expressing support for partnerships without taking any action; and
7. Just about all students at all levels-elementary, middle, and high school-want their families to be more knowledgeable partners about schooling and are willing to take active roles in assisting communications between home and school. However, students need much better information and guidance than most now receive about how their schools view partnerships and about how they can conduct important exchanges with their families about school activities, homework, and school decisions.

The authors see these results as important because they indicate that school-home partnerships can be built and can include families that would not otherwise become involved on their own. Although good programs may look different at each site, there are common characteristics among successful programs across grade levels, including “a recognition of the overlapping spheres of influence on student development; attention to various types of involvement that promote a variety of opportunities for schools, families, and communities to work together; and an Action Team for School, Family, and Community Partnerships to coordinate each school's work and progress.”

Fan, X.T., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13, 1-22.

Researchers conducted a meta-analysis to synthesize the quantitative literature concerning the relationship between parental involvement and children's academic achievement. Their findings revealed a "moderate and practically meaningful" relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement. Parental aspiration/expectation for children's educational achievement was the strongest relationship, while parental home supervision was the weakest. The relation of parent involvement to achievement was also stronger as a "global indicator" of academic achievement (e.g. grade point average) than as a predictor of student achievement in specific subject areas.

Finn, J. D. (1998). Parental engagement that makes a difference. *Educational Leadership*, 55 (8), 20-24.

This article analyzes how specific parenting practices, both at home and at school, relate to student achievement. Studies cited by the author indicate that parent involvement at home influences academic performance more strongly than parent involvement at school. Three types of parent involvement at home are consistently related to school achievement:

- Organizing and monitoring children's time, especially related to television viewing;
- Assisting with homework; and
- Talking about school issues with children.

These methods of involvement have also been linked with the resilience of students who succeed despite challenges such as poverty, minority status, or native language.

Research analyzed by the author also demonstrates a positive relationship between literacy and reading at home and student achievement. Several studies have shown a strong relationship between parents reading to their children as well as children reading to their parents and reading achievement. School programs that encourage literacy activities at home have proven successful.

Research has not found a consistent relationship between parental involvement in school (attending school programs, volunteering, visiting classrooms) and student achievement. Research also shows that children of "disengaged" parents (parents who are authoritarian, fail to provide guidance and structure, and do not provide emotional support) are the least successful in school settings. Finally, studies reviewed by the author indicate that schools can encourage parent involvement, both at home and at school, with outreach efforts.

Henderson, A. T., & Berla, N. (Ed.) (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education.

This synthesis includes descriptions of 66 studies, reviews, reports, analyses, and books published between 1974 and 1993 that address the effects of family involvement on student achievement. "The evidence is now beyond dispute," the authors write. "When schools work together with families to support learning, children

tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life.” Benefits of family involvement for students documented by the studies include: higher grades and test scores; improved attendance; more homework completed; fewer special education placements; better attitudes and behavior; improved graduation rates; and greater participation in postsecondary education programs. The authors identify six major themes from the studies chosen for inclusion:

- Families make “critical contributions” to student achievement, from early childhood through high school. Programs and policies to improve student outcomes are more effective if they include families;
- Parent involvement at both home and at school contributes to both student achievement and retention in school;
- Parent involvement contributes to the overall performance of all children in schools, not just the children of those parents who are active;
- Four roles played by parents contribute to children's learning: parents as teachers, supporters, advocates, and decision-makers;
- There is a correlation between the extent of parent involvement and the degree of student achievement. The form of involvement is less important than the amount or variety; and
- The best results for student achievement occur when families, schools, and community organizations work together.

Jordan, C., Orozco, E., & Averett, A. (2001). *Emerging issues in school, family, and community connections: Annual synthesis 2001*. Austin, Texas: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

This research synthesis examines issues in the field of “family and community connections with schools.” The review of more than 160 publications identified four key issues for research:

1. Clarifying the concept of family and community connections with schools;
2. Measuring the outcomes of family and community connections with schools;
3. Advancing the research base for family and community connections with schools; and
4. Identifying critical areas for research in family and community connections with schools.

The authors give three primary reasons for why these research issues need to be addressed: a) “the field is moving forward and work is being done without the research-based knowledge desirable to support the work”; b) “despite some promising models and growing evidence of the benefits of connections, policymakers, funding agencies, school systems, and state education agencies are still not demonstrating maximum support for connection — building practice”; and c) a significant amount of evidence of the impact of connections has been thus far “hidden” — results have not been published or widely disseminated.

Kellaghan, T., Sloane, K., Alvarez, B., & Bloom, B. S. (1993). Home processes and learning. In *The home environment and school learning: Promoting parental involvement in the education of children* (pp. 50-61). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

In this chapter the authors analyzed studies that focused on home processes that contribute to the academic success of students. From this analysis, they developed a “comprehensive picture” of processes in the home that promote school learning. These include: high expectations and aspirations of parents; language environment of the home; academic guidance and support in the home; stimulation in the home, including opportunities for children “to explore ideas, events, and the larger environment;” and general work habits of the family.

Kellaghan, T., Sloane, K., Alvarez, B., & Bloom, B. S. (1993). Involving parents in home processes and learning. In *The home environment and school learning: Promoting parental involvement in the education of children* (pp. 144-153). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

In this chapter the authors analyzed research on the role of home environments on school learning. They drew the following conclusions from this research: a) the home environment is “a most powerful factor” in determining school performance, including achievement, interest in learning, and number of years of schooling children will receive; b) when home and school have “divergent approaches to life and to learning,” children may not perform well; conversely, when home and school “have similar emphases on motivation and learning,” children are more inclined to perform well; c) the “socioeconomic level or cultural background of a home need not determine how well a child does at school.” Parents from diverse cultures and backgrounds “can and do promote stimulating home environments that support and encourage the learning of their children;” and d) parents can make better choices for what to do to help children learn if they have an understanding of home factors that contribute to learning. Programs designed to assist parents to support and encourage their children have proved beneficial in promoting children’s learning at school.

Rutherford, B., & Billing, S. H. (1995). *Parent, family and community involvement in the middle grades*. Urbana, Illinois: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 448411)

This digest reports the findings of a study that examined partnerships of families and communities with several middle schools. Researchers derived eight key conclusions that can promote family-school partnerships: 1) schools can create programs to respond to the particular needs of middle school students and their families; 2) “challenges can become opportunities for parent and family involvement”; 3) building relationships is key in building family and community involvement; 4) schools need to share responsibility and decision making about curriculum and instruction with families, teachers, and students; 5) schools need to use “creative approaches” and build strong community connections to sustain parent and family involvement; 6) schools need to provide professional development for teachers on best practices in family involvement; 7) schools need to help families create home environments that value student success; and 8) schools need to build community connections that will result in participation in school activities.