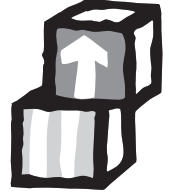

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HEAD START®



Engaging Parents

Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

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“Head Start has not only given my child a head start in life, but one for me as well.” — *Head Start Parent, Massachusetts*

The concept of “parent involvement” is so ingrained in the operations of Head Start that there is the risk of taking it for granted. Certainly you and your staff members share the belief that parents should be involved in the program that helps their children gain the skills they need to succeed in school. Everyone agrees that the children benefit from such involvement, and that the parents do, too.

Even so, your staff needs to consider, at regular intervals, some key questions. What do you mean by “parent”? What do you mean by “involved”? Whose job is it to involve the parents?

Such questions are especially critical now, with both the structure of the family and the makeup of the U.S. population going through rapid changes.

Today, the person who “parents” a child in Head Start may be a teenager, a single father, a recent immigrant, a grandmother, a foster parent, an aunt or a great-aunt. Fewer parents are at home full-time with their children. More parents are working two or more jobs or are in school or training full-time themselves.

Families today are more mobile, as they search for better employment and housing. Many families served by Head Start have recently emigrated from Southeast Asia, Central America, Eastern Europe and other distant points on the globe. Families within a program may not share a common language and they may represent widely different cultural beliefs, attitudes and practices.

These and many other factors mean that there is no “typical” parent and no one best way to get them involved. Traditional strategies to involve parents in Head Start, such as classroom volunteering or membership on the Policy Council, may not meet the interests, needs or logistical requirements of all parents.

Recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion call for a renewed effort to enhance family services and increase parent involvement. They have called for several action steps including:

Preface

- Reviewing and expanding current resources used for family services, parent education and family support;
- Increased efforts to involve parents in all aspects of the Head Start programs; and,
- Encouragement of male involvement in Head Start.

To begin to put these action steps into practice, programs will need to step back and consider not just what they are doing to involve parents but *whether or not the opportunities are meaningful and accessible to the parents currently in Head Start.*

Because of the more complex nature of parenting today, “parent involvement” is too big a task to lay on any one employee. It takes creativity, teamwork and the skills of the entire staff. *Engaging Parents* is a training guide that can help *all* of your staff members identify the range of families they serve, examine how successful your program is at involving all the parent members of those families and create an environment in which each staff member contributes, individually and as a team, to more successful parent involvement.

The use of the word “engage” in the title of this guide is deliberate. It has the same meaning as the word “involve,” but it also suggests more. To “engage” means to pledge or to commit oneself. The word “engage” also is used in reference to the gears of a motor coming together to successfully operate. In the same way, staff members need to *make a commitment* and to *come together* to involve all parents meaningfully.

That commitment must begin with the management team. By holding the expectation that everyone has “parent involvement” in his or her job description... by encouraging, recognizing and rewarding collaborative staff efforts for parent involvement... by setting aside the time and resources for staff to reflect on these issues, share ideas and receive training... you are showing that you are committed to meaningful involvement opportunities for all parents.

Engaging Parents is a foundation guide, that is, it lays out a course of training that is appropriate for every staff person, from the members of your management team to the volunteers. Subsequent guides will focus on specific strategies for involving parents. Together these guides can strengthen your program’s ability to build on the tradition of parent involvement that has so successfully guided Head Start in the past.

Overview

Purpose/Goals

We all know the saying, “Parents are their children’s first and most important teachers.” Children learn not only from the active instruction their parents give them but also from what they observe their parents doing, from the way their parents talk to them and behave toward them and from the home life their parents provide them.

But parents do more than simply teach their children. The greater truth is that “parents are a child’s first and most important adult.” Parents affect almost every aspect of a child’s life: self-esteem, health, attitudes, values, behavior, readiness for school and success in life.

The reasons for this are obvious. Of any adults, the parents of a child (or the persons who perform the duties of parents) have the most responsibility for that child. Over the years they spend the greatest amount of time with that child. They have the most invested in that child and their feelings for the child are the strongest and most intense.

Because parents have so much at stake, they have a great deal to offer to the Head Start program serving their children. Head Start has long recognized this. Much of its success has been due to its commitment to parent involvement.

Parent involvement benefits children in several ways. There is the direct benefit from the parents working with the staff, so that more can be accomplished for the children. Children benefit when their parents know about and support what is happening in their education. Parents who develop a habit of involvement are more likely to continue that participation throughout a child’s school career. Finally, parents who are involved gain skills in decision making, teaching, management, advocacy and other areas. They develop habits of learning that will continue throughout their lives. These gains can positively affect a parent’s self-esteem, attitudes, behavior and employment. This in turn can lead to positive effects on the children.

Head Start programs often struggle to maintain high levels of parent involvement. Traditional methods of involvement, such as having parents serve as classroom volunteers or on the Policy Council, don’t allow opportunities for all parents to be involved. They also do not take advantage of the many different kinds of contributions that parents can make.

Introduction

In response to this concern, Head Start has recently developed a new vision statement for parent involvement. This vision statement maintains that some of the most important goals for parent involvement in Head Start are to:

- Support parents as primary educators, nurturers and advocates for their children;
- Ensure that every parent has an opportunity for a significant experience in Head Start; and
- Ensure that parents are involved in making policy decisions for the program, which is the foundation of Head Start's unique success.

This foundation training guide has been developed to build the capacity of all Head Start staff to make Head Start's renewed vision for parent involvement a reality for every parent, in every program. The guide is divided into three modules, each containing two activities designed for workshop presentation, followed by two or more coaching activities.

Specific goals for each module are described below.

Module 1: Defining Parent Involvement

As a result of completing this module, participants will:

- Apply a broader definition of parent involvement to their daily interactions with parents; and
- Define the goals of Head Start's renewed vision for parent involvement and be able to identify current program practices that support those goals.

Module 2: Individualizing Parent Involvement

As a result of completing this module, participants will:

- Interact with children and families using practices and behaviors that promote belonging and invite participation; and
- Practice adapting parent involvement activities to make them more inviting and accessible for individual parents.

Module 3: Parent Involvement Is a Shared Responsibility

As a result of completing this module, participants will:

- Use effective listening skills to identify how each staff member contributes to and supports parent involvement for the purpose of forming collaborative staff relationships; and

- Use consensus building as a strategy to create a common understanding of their own program's strengths in parent involvement.

Following each set of activities within a module is a section entitled *Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice*. This section outlines several suggestions for activities that are designed to provide participants with opportunities to apply the information and skills learned in training situations in their daily lives. These extended learning activities are equally important to the training exercises, because for skills to take root there must be opportunities for practice and reinforcement over time.

The final sections of the guide, *Continuing Professional Development* and *Resources*, contain suggested activities and sources for supplemental information that can assist supervisors in extending the learning opportunities begun in this guide.

Audience

Engaging Parents is a foundation guide. All staff in Head Start, regardless of their roles or responsibilities, need to understand the information and demonstrate the skills presented in this guide. In particular:

- Managers will find the guide useful in planning and implementing parent involvement programs.
- Staff with the major responsibility for involving parents can use this guide to analyze the effectiveness of current practices.
- Policy council members can use this guide to engage staff and parents in a dialogue to create a profile of the program's parent involvement activities.
- Staff who are discouraged when parents don't come into the center for activities can use this guide to gain a fresh perspective on what involvement means.
- Staff who informally relate to families as they carry out their daily work can discover how each of their interactions with parents contribute to their engagement with the program.

Introduction

Performance Standards

This guide contains material which will help programs meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards requiring them to:

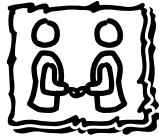
- Provide experiences and activities which support and enhance parents as the principal influence in their children’s education and development;
- Assist parents to increase their knowledge and understanding of, as well as their skills and experience in, child growth and development;
- Identify and reinforce experiences which occur in the home and community that parents can utilize as educational activities for their children;
- Provide opportunities for involving parents in health, mental health, dental and nutrition education; and
- Assist parents in understanding and using alternative ways to foster the learning and development of their children.

Core Resource

“Head Start Parent Involvement: Vision, Opportunities, Strategies”

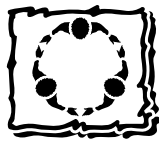
Definition of Icons

Coaching



A training strategy that fosters the development of skills through tailored instruction, demonstrations, practice, and feedback. The activities are written for a coach to work closely with one to three participants and can be used in place of a workshop where this is not possible.

Workshops



A facilitated group training strategy that fosters the development of skills through activities which build on learning through group interaction. These activities are written for up to 25 participants working in small or large groups with one or two trainers.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice



Activities assigned by the trainer immediately following the completion of the module to help participants review key information, practice skills, and examine their progress toward expected outcomes of the module.

Continuing Professional Development



Follow-up activities for the program to support continued staff development in the regular use of the skills addressed in a particular training guide. It includes:

- (1) Opportunities tailored to the participant to continue building on the skills learned in the training
- (2) Ways to identify new skills and knowledge needed to expand and/or complement these skills through opportunities in such areas as in higher education, credentialing, or community educational programs.

Introduction

At a Glance

<i>Modules</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Materials</i>
Module 1: Defining Parent Involvement	Activity 1 - What Is Parent Involvement? (W)	45 - 60 minutes	Easel, chart paper, pens, overhead projector, Overhead 1
	Activity 2 - Understanding the Head Start Vision (C)	30 - 45 minutes	Handout 1
	Activity 3 - The Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement (W)	60 - 75 minutes	Easel, chart paper, pens, overhead projector, Overhead 2, Handout 2
	Activity 4 - The Staff-Parent Connection (C)	20 - 30 minutes/ interview	Handout 3
Module 2: Individualizing Parent Involvement	Activity 1 - Why Become Involved? (W)	30 - 45 minutes	Easel, chart paper, pens, overhead projector, Overhead 3
	Activity 2 - Working Effectively with Parents (C)	30 - 45 minutes	Handout 4
	Activity 3 - Analyzing Activities (W)	45 - 60 minutes	Easel, chart paper, markers, Handout 5
	Activity 4 - Strengthening Parent Involvement (C)	60 - 75 minutes	Handout 6
Module 3: Sharing Responsibility for Parent Involvement	Activity 1 - Paired Peers (W)	30 - 45 minutes	Easel, chart paper, pens
	Activity 2 - Reflecting on Parent Involvement through Journal Writing (C)	varies	Handout 7
	Activity 3 - Working Together (W)	60 - 75 minutes	Easel, chart paper, pens, Handout 8
	Activity 4 - Shadowing (C)	varies	Handout 9
	Activity 5 - Peer Exchange (C)	30 - 45 minutes	Handout 10

(W) = Workshop Activity

(C) = Coaching Activity

Defining Parent Involvement

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will:

- Apply a broad definition of parent involvement to their daily interactions with parents
- Define the goals of Head Start’s renewed vision for parent involvement and be able to identify current program practices that support those goals

Key Concepts

- The Head Start vision statement reaffirms parent involvement as a cornerstone of the Head Start program and challenges each program to ensure that every parent has an opportunity for a significant experience in Head Start.
- Parent involvement can occur in many ways, at many moments and places and at many levels of intensity.
- Parent involvement is everyone’s job.

Background Information

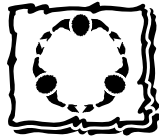
Parent involvement has long been a cornerstone of Head Start. Numerous parents look back at their involvement in Head Start with pride and credit their experiences in the program as a key factor in their own and their children’s growth and development.

However, the interests and needs of today’s parents and families are changing. Many of the strategies that Head Start programs have used to involve parents, such as volunteering in the classroom or becoming a Policy Council member, reach only a limited number of parents. New strategies are needed to ensure that all Head Start parents have opportunities to become meaningfully involved in their children’s education.

To begin the process of creating more comprehensive and systematic parent involvement opportunities, participants will first be asked to create a common definition of “parent involvement.” They then will be directed to recognize — and value — the many efforts they already have underway.

Module 1

Activity 1: What Is Parent Involvement?



Purpose: The purpose of this brainstorming activity is to help participants build upon their understanding of the influence parents have on children’s growth and development, by reflecting on their own experiences.

Materials

Easel, chart paper, pens, overhead projector, Overhead 1

Process

Direct participants to reflect for a minute on this question: “What did the caring adults in your childhood — such as your parents, older siblings, close relatives, neighbors or anyone who took an interest in you as a child — do to help you grow and develop?”

Ask each participant to share one of their responses. Have participants contribute in a fast-paced, round-robin fashion until everyone has given at least one response. Do not encourage discussion at this point.

Record all responses on chart paper and post it on the wall. The range of responses may include:

Fed me – took care of basic needs	Put the family first
Provided security	Disciplined me, taught me manners
Encouraged me to do well in all areas	Played with me
Loved me, nurtured me	Were involved at school (for example, parent-teacher conferences, PTA)
Set good examples (for example, worked, went to church)	Spent time with me
Read to me, modeled reading	Modeled respect for others and moral values
Were politically active (for example, voted, worked for legal change)	Provided me with the freedom to learn from mistakes
Taught me how to take care of myself (for example, to cook, to clean)	Helped me with homework
Volunteered in the community	Provided a safe environment
Promoted education	

Trainer Preparation Notes:

You will likely have some participants who feel they had little or no support from their families. If so, make the point that children can grow and develop without extensive family involvement. However, in such situations the children must nurture themselves or find nurturing relationships outside the family.

Debriefing

Once everyone has had an opportunity to respond, lead a discussion of the following four key statements (use Overhead 1). Relate each statement to examples from the group's brainstorming. Then ask participants to explore what each statement means, in terms of their own Head Start program. A brief discussion of each statement is included below; use this information as a guide for your discussion.

1. Parent involvement is often a “family” affair.

The person who is most responsible for a child's growth and development may vary. In some families it is one or both of the biological parents, while in others, it maybe a grandparent, aunt or uncle or older sibling. In some cultures and families, many family members are closely involved in a child's growth and development.

What does this mean for Head Start?

The term “parent” needs to be broadly defined to include any caregiver who performs parenting duties. Also, the target audience for parent involvement opportunities may vary from family to family.

2. Parent involvement occurs in a variety of ways.

Parent involvement is an ongoing process. Parents teach their children by what they say, what they do, and what they believe. Some involvement is formal and occurs in planned activities or programs such as Head Start. Some involvement is “informal” and occurs in the home. Both are valued types of involvement. How parents choose to become involved may vary from individual to individual.

What does this mean for Head Start?

Parents have an impact on their children's growth and development, whether or not they come into the center for program activities. Thus, it is essential that every Head Start program recognizes, values and supports how families choose to be involved.

Module 1

3. Parent involvement benefits parents as well as children.

Parents are people with full lives, part of which involves being a parent. Self development opportunities (such as adult literacy, job training or Policy Council volunteering) are forms of involvement.

Interest and participation in self development opportunities will vary from parent to parent. For some parents, meeting their own and their family's basic needs will be the main point of involvement.

What does this mean for Head Start?

Comprehensive parent involvement programs offer opportunities for parents to grow as parents and as individuals. The ways that parents choose to become involved and the degree of their involvement will vary for each person. There is no one way to involve parents.

4. Parent involvement is everyone's job.

Since the form and level of involvement will vary for each parent, programs should provide a wide variety of opportunities for parents and families.

What does this mean for Head Start?

Creating a full-range, flexible parent involvement program is an ongoing challenge. For a program to be successful, parent involvement must be part of every staff person's job. Every contact between staff and parents can communicate and reinforce the value of parent involvement. It is the responsibility of every staff person to reflect on the message they are communicating. It is the responsibility of management to prepare and empower staff as the supporters of parents.

If this workshop will be followed by Activity 3, let participants know that they will further explore what parent involvement means by examining Head Start's renewed vision for parent involvement.

Activity 2: Understanding the Head Start Vision



Purpose: Head Start staff and parents have a wealth of knowledge from their personal lives and day-to-day work with families and each other. In this coaching activity, participants will draw upon their experiences and relate them to the Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement. Participants will use reflection, brainstorming, critical thinking and interviewing skills.

Materials

Handout 1

Process

Provide an introduction to this activity by covering the following points:

Parent involvement has long been the cornerstone of Head Start's success. Families speak proudly of their involvement with Head Start and the impact it has had on their lives.

Recently, the Head Start Bureau has put forth a renewed "vision" for parents in the Head Start program. It states that Head Start's vision for parent involvement is "to create and sustain a partnership with all Head Start parents."

According to this vision statement, some of the most important goals for parent involvement in Head Start are to:

- "support parents as primary educators, nurturers and advocates for their children;
- "provide every parent with opportunities for a significant experience in Head Start; and
- "ensure that parents are involved in making policy and program decisions for their Head Start program."

Most parents come to Head Start because they want to do something good for their children. The motivation to improve the lives of their children is a critical strength that can be built upon to provide meaningful experiences for each family.

Explain that this activity will give participants an opportunity to look at what is meant by the terms educator, nurturer, advocate and policy maker, both from a Head Start perspective and their own experiences.

Give the participants Handout 1, *Understanding the Head Start Vision*. This exercise consists of *Exercise A: Caring for Children*, and *Exercise B: Parent Involvement in Practice*.

Instruct participants to complete Exercise A first. Encourage them to spend at least 15 to 20 minutes brainstorming and to try to come up with at least 15 to 20 items for their list. Then have them move to Exercise B, where they will sort the items from their brainstorming list into categories that match concepts included in Head Start's vision statement.

Module 1

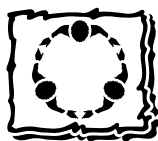
Debriefing

Once participants have completed the activities in Handout 1, ask the following questions:

- What did your parent or family do for you (or, what do caring adults in general do) that stands out as important?
- How has your upbringing influenced your work with Head Start?
- What do you think are the most important ways that parents and other caring adults can be involved with their children?

In closing, emphasize that parent involvement occurs in a variety of ways. It can happen formally and informally – both inside the program and outside the home and community.

Activity 3: The Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement



Purpose: Since parent involvement has always been a key to Head Start, most programs already involve parents in many different ways. This activity provides participants with an opportunity to review Head Start's renewed vision for parent involvement and reflect upon and acknowledge what they are already doing.

Materials

Easel, chart paper, pens, overhead projector, Overhead 2, Handout 2

Process

Introduce the activity by stating that while parent involvement has always been a cornerstone of Head Start, today many programs face new challenges. These challenges may make it difficult to involve parents in meaningful ways. Traditional approaches, such as having parents volunteer in the classroom and serve on Policy Councils, do not reach all parents.

Place Overhead 2 on a projector or write the information on a flip chart. Then read aloud the Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement:

THE HEAD START VISION FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

To create and sustain a partnership and collaboration with all Head Start parents, with goals to

- support parents as primary educators, nurturers and advocates for their children;
- provide every parent with opportunities for a significant experience in Head Start; and,
- ensure that parents are involved in making policy and program decisions for the Head Start program.

State that “involvement” means different things to different people and happens in a variety of ways. To meet the challenge set forth by the vision statement, Head Start programs need to examine the opportunities and strategies they are currently using to involve parents. As a first step in this process, it is important to reflect and recognize all that is currently being done to involve parents. Just as Head Start builds on family strengths, it is important to recognize and build on program strengths.

Provide participants with Handout 2, *The Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement*.

Note that programs can support the goals of the vision statement by operating under the principles that appear on page 1 of the handout. Then read aloud to the group, or have volunteers read aloud, each bulleted principle.

Explain that the handout is organized into three main sections, which reflect the chronological way in which parents experience Head Start:

- Planning and preparation for entry into Head Start;
- Participation in Head Start; and
- Preparing to transition from Head Start.

Tell participants that in this activity, they will be reflecting on how their program reflects these principles.

Divide participants into four groups and assign each group a number (one, two, three or four). Have them move into their groups. Post chart paper near each group that is titled as follows:

Module 1

- **Planning and Preparation for Entry into Head Start:** program development and management; recruitment and enrollment; orientation; family goal setting and planning (Handout 2, pages 3-6).
- **Participation in Head Start:** range of opportunities for participation; parents as educators, caregivers and nurturers of their children (Handout 2, pages 7-9).
- **Participation in Head Start:** parents' personal development, support for parents as partners in decision making for themselves and their program (Handout 2, pages 10-12).
- **Preparing to Transition From Head Start** (Handout 2, pages 13-14).

Direct participants to read their assigned section of Handout 2. You may want to ask for volunteers to read the section aloud in each small group.

After allowing time for reading, ask each group to reflect on how their program already involves parents in relation to their assigned section of Handout 2. Ask for a volunteer in each group to record responses on the chart paper.

Remind the groups that the point of brainstorming is to generate a lot of ideas quickly, not to get caught up in a lengthy discussion of any one point. Allow 10–15 minutes for brainstorming.

Reconvene the large group. Ask for a volunteer from each group to report on its discussions. Each volunteer should, in turn, present a summary of his or her small group's assigned section of the Vision Statement, as well as its list of ways that their program involves parents.

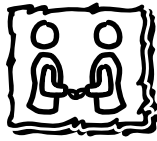
Debriefing

Ask participants to share one or two key ideas that emerged from this activity. The following questions can guide your discussion:

- What did this exercise reveal about what you are already doing to engage parents? Did anything surprise you?
- Has this activity had an effect on how you define parent involvement?
- Did this activity raise any implications for everyday practice?

Close this activity by restating the concept that programs already do much to engage parents. The challenge is to ensure that opportunities are meaningful and reach out to all parents. Note that this challenge will be looked at more closely in Module 2.

Activity 4: The Staff-Parent Connection



Purpose: The experiences of all Head Start staff and parents enrich parent involvement and influence the shape it takes within the program. In this coaching activity, the participants will interview a staff member or experienced parent to help them further understand parent involvement in their program. Participants will use questioning and listening skills.

Materials

Handout 3

Process

Explain that each individual's experience in parent involvement is unique. Staff may have a range of approaches for, and viewpoints on, involving parents. Parents themselves may have other perspectives. This exercise will provide participants with an opportunity to talk with co-workers and parents to gain an in-depth look at how both parties view the partnership they have formed in this program.

Help participants to identify one or more people to interview — staff members and/or parents with experience in Head Start. As participants identify the people they wish to interview, ask them:

- Why do you want to talk to these people in particular?
- What do you hope to learn from these interviews?
- When would be a good time to approach them?

Hand participants Handout 3, *The Staff-Parent Connection in Head Start*. Go over with them the instructions page, which covers:

- Asking to interview
- Starting the interview
- Taking notes
- Summing up what you heard
- Asking for final comments
- Thanking the person
- Taking additional notes as you reflect on the interview

Have participants make copies of the interview sheet for each interview they plan to do. Set up a time to meet again, which gives the participants a “deadline” by which to finish their interviews.

Module 1

Debriefing

Begin discussion by asking participants to reflect on the interview process. What methods did they use to take notes during the interviews? What was hard or easy about the assignment?

Ask the participants:

- How has each individual's experience influenced his or her work with parent involvement in Head Start?
- How do you compare the perspectives of each person you interviewed?
- What would account for any differences in perspective?
- What is the program doing to engage parents?
- What are the program's strengths in terms of parent involvement?
- What are some changes that people see a need for?

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice



Supervisors can encourage and support participants as they begin to apply the key ideas from this module to their day-to-day practice. Examples of activities to extend practice include:

Ask participants to speak with several Head Start parents, both male and female, and ask what they think about when they hear the term “parent involvement.” Compare these responses to those heard in the workshop. Suggest that participants share their research with others who attended the workshop.

Begin to promote Head Start's renewed vision for parent involvement by getting the “word out” to parents. Make copies of Handout 1 for Policy Council members and, as a group, brainstorm strategies for getting the information in this document out to all parents.

Have participants brainstorm strategies that will both convey to and reinforce with parents the important message that they are involved with their children's growth and development whether or not they come into the center for activities and meetings.

Have participants reflect upon themselves as parents. What areas of involvement are their strengths, what would they like to change? What supports do they need to do that?

Handout 3: The Staff-Parent Connection in Head Start

Instructions: Each individual staff person's experience in parent involvement is unique. Staff may have a range of approaches and viewpoints on involving parents. In this activity, you will use interviewing techniques to examine staff support for parent involvement in your Head Start program.

Approach the person you wish to interview at a convenient time (such as during break or during planning or staff development time). Let the person know that you will be asking only three questions, so the interview should not take more than 15 to 20 minutes.

Begin the interview by stating your goal: to learn more about how parent involvement happens in this program. This way, your co-worker will understand your purpose and can help you keep the conversation focused.

Take brief notes as you interview. When you have finished each question, stop to review your notes or add to them. Say, "These are the main points I heard you say." Then summarize what you heard. This gives the person a chance to correct or add to their response.

After you have covered the four questions, ask the person you are interviewing if he or she would like to add anything more. Then thank them for their time. Let them know what you learned from the interview.

Finally, while the conversation is still fresh in your mind, go through your notes once more. Add any important points you remember.

After you have completed all your interviews, meet with your coach to talk over what you have learned.

An interview sheet is provided. Make copies for each interview you plan to do.

STAFF PARENT INTERVIEW SHEET

Instructions: Begin by stating: “Parent involvement has always been an important part of Head Start’s success. I’m trying to learn more about how parent involvement happens in our program. I’d like to ask you a few questions.”

1. What do you think are the strengths of our parent involvement program? What do you think parents find most useful?

2. If we wanted to involve *all* parents, what would need to change about the program?

3. Are there things staff needs to do differently to involve *all* parents?

Individualizing Parent Involvement

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will:

- Interact with children and families using practices and behaviors which promote belonging and invite participation
- Practice adapting parent involvement activities to make them more inviting and accessible for individual parents

Key Concepts

- The Head Start vision statement reaffirms parent involvement as a cornerstone of its programs. It challenges each program to ensure that every parent has the opportunity for a significant experience in Head Start — as educator, nurturer, supporter and/or policy maker.
- One strategy to increase the involvement of all parents is for Head Start staff to individualize parent involvement opportunities. This process can begin by analyzing current program practices to determine if they are:
 1. **Inviting**, that is, are current program practices responsive to a variety of parent interests? and
 2. **Accessible**, that is, are current program practices tailored to meet the diverse needs of families?

Background Information

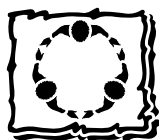
Volunteering in the classroom, attending workshop sessions and serving on the Policy Council are just a few of the traditional opportunities for parent involvement offered by Head Start programs. However, because the interests and needs of Head Start families vary greatly, these activities alone are not enough to involve all parents.

Parents become involved and stay involved for a variety of reasons. What is seen as an inviting and accessible opportunity or activity by one parent may not be so for another. Culture, family traditions, personal beliefs about parenting, the amount of stress facing a family and other demands on parents' time such as work schedules or care of other children, all have an impact on an individual's level of involvement both in the home and in the Head Start center.

Module 2

The challenge is to provide meaningful involvement opportunities for every parent. A first step in beginning to address this challenge, is for programs to analyze their current program practices to determine if they are **inviting** and **accessible**.

Activity 1: Why Become Involved?



Purpose: This brainstorming activity is designed to encourage participants to reflect on *why* individuals become involved and what supports help them stay involved in a program or an activity.

Materials

Easel, chart paper, pens, overhead projector, Overhead 3

Process

Begin by reviewing the key concepts on page 43.

Introduce the purpose of this brainstorming activity and ask participants to reflect for a moment on the following scenario (use Overhead 3):

A new community center has just opened in your area and will be offering different types of programs for children and adults. The community center wants to provide family-focused programs. They have asked for volunteers from the community to help them understand what this means for families in this particular community.

After a moment or two for reflection, ask participants to consider the following questions in light of the scenario:

- What would motivate you to become involved in the center? That is, what would make the community center inviting?
- What could the center do to encourage you to stay involved over time? That is, how can the community center make programs more accessible?

Record participants' responses on a flip chart and post them.

Debriefing

Point out that people become involved and stay involved in a program — whether it is a community center or Head Start program — for a variety of reasons. Some parents become involved because they see benefits for their children. Others become involved because the program meets their own needs as adults. Different parents will choose to become involved in different ways. Often, parents become involved and stay involved because the program meets a variety of their interests and needs. Use examples from the brainstorming to reinforce this point.

Note that the reason why parents become involved, what activities they select to participate in and the intensity of their involvement varies by each individual. Therefore, when tailoring parent involvement opportunities to meet the needs and interests of different parents, the following factors must be considered (use Overhead 4):

Culture. Everyone has a culture. Culture is defined as the knowledge people use to interpret their experiences and to base their interactions with others. Values, priorities and beliefs are rooted in diverse cultures.

- A family's culture and traditions may affect how the parents define involvement, which family member(s) are most actively involved and what types of activities are valued.
- With changing demographics and expansion, more programs are facing the challenge of ensuring that families from all cultures are made to feel part of the Head Start family.

Life Circumstances. Head Start parents face many issues that may affect the degree to which they become involved in the program.

- Mobility, whether it involves migrant families, homeless families or families that move often, requires program staff to modify when and where services are delivered.
- As parents work or attend school, they have less time for volunteering in classrooms or attending meetings at the center. Finding new ways of getting information to parents is a challenge facing many staff members.
- Families experiencing stressful situations such as illness, disability, the birth of a new baby or family disruption may have difficulty seeing what they have in common with other families and be reluctant to join organized activities.
- Parents with younger children or responsibility for elder family members may feel uncomfortable leaving them to participate in Head Start functions.

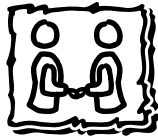
Module 2

- Parents themselves have different developmental needs based on their own age and life experiences and the number and ages of their children.
- Men, including single fathers, often need special encouragement to participate in programs that focus on their children.

Invite participants for input on what cultural or life circumstance issues are particularly important to address in their community.

Conclude by stating that what seems inviting and accessible for one parent, may not seem so to another. To increase parent involvement may require programs to review not only what opportunities they provide but how inviting and accessible those activities are perceived to be by parents with diverse interests and needs.

Activity 2: Working Effectively with Parents



Purpose: Head Start staff work hard to maintain an environment that promotes meaningful involvement for all parents. This requires that they continually examine their own interpersonal approaches. In this coaching activity, staff will reflect honestly about themselves by completing an inventory of their personal competencies in working effectively with parents. Participants will use writing and critical thinking skills.

Materials

Handout 4

Trainer Preparation Notes:

This activity requires the participants to be honest about themselves. Thus, establishing trust is very important. As coach, ensure participants that their responses in this activity will be respected and kept confidential. If you are successful in building trust, participants will be willing to take personal risks to share about themselves and be open with their ideas. And, you will be modeling the trust relationship that can form between staff and parents.

Process

Distribute Handout 4, *Working Effectively with Parents - Personal Competencies Checklist*. Talk up front about the specific strengths that you have seen in the participants' dealings with parents. Share any ideas from self assessments that you have done in the past and how those assessments were helpful to you.

Make sure the participants understand the ranking task by practicing on sample questions such as, "I can fix cars" or "I can cook many different kinds of delicious meals."

Encourage the participants to think about all of their contacts with parents in the program when responding to each statement.

Direct participants to complete the exercise at a time when they have privacy and can concentrate.

Debriefing

Ask participants for their reactions to having to evaluate themselves. Have them describe the experience — was it difficult? revealing? fun?

Discuss these questions with the participants:

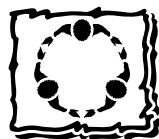
- Why are these competencies important? That is, how do they help staff meet parents' interests and needs?
- What are your strengths?
- Did you identify some places where you need support or more information?

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Ask participants if they would be willing to repeat this exercise at a future date, after they have had a chance to work on specific competencies (for example, in three months). If they are agreeable, mark your calendar. At that future meeting, have participants review the checklist and explain to you what they have done to increase skills in the areas where they had previously given themselves lower marks.

Module 2

Activity 3: Analyzing Activities



Purpose: This activity will provide participants with an opportunity to identify elements that make parent involvement activities inviting and accessible.

Materials

Easel, chart paper, markers, Handout 5

Process

Introduce this activity by drawing from the Background Information for this Module (page 59). Stress that any contacts — whether a brief chat or an activity — that staff members have with parents can make them feel that Head Start is inviting and accessible.

Divide participants into small groups of six to eight. Ask for one person in each group to volunteer to lead the group and record responses. Provide each person with copies of Handout 5, *Looking at Head Start from the Parents' Point of View*.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Preview ahead of time the stories in Handout 5. If the characters and situations do not match well with the reality of your program, then create a new set of stories that better reflect your program's context.

Post the following questions on chart paper so they are visible for all groups to see:

- If you were the parent in this story, would you find the opportunity at Head Start inviting? accessible?
- Are there other parents you can think of who would not find this inviting? accessible?
- How might the opportunity be adapted to make it more inviting and accessible to more parents?

Have each group's volunteer select and read aloud one story and then use the questions above to organize a discussion.

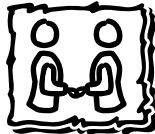
Encourage the small groups to discuss all four stories if time permits. Limit total discussion time to about 20-25 minutes.

Debriefing

Reconvene the large group. Ask each of the small group volunteers to stand and recap one of their story discussions.

After each group has responded, ask the group at large to reflect on the different ideas that came out of the small group discussions and to identify some common principles or strategies that make opportunities inviting and accessible.

Activity 4: Strengthening Parent Involvement



Purpose: As staff work to provide opportunities for all parents, they need to continually examine their contributions to program practices. In this coaching activity, staff will take a realistic look at specific program activities and choose one to analyze for ways to make it more accessible and inviting for parents. Participants will use critical thinking and writing skills.

Materials

Handout 6

Process

Explain that parent involvement in Head Start occurs in many different ways at many different moments. The Head Start Vision Statement can be used as a framework to “take stock” of their program’s many different opportunities for parent involvement; analyze these practices; develop ideas to improve them; and share these ideas with other program staff.

Distribute Handout 6, *Parent Involvement Inventory*. Review the factors (below and on the instructions page of the handout) that affect how inviting and accessible the program is for families.

Factors having to do with *Life Circumstances* may include:

- Mobility (such as for migrant or homeless families)
- Work and school schedules
- Illness, disability or other physical factors affecting families
- Family disruption (such as divorce, separation or death)

Module 2

- Life stages of family members (for example, whether they are teen parents or grandparents)
- Finances

Factors having to do with *Culture* may include:

- Values and belief systems
- Language
- Customs and community expectations
- Family structures and roles
- Practices and preferences

Instruct participants to complete Exercise A, *Parent Involvement Inventory Worksheet*. Participants are to finish the statement with an example of how parent involvement is encouraged in their program. Go over the example with participants, and talk them through possible ways to complete the first several sentences. Suggest that if they are not sure how to complete a statement, they should skip over it and return to it later. Note that there is space at the bottom of the form for listing program strengths that do not seem to “fit” into any one statement.

Direct participants to go to Exercise B, *Building On Our Parent Involvement Strengths*, only after they have completed all of Exercise A. In this exercise, participants take a deeper look at one statement from the inventory to determine the challenges to success in that area and to brainstorm on possible solutions.

Encourage them to think freely and not to worry about how “impossible” their ideas might be. The point here is to practice identifying challenges and seeking solutions. As all staff develop and feel free to use this skill, they can exchange ideas, mull over the options, select the ideas that are worth trying and work, as a group, toward those goals.

As a final step, direct participants to ask for feedback on their ideas from at least two other staff members.

Debriefing

Begin by stating that what seems inviting and accessible for one parent may not seem so to another. To increase parent involvement, the program has to take a look at the opportunities they already provide *and also* think about how inviting and accessible those activities are perceived to be by parents with diverse interests and needs.

Ask participants:

- Is the program providing meaningful ways for participation by *all* family members?
- Did you find the brainstorming a useful technique for identifying challenges to parent involvement, and ways to address those challenges?
- What ideas for strengthening parent involvement did you come up with that you think are workable? How did your colleagues respond to those ideas? What should you do next to pursue these ideas? Who would need to be involved? What resources would you need?
- How could you use the brainstorming skills practiced here for future reflection and planning?

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice



Supervisors can encourage and support the transfer of ideas in this module from the training situation into practice. Some activities to extend practice are as follows:

Ask participants to become their own researchers. Have participants ask two or three parents what they think make opportunities inviting and accessible in your program (be sure that they ask the opinion both of parents whom they feel are involved as well as those they wish to involve more). What would make the opportunities even more inviting and accessible? Then have participants compare their findings to those of other participants gathering the same information. Are there any trends or issues creating common barriers to participation that should be addressed by staff?

Module 2

Select one or two parent involvement opportunities that did not reach as many parents as you had hoped (for example, a meeting that took a lot of time and effort to prepare but drew few participants). At a staff meeting, analyze this activity by either applying the common principles that emerged from Activity 3 or asking:

- How many of our parents would find this opportunity inviting? accessible?
- How could we change or adapt it to meet more parents' interests and needs?
- How can we get more information from parents about their interests and needs?

Review the attendance records for your recent activities (for example, over the past three months) and ask:

- Are there some parents we reach repeatedly? Are there some who do not participate?
- Are there some trends we should consider? For example, are most of our opportunities meetings offered at times inconvenient to working parents?

Have all staff complete the personal competencies checklist and use it as a basis for discussion of common staff development needs.

A new community center has just opened in your area and will be offering different types of programs for children and adults. The community center wants to provide family-centered programs. They have asked for volunteers from the community to help them understand what this means for families in this particular community.

To make parent involvement opportunities
inviting and accessible, consider:

- Culture
- Life circumstances

Module 2: Individualizing Parent Involvement

Handout 4: Working Effectively with Parents — Personal Competencies Checklist

Introduction: Encouraging parents to get involved requires you to use many different interpersonal skills. It can be very rewarding when your personal and professional abilities help you to effectively engage a family that had not participated before.

There are several abilities, or **competencies**, that can help you work successfully with people of different cultures, traditions and experiences. These abilities are related to each other but each one is important in its own right. They are listed in the checklist below. By going through this checklist, you can gain a sense of your own strengths and can determine those areas where you see a need for personal and program staff development.

Instructions: Allow yourself time and personal space for honest reflection. You will not have to show your completed form to anyone else.

For each item on the checklist, rate yourself using the following scale:

1 = I need much more training and support in this area

2 = I need a little more training and support in this area

3 = I am good in this area

4 = I am very good in this area

- 1 2 3 4 1. I am able to understand the thoughts, attitudes and experiences of many different parents.
- 1 2 3 4 2. I recognize that my point of view may not be shared by parents.
- 1 2 3 4 3. I reflect on my thoughts, feelings, and stress level in order to stay calm and focused in my work to involve families.
- 1 2 3 4 4. I treat parents as individuals and recognize that everyone belongs to many groups and no one represents a whole group.
- 1 2 3 4 5. I am able to stop myself from judging parents negatively.
- 1 2 3 4 6. I am able to pay close attention to what is being said by parents, both through what they say (verbally) and how they behave (nonverbally).
- 1 2 3 4 7. I am able to observe parents' behavior and understand the meaning of that behavior (non-verbal messages).
- 1 2 3 4 8. I am able to see the many different points of view that exist in my work with parents.
- 1 2 3 4 9. I am able to respond to unpredictable situations without becoming stressed.

-
- 1 2 3 4 10. I am able to adapt quickly to changing family situations.
- 1 2 3 4 11. I am able to stay calm, collected and persistent in trying situations.
- 1 2 3 4 12. I am able to be resourceful and respond skillfully in my contacts with parents of different cultures.
- 1 2 3 4 13. I am able to laugh at myself and find humor and irony in life.
- 1 2 3 4 14. I am able to act in a respectful manner toward parents who are different from me.

Adapted from the Multicultural Training Model by Dr. Mikel Hogan-Garcia, California State University at Fullerton © 1990.

When you have completed the inventory, think about the following:

1. What two or three items are your strengths?
2. Are there competencies on which you would like more training, information or support?
3. How do your strengths and support needs compare with those of other staff in the program?

Finally, meet with your coach to discuss your ideas.

Module 2: Individualizing Parent Involvement

Handout 5: Looking at Head Start from the Parents' Point of View

Story #1 AL'S STORY

I'm a single, working father. I've seen my daughter Rochelle blossom since she started Head Start this year. That makes me feel good about the program. A staff member called me yesterday and asked me to become a Policy Council member. She said it was the best way for parents to become involved. I feel good that she asked me but I'm shy in groups, especially since I'm usually the only man. I'm also worried about the meetings. I hardly have time to spend with Rochelle as it is.

Story #2 JUANITA'S STORY

My name is Juanita. My life seems to get crazier everyday. My teenage daughter is pregnant. I'm behind on my rent and worried about getting evicted. I need to work or go to school because of changes in the welfare system. I'm beginning to be concerned about the number of pills I'm taking to control my back pain.

I'm not new to Head Start. I started in the program when my older daughter was a preschooler but because of the many moves we made that year, I didn't continue. I'd really like my son Ernesto to have the benefits of the program. My neighbor is a teacher's aide and encouraged me to enroll him. Now she wants me to volunteer in the classroom. She says parents need to be involved. She also said that I'd learn a lot about Ernesto by being a volunteer. I want what's best for Ernesto but I'm feeling overwhelmed.

Story #3 YURIKO'S STORY

My name is Yuriko. I'm twenty and have been in a wheelchair for four years now, ever since my Sammi was a toddler. I know it's hard for him to have a mother that's different. Sometimes he takes it out on me. He's gotten better since he's been in Head Start. Having him go to the center every day gives us some time apart. Recently, the home visitor has been talking to me about coming into the center for some parent activities. She said she could help me find transportation. I'd like to get out of the house. Not too many of my friends come around anymore. I'm just not sure if the center is where I want to go.

Story #4 PORNTIP'S STORY

I just moved here from Thailand, so I had never even heard of Head Start until my aunt told me about it. It sounded like something I might want for my daughter Malee. I want her to make friends here and to learn English. After my aunt talked to me, I was at the laundromat and saw a poster for the local Head Start program. The poster was really faded, and none of the children looked like my daughter. Even so, I called the number on the poster. The lady who answered the phone wasn't very friendly. I think she couldn't understand my English. Maybe Head Start isn't the right place for my daughter.

Module 2: Individualizing Parent Involvement

Handout 6: Parent Involvement Inventory

Introduction: Several factors affect the ability of parents to become involved.

Factors having to do with *Life Circumstances* may include:

- Mobility (such as for migrant or homeless families)
- Work and school schedules
- Illness, disability or other physical factors affecting families
- Family disruption (such as divorce, separation or death)
- Life stages of family members (for example, whether they are teen parents or grandparents)
- Finances

Factors having to do with *Culture* may include:

- Values and belief systems
- Language
- Customs and community expectations
- Family structures and roles
- Practices and preferences

This two-part exercise will help you think about the different ways that your program implements parent involvement. It will also help you look carefully at one parent involvement activity, to determine what challenges may stand in the way of success, and to come up with some ideas for overcoming those challenges. Please keep the above factors in mind as you do the exercises.

Exercise A: Parent Involvement Inventory Worksheet

Instructions: Exercise A will help you identify your program's strengths in terms of parent involvement. Each statement represents an idea contained in the Head Start Vision for Parent Involvement. Complete each statement, as shown in the example at the top of the page. There is space at the end of the exercise to list program strengths that don't neatly fit in with one of the statements. Fill in all of the blank lines before moving to Exercise B.

Example:

We support families facing challenges by _____ holding orientations at convenient locations
such as clinics and community centers.

Vision

1. We support families facing challenges by _____

2. We build on each parent's strengths and interests by _____

3. We involve all staff in parent involvement by _____

4. We identify barriers to parent involvement by _____

Opportunities

5. We support parents as primary educators by _____

6. We support parents as nurturers by _____

8. We involve parents as advocates by _____

Strategies

9. During recruitment we show families what is unique in Head Start by _____

10. In orientation we build on parents' interests by _____

11. We use screening and assessment to support parents by _____

12. We involve parents in program decision making by _____

13. We support families in transition by _____

Other Ways We Support Parents

By _____

By _____

By _____

Exercise B: Building On Our Parent Involvement Strengths

Instructions: Look over Exercise A and pick one of your program’s strengths to look at in greater depth. Write that statement in the box at the top of the worksheet. Then, in the boxes below, list some of the possible challenges to success in that area. In the next set of boxes, put down your ideas for overcoming each challenge. In the “?” sections of the worksheet, put down any questions that would need to be answered before the program could carry out your ideas.

Part of a sample worksheet has been filled out for you. Use this as a guide only. The point here is to brainstorm, to think freely. That way you can come up with a whole list of possible action plans. When you have finished the worksheet, ask one or two co-workers for their feedback. Record their comments under “Feedback.”

Finally, meet with your coach to talk over what you have learned.

SAMPLE WORKSHEET**Parent Involvement Activity:**

We support families facing challenges by holding orientations at convenient locations such as clinics and community centers.

CHALLENGES	IDEAS
1. Some parents are working or too busy to come.	Videotape orientation so parents can watch it on their own time. Hold orientations in the evening or on weekends.
2. Some parents don't speak English.	Find translators (clinic staff, H.S. program staff, parents?) Encourage parents to bring family members who can translate for them. Make videotapes of orientation in different languages.

WORKSHEET

Parent Involvement Strengths:

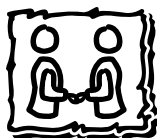
CHALLENGES	IDEAS	?	FEEDBACK

- How could we use this inventory with others from the Head Start community, such as parents and other community members?
- How could we make that happen?

Trainer Preparation Notes:

If there is interest in repeating the inventory with others from the Head Start community, enlist volunteers for a committee to help organize that activity.

Activity 4: **Shadowing**



Purpose: It is difficult in the day-to-day rush of program life to stop, take stock and appreciate the role that other staff members play in the lives of children and parents in the program. In this coaching activity, participants will do just that by following and observing staff as they interact with parents. Participants will use observation and writing skills.

Materials

Handout 9

Process

Distribute Handout 9, *Shadowing*, to participants. Explain that this is an opportunity to focus on the ways that different staff members work to involve parents in the program. From this exercise, participants can get a better sense of their own role in the staff team, and they can also discover many ideas and techniques for involving parents that they might want to adopt.

Explain that “shadowing” means they will be a silent partner with a staff member for a brief time: going wherever that person goes, watching what he or she does, observing the results, taking notes and, finally, discussing what they observed with the staff member.

Go over a staff list with the participants. Help them select one or two staff members that they would like to shadow. The shadowing should be of staff members at times and places where they can be observed talking or working with parents.

Continuing Professional Development



The information and activities presented in this guide are just the first steps in building the capacity of all Head Start staff to strengthen parent participation by making opportunities for involvement more accessible and inviting. To support staff in transferring training into practice, here are some suggested next steps you may wish to consider:

Coursework at Community Education Programs

You can encourage staff members to add to their skills and knowledge base with formal learning that takes place outside the Head Start program. While few institutions of higher education offer courses specifically on “parent involvement,” there are related areas of study that staff might find helpful, including:

- Child and family development
- Working with family systems
- Strategies for working with adult learners
- Stress in family systems
- Basic level counseling courses

You can encourage this kind of continuing education by keeping a collection of current course catalogs from local community education programs, community colleges, colleges and universities and other centers of learning. That collection would also need to contain information on financial aid, scholarships and other sources of tuition support.

As you look to advise staff, you will find a natural link between the skills emphasized in many of the coaching activities (i.e., writing, interviewing, critical thinking) and the skills that are developed through Adult Basic Education, GED or entry level college course work. Collaborate with the adult and continuing education providers in your community to integrate Head Start training activities into their curriculum. The result will be a focused and applied training that enables staff to acquire credentials while building their capabilities at work. This will also give outside educational institutions a chance to benefit from Head Start training.

Skill-Building through Other Agency Programs

Seminars and conferences sponsored by agencies outside of Head Start — such as agencies involved in family preservation, welfare, business or mental health — also provide opportunities for staff to continue training in areas related to parent involvement. Such groups may provide training in such areas as:

Continuing Professional Development

- Basic communication skills, especially interviewing and listening techniques
- Conflict resolution
- Managing stress to avoid burnout

As with the suggestion above, leadership would need to be provided in terms of promoting the availability of such programs and helping staff as needed to apply and to finance their attendance.

Working Collaboratively With Other Agencies

Since parent involvement has always been a cornerstone of Head Start, staff and parents have a lot of expertise to offer other programs. In turn, other programs and agencies working with families (often the same families) have their own expertise to offer Head Start. Encourage staff to forge connections with other community agencies, and help them to search out and discover such opportunities. Provide staff time to sit on other agency boards, make presentations to their staff or offer to participate on joint planning committees.

In addition, invite key personnel from outside agencies and community leaders to participate in Head Start functions or to provide staff training. By building cooperative and collaborative relationships between your staff and other leaders in the community, you will be providing natural “cross-training” opportunities that can only increase the wealth of knowledge and expertise within your organization.

Peer Support Groups

Once staff members have had their interest and energy ignited by the exercises in this training guide, they may welcome the idea of forming a group that meets informally, on a regular basis, to talk over key issues in parent involvement. In particular, staff working directly — and intensely — with families may need this kind of ongoing support to prevent burnout.

Establish peer support groups with an experienced supervisor or facilitator so staff have an opportunity to continue gaining other perspectives as they adapt and modify their efforts to engage parents. The members of the support group should be the ones to decide, as a group, their rules of operation, agenda, schedule of meetings and level of formality. (In fact, these particulars may evolve over time rather than be “decided.”) Groups can use their time together to discuss general parent involvement issues or to deal with the immediate concerns and issues facing members.

Training and information needs are often varied. The following is a suggested list of resources and materials that provide additional information about engaging parents. It's important to note that these are just some of the many materials and resources available and not a comprehensive list. The materials and resources listed were selected on the basis of relevance, readability, availability and cost. The Head Start Bureau, Regional Offices, Training and Technical Assistance network and fellow grantees are also a source of information and strategies in your efforts to engage all families.

Head Start Materials

Please refer to your catalog for ordering information.

Head Start Parent Involvement: Vision, Opportunities and Strategies.

A Head Start Handbook of Parent Involvement Strategies.

Head Start Multicultural Principles.

Head Start Bulletin, No. 47. September/October, 1993.

Children Today magazine. Vol. 22, No. 3, 1993. Published by the Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services. See articles, "Serving Homeless Children" and "Interviews with Head Start Parents."

Engaging Every Head Start Parent in Meaningful Program Experiences (video). Parent Involvement Institute, Douglas R. Powell, speaker.

Partnership With Parents (video and user's guide).

Other Materials and Resources

Ash, Carolyn (1994). *Working with African American Families: A Guide to Resources*. Family Resource Coalition, 200 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1520, Chicago, IL 60604. 100 pages, \$25 members, \$35 non-members. This expandable loose-leaf guide offers a one-stop resource that includes annotated references, highlights useful books, articles, curricula and national and local organizations and contains a comprehensive appendices. The special FRC Report, "It Takes A Whole Village to Raise A Child," is included. A wealth of information included in one place.

Resources

Powell, Douglas R. (July 1991). *Strengthening Parental Contributions to School Readiness and Early School Learning*. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. (ED 340467), 75 pages. This paper provides a review and synthesis of research pertaining to implementation of the National Goal for Education calling for parents to prepare their children for school success. It examines research regarding the following major questions:

- To what extent do parent practices and beliefs in the early years contribute to children's success in school?
- To what extent are desired parent practices carried out by parents?
- How do parents view the task of preparing their child for school?

Levine, James A., Dennis T. Murphy, and Sherrill Wilson (1993). *Getting Men Involved - Strategies for Early Childhood Programs*. Scholastic Inc., Early Childhood Division, 730 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003. 96 pages, \$12.95. Telephone 1-800-SCHOLASTIC. Based on the work and research of The Fatherhood Project of the Families and Work Institute of New York, this how-to guidebook provides a concrete understanding of thinking about the development of male involvement initiatives in early childhood programs. Strategies are provided that were found to be successful in other programs across the country, some of which can be implemented quickly. One of the most valuable aspects of the guide are the descriptions of fourteen exemplary model programs. These programs represent a wide cultural diversity and offer suggestions that are real and concrete. The guidebook ends with a comprehensive set of resources that includes books for different ethnic groups and materials for professionals, organizations and programs involving fathers and other men for information, support and networking.

Nickel, Phyllis Smith and Holly Delany. *Working with Teen Parents - A Survey of Promising Approaches* (1985). Family Resource Coalition, 200 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1520, Chicago, IL 60604. 139 pages, \$12. Telephone (312) 341-0900. This volume walks the reader through solutions which programs have found effective in working with teen parents. Highlights include ideas for ensuring teen participation, selecting and training volunteers, building community capacity for teen services and pregnancy prevention efforts. A directory of programs is provided.

Resource Organizations and Clearinghouses

ASPIRA Association, Inc. A national Hispanic education leadership development organization, ASPIRA administers national parent involvement demonstration projects in Hispanic communities. Publications and brochures for parents are also published in Spanish and English. 1112 16th Street, N.W., Suite 340, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 835-3600.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. ERIC-EECE is a decentralized nationwide information system. It is the largest education-related database in the world. The Elementary and Early Childhood Center collects and disseminates information on parenting, child development and child care. ERIC/EECE has a variety of special projects, including Parents Ask ERIC. A free biannual newsletter is available. ERIC/EECE, University of Illinois, 805 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801-4897. 1-800-583-4135.

Family Resource Coalition (FRC). FRC is a national membership organization dedicated to communicating the premise, promise and practice of family support. FRC maintains an extensive publications catalog and the largest database on family support programs. The Coalition also operates the National Resource Center for Family Support Programs. 200 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1520, Chicago, IL 60604. (312) 341-0900.

Grandparent Information Center. Operated by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the Center provides information about programs, support groups, service interventions, research activities and resources available across the country to help grandparents cope with their surrogate parent roles. 601 E. St., N.W., Washington, DC 20049. (202) 434-2277.

Hispanic Policy Development Project (HPDP). HPDP is a nonprofit organization that encourages the analysis of public and private policies and policy proposals affecting U.S. Hispanics. HPDP publishes a series of publications in English and Spanish especially for parents. 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 538, Washington, D.C. 20036. (202) 822-8414.

Resources

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC publishes materials on all aspects of child development and early childhood education, including parent involvement. 1509 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-1426. (202) 232-8777 or 1-800-424-2460.

National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI). NBCDI is a national organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for African American children and youth. The organization offers programs, workshops, publications and communication services. 1023 15th Street, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20005. (202) 387-1281.

National Coalition of Advocates for Students (NCASE). NCASE is a foundation-funded network of experienced child advocacy organizations that work to improve access to quality education for all students, particularly those who are poor, members of racial/linguistic minorities, recently immigrated, and/or physically challenged. They have published *New Voices: Immigrant Students in U.S. Public Schools* (1988) and *The Good Common School: Making the Vision Work for All Children* (1991). 100 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116. (617) 8507.

National Council of La Raza (NCLR). This research and advocacy organization works on behalf of the Latino population. NCLR's Project EXCEL is a national education demonstration project which includes tutoring services and parental education. 810 First Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20002. (202) 289-1380.

National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA). This organization advocates for the needs of Indian children and Indian child welfare programs across the country. It publishes curriculums, training manuals and parenting aids, maintains a database of tribes and ICW programs and houses a comprehensive library of Indian child welfare materials. Among its publications are *Cross-Cultural Skills in Indian Child Welfare*, a guide for the Non-Indian providing background information about Indian culture and describing culturally appropriate helping approaches (\$12.50), and *Positive Indian Parenting: Honoring our Children by Honoring our Traditions, A Model Indian Parent Training Manual* (\$40). 3611 S.W. Hood St., #201, Portland, OR 97201. (503) 222-4044.