Parents in education (PIE)

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Parents in education (PIE)

Abstract

"I want to be part of my child's life, all parts of it. I want to help decide things at school, not just be there to help with work that is sent home, but really involved in the school and the decisions about the education my child gets." (D. Schnuelle, personal communication, April 2000) This is the voice of just one parent, but these sentiments and concerns echo many parents. School involvement and making decisions with the administration and faculty is an important part of a parent's responsibility to the school and the children. How do we, as educators, allow families to be equal contributors in schools and the decision-making process?
Parents in Education
(PIE)

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by
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Degree of Master of Arts in Education

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Introduction and Literature Review

"I want to be part of my child's life, all parts of it. I want to help decide things at school, not just be there to help with work that is sent home, but really involved in the school and the decisions about the education my child gets." (D. Schnuelle, personal communication, April 2000) This is the voice of just one parent, but these sentiments and concerns echo many parents. School involvement and making decisions with the administration and faculty is an important part of a parent's responsibility to the school and the children. How do we, as educators, allow families to be equal contributors in schools and the decision-making process?

Epstein (1985), along with Green of NEA Today (2000), designed a blueprint for action. The blueprint is designed to create a school-family partnership. This plan brings parents into the schools through: volunteering in the school, learning at home, participating in the decision-making process, collaborating with teachers, collaborating with the community, and communicating between home and school. Using this blueprint, families and schools are able to successfully build a partnership between all parties involved. These six components for bringing parents into the schools (listed above) can provide a framework in which to organize a unique partnership within the school.

Jones (2001), also states six types of activities schools used to involve families and communities. They are: (1) parent education activities, (2) communication activities between families and schools, (3) volunteer opportunities, (4) at-home learning activities, (5) decision-making opportunities and, (6) community collaborations (p.23). These six components, similar to Epstein's (1985) and Green's (2000), can be incorporated into a program that one creates for an individual school.

Swap (1993) developed a model based on partnership. Based on her research, Swap feels partnerships hold the most promise for transforming information, rather than transmitting knowledge. Swap explains further that schools cannot simply inform parents on effective strategies for a partnership, but families
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and schools must work together in this collaboration. Partnerships are more apt to be developed when teachers acknowledge families and what is important to them. The information educators acquire from parents facilitates establishment of a partnership with families in which teachers and families share responsibility for the nurturing and education of children. The Partnership model describes an alliance between parents and educators to encourage the success of all children in school. According to Swap, a partnership has a very specific meaning that encompasses long-term commitments, mutual respect, widespread involvement of families and educators in many levels of activities, and sharing of planning and decision-making responsibilities. Specific training and staff development is an essential investment in any partnership. Partnerships need to be flexible and specific for each individual school (Reading Today, 1998). Recognizing the value of flexibility, programs need to be designed so each school can effectively develop a relationship between the school and its families. Having a foundation that incorporates families in a variety of situations is essential when developing a partnership.

Bennett (1986) found the role of parents to be crucial for learning: “Parents are their children’s first and most influential teachers. What parents do to help their children learn is more important to academic success than how well-off the family is.” (p. 10) Parents play an essential role in any child’s life. According to Snodgrass (1991), “Parents often assume that the public school will take the place of the home in effecting their children’s growth, but research does not support this assumption” (p.83). When a child enters school, a parent’s role remains important, but takes on a different form. Families need to be active in their child’s academic career. While parents often recognize the value of their children being successful in school, they often do not realize the crucial role they play in their children’s academic achievement (Snodgrass). Often it is difficult to incorporate families and schools into a family involvement program that truly involves families in the process of developing a program. However, incorporating families into the schools can benefit everyone. Educators work diligently to provide opportunities for parents to participate in
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schools and their child's education (Workman & Gage, 1997). Educators plan parent teacher conferences at least one time during the year. Report cards are sent home. Parents volunteer to help with field trips or special events. Parents are invited to performances given by the students. Weekly newsletters tell parents of activities and events happening in the class, important dates parents need to remember, plus suggested activities that parents can do at home to help their child. These activities are labeled “family involvement.” However, family involvement should not be limited to volunteering at school or attending school-sponsored events (Barbour, 1999). Parent involvement programs, such as those listed above, do not typically allow for a partnership between families and schools to take place. Ideally, a partnership brings the community of adults together to work toward a common goal, helping students succeed.

A correlation between family involvement/school partnerships and student achievement has been found. When families become involved in their child’s education positive results are achieved (Stolcklinski & Miller-Colbert, 1991) such as: (1) higher academic achievement (e.g., Becher, 1984; Benson, Medrigh, & Buckley, 1980; Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee, 1989; Henderson, 1987); (2) student sense of well-being (Cochran, 1987); (3) improved student school attendance (Haynes et al.); (4) student and parent perceptions of classroom and school climate (Haynes et al.); (5) positive student attitudes and behavior (Becher; Henderson, Marburger, & Ooms, 1986; Leler, 1983); (6) student readiness to do homework (Rich); (7) increased student time spent with parents (Rich, 1988); (8) better student grades (Henderson et al.); (9) higher educational aspirations among students and parents (McDill, Rigsby, & Meyers, 1969); and (10) parent satisfaction with teachers (Epstein; Rich). Great benefits occur when families and teachers communicate and collaborate together and become involved in the education of children (Green, 2000).

Programs have been initiated that bring the research into practice. The question remains, How do we, as schools, create an environment for families to be
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equal contributors in schools and the decision-making process? The answer lies in a careful review of specific programs. The following programs were designed to increase parental involvement. These programs encourage families to participate in each child's learning. Programs such as these allow for families to be a part of their child's academic life, but more often, these programs are ones that teach parents instead of allowing the families and schools to equally contribute to a partnership. Teaching parents often is an ineffective way to bring them into the school as an equal partner. Parents can contribute much more effectively when everyone works together. Following is a description of several programs. These programs, although sound good in theory, often do not incorporate Jones (2001) and Epstein's (1985) six required program components that are needed for an effective partnership to occur.

**FAST (Families And Schools Together):** FAST is a program in which parents are empowered by using structured activities creating rituals that families share as a unit. These three-hour sessions are filled with activities based on family togetherness and centered around an evening meal that builds the family bond. Activities involved in the FAST program are: FAST hello, scribbles, feeling charades, parent meeting, kid time, and closing. The parent meeting allows for parents to discuss problems or successes that their family has had. This activity, along with the others, aide in resisting the temptation of substance abuse for the parent as well as the children. Families participate in activities where the boundaries between children and parents are separate. FAST develops a consistent routine for each week of the eight-week program. FAST provides experiences for families in a safe environment with positive influences. At the end of the program, the families are presented with a list of affirmations. These statements affirm the parents and the positive things that the parents are doing with their children. Parents' self confidence is built using these affirmations. Families graduate from the program when they successfully complete the eight-week commitment (McDonald, 1998).

Although the underlying purpose of FAST is to empower the caregiver of the
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family, deficits exist in the program. As was cited in the beginning, an effective partnership between families and schools include six types of activities. FAST incorporates the criteria for parental involvement through parent education activities and communication activities between families and schools. Barbour (1999) suggests that families should not be limited in their involvement to school-sponsored events. FAST, however, only involves events that are school-sponsored.

Programs often want to help parents, but more often they confirm parents' insecurities about themselves and their knowledge of education. Reading Today (1998) states that having a program that is flexible and diverse would allow for an effective partnership. The FAST program does not provide the diversity which is critical in a parent involvement program. While deCarvalho (2001) found an important issue when dealing with family-school programs is equity, parents are not considered an equal contributor in the FAST program. This program is one that was designed for at-risk families that need help with parenting skills. FAST allows parents to bring important issues to the parent meeting, however the families are kept to a timeframe and an agenda within the complete program. FAST possesses components that enable families to become empowered by the effective parenting skills that are addressed by the program and their fellow peers. FAST does not possess several key elements (parent education activities, communication activities between families and school, volunteer opportunities, at-home learning activities, decision-making opportunities, & community collaborations) that leads to the development of an effective partnership.

**FIT (Families in Training):** This New Jersey program comes in a kit for workshops that teachers can facilitate for parents. The kit is complete with forms and scripts, overhead transparencies and handouts, and various ideas for parents on the issues of homework and self esteem. The kit contains useful resources on how to conduct workshops for parents. These workshops range from a one-hour meeting to a three-hour workshop for parents.

In this program, teachers present strategies to help with homework and to
build the self-esteem of the students. These strategies often result in parental involvement through homeroom moms and dads and the Parent-Teacher Association. Carfago (1998) states that everything is manageable with this program. However, all-inclusive programs, such as FIT, can become problematic for many.

Programs, such as FIT, are often more like meetings that inform parents on proper methods of teaching their child, and they are consequently saying that parents do not know and are not doing the right things (Dillon, 1989). This program does not meet the needs of children and parents because it has prepackaged content designed to provide parents with information. Pape (1999) concurs with Dillon that informational meetings are not full programs. He suggests that teachers give parents a set of activities and ideas they can use at home to help their children. When programs are generalized, they often do not fit the needs of an individual classroom, the school, or the families involved in the school (Shockley et al, 1995). Out of the six recommended types of activities schools should use to involve families and communities, only four are used through FIT: parent education activities, volunteer opportunities, communication activities between families and schools, and at-home learning activities. Yet parents want to be and should be an equal contributor in the development of a family involvement program which would require decision-making opportunities and community collaboration.

Read, Write, Now: Read, Write, Now encourages children to read during the summer months and also encourages adults in the community to read with a child at least 20 minutes each week. Read, Write, Now assists children that come from disadvantaged homes. Taking this program a step further, Read, Write, Now initiated an additional program that extends into the school year called America Goes Back To School. America Goes Back To School is a program that encourages parents, grandparents, and other community leaders to assist in schools. All are welcome to help in the schools. When children see community members in the school helping with their education the premise is that the children will feel important
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and in turn want to try harder to do well in school. Students will become aware that one person can make a difference if they see the school personnel welcoming the community into the school (Riley, 1995). Read, Write, Now and America Goes Back To School are programs that allow and empower the community to become involved in the lives of children.

Although these programs sound good in theory, much energy is put into the development of these programs. A quality parental involvement program includes parent education activities, communication activities between families and school, volunteer opportunities, at-home learning activities, decision-making opportunities, and community collaborations. The Read, Write, Now and America Goes Back To School programs include parental involvement activities and community collaborations, but do not include all six crucial components. Learning at-home activities and working together in the decision making process are two equally important types of involvement that are not found within Read, Write, Now nor within America Goes Back To School. Read, Write, Now and America Goes Back To School are programs that incorporate the community in the schools and with the students in volunteer opportunities, but much is missing from these programs to effectively call them partnerships.

**CHILD-PACs (Children's Hands-On Integrated Learning Discoveries-Parents as Co-Partners):** This program is an approach in which learning takes place at home. Children take home a bag with various games and activities. These learning center bags are innovative ways to promote positive interaction for busy families. Games and activities are centered around a particular home activity such as bath time, bed time, or travel time. The bags are explained to families during a home visit or an evening parent meeting. The bags also include evaluations and journals which allow the parents to comment and suggest alternative ways to use the bags. Families are able to be involved by supplying materials to fill the bags through donations of games, toys, and/or books. The bags are meant to promote family time and have received much success within the community
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(Patton, 1987). Rich (1994) comments that a greater closeness is achieved as well as a stronger education for students when activities are sent home. The activities that are used within this program are: parent education activities, communication activities between schools and families, and at-home learning activities.

This program, however, allows for no partnership between the families and schools. Although it is stated in the six key principles on effective partnerships between home and school that learning at home is essential, this model does not promote other key principles for effective partnerships. This model allows for little interaction between families and schools. School personnel invite families into the schools, but this meeting only concerns CHILD-PACs. Families do not participate in the development of the CHILD-PACs, but are welcome to add any additional supplies to the previously made CHILD-PACs. Pena (2000) suggests that it is important to remember that there is no one method that will lead to a partnership between families and school. CHILD-PACs will not automatically lead to parent involvement because individual parents follow through with at-home activities in different degrees of involvement. CHILD-PACs allow families to participate in at-home learning activities, but does not incorporate the family into the decision making process and other important partnership activities.

**Innovative Conferencing Model:** Faculty in Tacoma Washington initiated a program that expanded the parent teacher conferences into a partnership between the parent, student, and teacher. In the Larchmont Elementary School, these conferences are held at least three times a year and all parties take turns listening to each other. Teachers actively listen to parents and their ideas for goals. Teachers and children then contribute to the development of these goals. The child takes responsibility for his/her own learning and reviews the support of parents and the teachers. All parties decide on ways the child can achieve the goals that they help set. Parents, students, and teachers have an equal part in this entire process. With this model, each participant is on the same level and has an invested interest in the conferences and the success of the child (NEA Today, 1999). This program
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helps develop the communication process that is critical between families and schools. Out of the six activities that are important to a partnership between schools and families, the Innovative Conferencing Model incorporates communication activities, at-home learning activities, and decision-making opportunities.

The Innovative Conferencing Model is an effective model that involves parents in making decisions with their child’s education. This model also allows parents to participate in at-home learning opportunities. While the Innovative Conferencing Model contains effective strategies that can be used to develop a partnership, other equally important activities are omitted from this model. Henderson (1998) concludes that family involvement works better when parents are given different roles to play. The Innovative Conferencing Model does not allow for the variety of roles that parents need to play in schools and their child’s education. There is still another drawback with this model. In a teacher’s already busy life, this model only adds more time consuming preparation. The extensive amount of preparation could be viewed as a deficit for many teachers.

Each of the programs described above contain valuable information on programs that have been implemented in schools to promote family involvement, as well as supportive research that endorse these programs. Most programs that use family involvement models, however, tend to see parents as an unequal partner in the family involvement program. “These activities often seek to ‘train’ parents in the ways of the school and mainstream society and assume a home deficit approach” (Shockley, Michalove, Allen, 1995 p.92). Few programs allow families to actively become part of the development process of the program. Consequently, one single model often does not incorporate the six key components to effectively create a partnership between families and schools. Educators as well as families see the need for an effective partnership to occur.

“We need to work as a team for our children, for our future” (D. Schnuelle, personal communication, April 2000).
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Methodology

I currently teach in a small private grade school containing grades kindergarten through eighth grade. The student population consists of all European-American children and averages about one hundred students within the entire school. We currently have no specific program involving the parents. The parents are eager to help in any way possible, but rarely initiate the offer to help. After working in two other schools where family involvement was not addressed and no program was implemented into the schools, I decided that a family involvement program would work well in the school where I am currently teaching. I was trained in the FAST program and adapted the program in my school focusing on the kindergarten class. The underlying core philosophy of FAST is wonderful in theory, however it was not welcomed into the school as I had hoped. While taking classes to further my education, I became even more interested in the development of a program that would best suit the needs of the families at our school.

I was looking for an ideal program that would work well in our school. I conducted many searches looking for information through EBSCO and ERIC. Materials that I used came from my own personal library, Rod Library at the University of Northern Iowa, and Preuss Library at Luther College. I visited with several colleagues who implemented different parent involvement programs into their classrooms or schools. After this extensive search, I found that many of the programs did not incorporate the six key effective partnership components of parent education activities, communication activities between families and schools, volunteer opportunities, at-home learning activities, decision-making opportunities, and community collaborations (Jones, 2001; Epstein, 1985). Colleagues were not satisfied with the programs they had used simply because the programs they were implementing were not comprehensive. To best suit the needs of the families in our school I decided to design a program that would implement the key components for an effective partnership.

It is my hope that the program I develop will increase family involvement
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within the school as well as within the lives of the children. I developed a variety of activities to incorporate the key components into the program. I adapted ideas that worked well in the FAST program. I also added ideas that worked well in other programs and adapted those ideas to best suit the needs of the families involved with my school. I included all the materials needed for each evening into the appendices for easy use for any teacher wanting to use the program within their own classroom.

The programs detailed in the literature review did not meet the criteria needed for a partnership to occur. In the program I developed various methods of communication were implemented to develop a partnership between families and schools. It is my hope that families as well as teachers will see the benefits of this program. Everyone involved will collaborate with each other to make school successful for the children, for the families and for the teachers involved.
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Family involvement has been researched over the past three decades. This research tells us that when families are involved in their children's lives, the children are more likely to succeed in school (Stolcklinski & Miller-Colbert, 1991). Families need to provide input that the school will use to promote family involvement and create an effective family involvement program. Effective partnerships between schools and families need to be implemented into every school. Following Epstein's (1985) and Jones' (2001) suggestions, the pie program will incorporate the six key components to an effective partnership in order for families to be actively involved in the school's activities and their child's education. Through the use of these six components, (parent education activities, communication activities between families and schools, volunteer opportunities, at-home learning activities, decision-making opportunities, community collaborations) it is hoped that the PIE program will increase student academic achievement and school performance as well as provide a better sense of well-being for all participants. Knowing the school that I work in, I decided to develop a program that would allow for families to come into the school, feel comfortable with the staff as well as other parents, and assist their child in their learning. I designed several evenings that would allow families to get together as a large group and work as colleagues. I have also allotted time out of the school year for additional activities to be incorporated into the program. These evenings would be developed into the program at the request of the parents and their needs.
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<td><strong>Community collaborations</strong></td>
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Meet the Teacher Evening

For parents, kindergarten is the first public school experience they have as a caregiver and provider for their child. As a kindergarten teacher I encounter many first-time parents. They are often uneasy and unsure of their role in their child’s education. They often do not know what their child does during the day while at school.

Our first meeting, Meet the Teacher, will be a night when the parents can meet me and we can go through many details about school that are often left out. A informational letter will be sent home with the children concerning when the meeting will take place and the agenda for the meeting (Appendix A.) This evening will involve parent education activities, volunteer opportunities, and decision-making opportunities. The purpose of these activities is to begin to develop a communication between families and schools. We will begin the evening with a welcome and introductions of the families who are in kindergarten. I will then describe the agenda for the evening (Appendix B). At this time children will participate in an activity time. This time will be filled with fun and games while parents are able to meet with their peers (Appendix C). Children will be taken care of by Luther students or high school students earning credits for Confirmation. Weather permitting, there will be time for the children to play outside. After play time, a snack will be provided and then free choice of games and activities in the kindergarten room. Parents and myself will continue the meeting and will go through a day in the life of a kindergartner. This will include a schedule of our daily activities and a brief explanation of these activities (Appendix D). We will then go through the supply list that was given out during the April Kindergarten Roundup (Appendix E). We want kindergartners to be independent. This means for parents to buy clothes and materials (coats, boots, and bags) that children can take care of themselves. I also want parents to buy materials that are practical (book bags that can carry folders, large books, and art projects). We will then continue our meeting that will allow parents to discuss the developmental assets with each other. Parents will talk about
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developmental assets that children need to succeed in life (Appendix F). It is my expectation that parents will be able to provide these assets for their children. Parents will be divided into small groups of 4-5. After I distribute the handout with several developmental assets listed, parents will have a chance to discuss these assets. The parents will discuss how life has changed compared to the way it was when they were young. Parents will then be brought back together in a large group. We will discuss some of their thoughts and feelings about the assets and how times have changed. Parents will then discuss what they can do to be involved in the school and their child’s education. We will then brainstorm together, as a large group, additional sessions the parents would be interested in having areas in which they would want to know more. Along with this brainstorming activity, I will suggest volunteer opportunities for the families to partake in at school. Parents are welcome to sign up for activities in which they would like to volunteer (Appendix G). We will then wrap up the meeting with an overview of what was discussed and a tentative plan for the next meeting. Children will be brought back to the large group at this time. I will then close the meeting by offering a sincere thank you and we will then depart.

Meet the Teacher will be a meeting when parents can come together, discuss the schedule their child has during kindergarten, a detailed supply list, a small group discussion, and a brainstorm session on other related topics for future evenings.
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Kindergarten Day

Getting families involved in the school's activities and their child's education is important. Through PIE activities, families are able to become more involved in their child's education.

An evening entitled Kindergarten Day will aide families to be more aware of what their child does throughout the day. Parents will receive a letter explaining the evening with a reply form attached to the bottom portion of the letter (Appendix H). Through this evening activity, it is the intent, that a communication will be opened between the parents and educators. This activity will enable parents to build a greater understanding of what their child does throughout the kindergarten day. It is my anticipation that through this activity, parents will be better informed and will want to be more involved with their child's education. We will begin the evening with a welcome, an introduction, and an agenda for the evening (Appendix I). At this time children will go with Luther students or high school students. An evening of activities will be made available for the children (Appendix J). Again parents and myself will go through the day of a kindergartner, however this evening will be different from the first in that we will be going into more depth about what a kindergartner does during the day. I will then review the schedule of our day (Appendix D). I will then explain why we do the activities that we do. This short activity may take only about twenty minutes. When I have finished explaining the day, children will return from the cafeteria to assist their parents in the activities. Parents and children will participate in our normal activities of our day. This evening will have shortened versions of each activity that we do throughout the day. We will begin with the calendar. Children will be able to explain how we open our morning with the activities of the calendar. After calendar, we will move to choice time. Again children can assist their parents with the activities offered at choice time. Following choice time we will have a short break. This will be our recess and bathroom break. We will regroup when I blow the whistle for our next activity, community time. Community time is when we have guidance, problem solving and when we learn about God and His teachings. After a
short lesson we will sit around the tables for our art activity. Children and parents will be offered paper and watercolors. At this time parents and children will be able to work together to create a picture of what they enjoy doing together. The cleanup song will be sung when we are finishing up with the activity. I will explain our next few activities, lunch, recess, and rest time. After I have explained these activities we will have story time, then an additional activity. This activity will involve writing a story about their day. We will come together and read our stories to the rest of the class. After this we will have a snack, just as we do in our normal kindergarten day. After snack is cleaned up we will join in math. Children will be able to instruct their parents as to the activities we do in math. After math, again the cleanup song will be sung and we will gather together for our dismissal. Once all of the activities have been completed and we have gathered together, for our conclusion of the evening, it is my anticipation that parents will be able to offer ideas they can do at home with their children to develop the skills we are emphasizing in school. Hopefully, parents will assist their children at home with the skills they need to succeed in school (Appendix F). As parents brainstorm activities, I will write them down and send the complete list of activities to every family. We will then begin a discussion the parents had brainstormed during the previous evening. Parents will be given time to discuss concerns or ideas for other activities as this time. This will be done before the closing of each evening. A sincere good bye will follow a wrap-up of the evening. Families will then depart. The volunteer sheet will be made available to families as they leave school (Appendix G). This sheet was made available to families during the first meeting. Volunteer opportunities are made available for families throughout the school year.

Family involvement programs are important in the lives of children. Kindergartners are so proud of their learning, Kindergarten Day will allow kindergartners to show their parents what they know. Parents will have a better understanding of what their child does throughout the day.
Family Involvement

Scavenger Hunt

The main purpose of this next family meeting is to provide families with an evening filled with fun. Helping make following directions fun allows families and schools to come together through a scavenger hunt. It is my hope that this activity will be done sometime during the month of October. The previous activities that have been described involve parent education activities, at-home learning activities, decision-making opportunities, and communication activities between families and schools.

Prior to this inservice, I will send home a letter explaining the evening (Appendix K). The letter will explain the entire evening. The evening will include the scavenger hunt as well as decorating a pumpkin. We will begin the evening with a welcome, introductions and an agenda for the evening (Appendix L). Directions then will given to the families. This activity is expected to allow families to come together and have a good time. I would like to see the families working together to complete the hunt and decide as a team how to decorate their pumpkin. The first clue for the hunt will be given to the families. After the first clue has been figured out, families will continue to look for additional clues throughout the school building (Appendix M). Treats will be placed at various points within the scavenger hunt. Families will allow the children in their family to read the clues and decide where the next clue can be found. The second to last clue will lead the families to a pumpkin. The family will then decide as a team how they wish to decorate the pumpkin. Decorations for the pumpkin will be supplied by the school. Families may choose to bring any additional materials for decorating the pumpkin. While decorating their pumpkin, families will be invited to have snacks that will be provided. When the pumpkins have been completed, I will hand out prizes for each pumpkin. The pumpkins will be completed at school. After they have been completed, they will be displayed at school in the trophy case located in the front lobby until Halloween. I will close the meeting with a thank you and good-bye. The families are welcome to leave once they have received their prizes and have had a snack.
Family Involvement

I hope that this evening will be one with a relaxed atmosphere and allow the parents to talk with others. I am optimistic that the scavenger hunt will be a time when everyone can relax, have a good time, and create a sense of community within families and across the entire group of participants.
Family Involvement

Alphabet Potluck

The holidays can be a difficult time to get together. Providing a time for families to get together can be important for the bond between parents and children. During the holiday season I will provide a time when children and parents can come together and share an evening out with other families.

This evening will be entitled alphabet potluck. Three weeks before the alphabet potluck, families will receive a letter explaining the evening (Appendix N). The letter will have a form on the bottom half of the paper. This form will be sent back to school. Families that plan on attending will be asked to bring a dish (main dish, salad, dessert) to share with others. The evening includes a simple agenda. We will share a meal and a tradition with the rest of the families. Once every family arrives, we will begin the evening with a welcome, introductions and the agenda for the evening (Appendix O). Each family will then be welcome to share a family tradition with the rest of the families. I feel that it is important for families to get to know each other on a more personal basis. After the traditions have been shared, families are welcome to eat supper. Families are welcome to sit and talk with other families throughout the evening. After the meal is finished, children may want to play in the gym for a short time. After cleanup, we will have a quick overview of the next family get together, make and take game night. The evening will end with a thank-you. In order to provide an ongoing sense of community it is important for families to come together on several occasions with a variety of agendas and activities.

Through this evening a friendship may be built among parents which can develop a network of peers that will work together in future opportunities to problem solve issues and interact and connect with teachers and the school community.
Family Involvement

Make and Take Family Game Night

When families become involved in the schools, higher academic achievement is produced. It is my hope that when families partake in parent education activities and at-home learning activities, higher academic achievement will be accomplished. Through PIE, I planned an evening when families can come into the school and join others in making an educational game which they are able to take home when they are finished.

This evening is entitled Make and Take Game Night. A few weeks before the evening a letter will be sent home (Appendix P). The letter will explain the evening, which will consist of making a game and taking that game home for hours of fun with their family. We will begin this evening with a greeting and an agenda (Appendix Q). While parents and family members are making the games, the young children (age 4 and under) will be able to participate in an activity time of their own (Appendix R). Activities and play time will be made available for these young children with supervision by Luther College students or high school students completing credits for Confirmation. The young children will be supplied with a snack. Families are making games in the cafeteria while the young children are being supervised. Materials for the games will be supplied by the school. A variety of games will be made available for children ranging in ability and age (Appendix S). The games will be made at school, during this evening. Once the games are made, families can then play the games and mix and mingle with other families. During the evening of game making and playing, I will provide snacks and beverages for the families. The evening will then conclude with a wrap-up. This wrap-up will consist of families sharing what they enjoyed about the evening, and if they had any ideas for any additional inservices. Young children will then be brought back to their families and a sincere thank you and good-bye is planned. As families are leaving school, the volunteer sheet will again be made available for families willing to volunteer (Appendix G).

I anticipate that when parents come to school and feel comfortable in the
Family Involvement

school and with the school personnel, families more likely will want to become involved in the school.
Family Involvement

Game Night

Student and parent perceptions of the school climate will be enhanced by building a partnership between families and schools. By the previous family meetings and this final family meeting I hope that partnerships will be built between the families and school.

Game night will be the final evening that I have planned for the families. This evening will involve families, just as the previous meetings. Parents will be informed of this night through a letter that I send home with the children (Appendix T). The letter will explain that families will join together for evening in which they bring a game. Families will bring a favorite game to play with their own family plus other families may join others to play games. The evening will begin with a welcome, introductions and an agenda for the evening (Appendix U). At this time, small children (age 4 and under) will be taken by Luther students or high school students earning credit for Confirmation. During child’s time, the small children will be able to play in the kindergarten room. They will be provided a snack during the evening. The games will then be set up around the cafeteria. Families will be able to play games with their own as well as other families. Snacks will be provided while families are playing games. These families will be provided by the school. Families will mingle and play games with other families. Evaluations for PIE will be provided to the families (Appendix V). These evaluations will help me to better plan PIE for the next year. The evening will conclude with a short wrap-up of the games families have played and a sincere thank-you for participating in the evenings and good-byes.

PIE activities are to promote family involvement through various inservices incorporating the key components to an effective partnership. I anticipate families will feel comfortable with the school and the personnel.

Ideas that parents have shared in earlier sessions and tonight’s session would be implemented into the remaining school year.
Family Involvement

Community Connections

It is often hard to incorporate all the components needed for an effective family involvement program. Involving the community can be a difficult component to include. The program that I have developed involves the community by initiating the communication with the community before school begins. I will post a short news release in the newspaper pertaining to the volunteer opportunities that are available through our school (Appendix W). These opportunities will be available to the community throughout the entire year. In addition to the news release, I will approach community members to develop a celebrity read two times per month. Members of the community will be invited to come into the classroom and read a story to the children. The trade book will be provided by the school and given to the community member prior to their school appearance. After the celebrity has read the book, we as a class, will write a thank-you to our reader for coming into the classroom and reading to us. The celebrity read will be promoted through the newspaper by a picture of the celebrity reading a book to the children. At our first evening activity, parents and other caregivers will have the opportunity to participate in the celebrity read. Additionally, if parents have suggestions for additional celebrities, their input is always welcome. Ideally, this will create more interest and hopefully more celebrities will come into our school to volunteer their services.
Family Involvement

Possible suggestions for additional evenings

- Literacy activities
- Substance abuse
- Math activities to do at home
- Home and Back with books
- Bicycle Safety
- Stranger Danger
- Positive reinforcement
- Positive/negative consequences
- Assertive discipline
- Behavior modification
- Acceptance of cultural differences
- Full inclusion of handicapped children
- Behavior disorders
- Respect for all human beings
- Personal hygiene
Conclusion

After researching and completing this project, I am confident that an effective parent involvement program would be beneficial to children, families, and schools. In creating a family involvement program, it is my hope that families would be welcomed into the schools and offer a collaboration between everyone involved. This bond would then hopefully be developed and strengthened throughout the students life. After researching several programs, taking part in a program, and speaking with colleagues about additional programs I am confident that I have developed a program that would best suit the needs of my school and the families with which I am involved. Incorporating the six key components (parent education activities, communication activities between families and schools, volunteer opportunities, at-home learning activities, decision-making opportunities, community collaborations) Epstein (1985), and Jones (2001) suggest creates a program that would allow for interaction and participation with the school and families.

Family involvement programs will likely benefit families and create a bond in which they will feel a connection to the school as a community that will encourage them to participate and interact more fully. Families will hopefully be able to collaborate with other families and in turn work together with schools to make school a success for children. Students will see the connections made with other families and the school and they, too, will hopefully develop a better appreciation for the schools and teachers. It is my belief that family involvement programs will empower all who are involved, including the community members. By implementing a family involvement program into a school, we develop a collaboration between all who are involved. Family involvement programs that incorporate the six key components of parent education activities, communication activities between families and schools, volunteer opportunities, at-home learning activities, decision-making opportunities, and community collaborations) (Jones 2001; Epstein 1985) will develop a communication network that would not only be beneficial for the parents and teachers but for the students as well.
Family Involvement

References


Family Involvement

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, Center for Social Organization of Schools.


Family Involvement

*Childhood Education*, 342-345.


Family Involvement


Teachers to parents and students 'Let's decide together.' (1999, November). NEA Today, 18, 31-35.


Appendix A

Meet the Teacher parent letter
Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new school year. This year evening activities have been planned for families involving a variety of topics. If you are interested in additional evenings, I have set aside time for us to discuss future evenings. Our evenings will run about 2 hours. We will begin all of our sessions with an agenda and a welcome. Many evenings will include snacks. These evenings are not mandatory for parents and children, but it is a great way to learn new things, make games that you can take home, share ideas with other parents, and spend quality time with your entire family.

Our first evening will begin at 6:30 on ______________. It is called “Meet the Teacher.” We will start our evening with introductions and an agenda. You will have a chance to provide input during the evening. I will then go through our schedule of the day. We will also talk about the supply list. The supplies that the children are to bring to school will support independence and responsibility. We will also talk about the developmental assets that all children need to succeed. I want to know additional ways that parents can be involved in school and their child’s education, so bring your ideas with you and we will brainstorm ways you can volunteer if you wish. Children are welcome to come with you. Luther students will be here to take care of children while we meet. They will be supplied with a snack and activities to do. Please send the bottom portion of this letter back to school so I can adequately prepare for a great evening.

I hope to see you there!!

Mrs. K. Becker

_____ Yes! I would love to participate in “Meet the Teacher” evening.

Number of adults attending _____

Number of children attending _____

_____ No, I am sorry I will not be able to participate in the evening.

Name_________________________
Appendix B

Meet the teacher agenda
Family Involvement

Meet the Teacher

Agenda

6:30- Welcome / Introductions

Agenda for the evening

6:45- A day in the life of a kindergartner

Go through schedule of the day

7:00- Supply list

Go through detailed supply list.

   Independence

   Responsibility

   (Coats, boots, bags, simple meals that children can make themselves)

7:20- Developmental assets.

   The importance of the developmental assets in the lives of children.

   Distribute list of assets. Parents will get into small groups and talk about the assets and how growing up has changed.

   Parents will then regroup and discuss their thoughts and feelings.

7:45- Discuss ways parents can be involved in the school and their child's education.

8:00- Brainstorm other sessions that they might be interested in attending.

8:15- Closure and departure

Parents will be attending this informational meeting. Children will be taken care of by students from Luther College and/or high school students earning credit for Confirmation.
Appendix C

Activities for child's time
Mask Mania

Materials:
grocery bags
scissors
ribbon
pencil
markers
paints
construction paper
glue

To Make Square Masks:
1. Put a bag over your head. Place your fingers where your mouth and eyes are. Remove the bag from your head, leaving your fingers there. Draw eyes and a mouth. Cut them out.
2. Trim a few inches from the opening of the bag, or cut curved slots in the sides so the mask can rest on your shoulders.
3. Follow the instructions for the mask you want to make.

Frog:
1. Glue blue construction paper on the front of the bag. Cut out the paper eye holes where they’re already cut out of the bag. Cut out a frog, fly, and lily pad from paper and glue them on. Position the frog so that its eyes are above the top of the bag, and so that your eye holes are the frog’s nostrils.

Chick
1. Cut out eyes and a beak from construction paper. Add details with markers. Glue them on the front of the mask. For the feathers, cut out strips of paper. Glue them on the mask, and curl the ends around a pencil.

Bearded Man
1. Draw facial features and glasses with a marker. Cut out ears from a paper bag, and glue them on. For the beard, cut wide fringe in paper, and glue it on. Curl the ends around a pencil.

Taken from:

THE NAPPING HOUSE

Author: Audrey Wood • Illustrator: Don Wood • Publisher: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

In this story several characters fall asleep on top of each other in a little bed. Daybreak brings a surprise ending. The illustrator shows the passage of time through the lighting.

Napping House Mobile

Setting the Stage
- Discuss excuses students have used to get out of taking naps or going to bed.
- Share different kinds of mobiles.

Materials
- Plain index cards, 5' x 7' (several per student)
- String or yarn
- Scissors
- Markers or crayons
- Stapler
**Family Involvement**

**Procedure**

1. Draw a large bed on one card, and each story character (including the flea) on the remaining cards. Color and cut out.

2. Staple the bed to the bottom of the string and the rest of the characters as they appeared in the story. Write the title on a card and staple to the top. Use this mobile to retell the story.

**Additional Art Activities**

1. Accordion fold a long strip of paper. The bed and characters can be drawn on each folded section.

2. Make stick figure puppets of the characters in the story.

**Integrated Activities**

- **Perform a choral reading of the story, holding up stick puppets of the characters.**

- **Write a cumulative story about the day the class was so hungry that the children ate a large sandwich, a pizza, a sundae, etc.**

**Related Books**

- *Ten Bears in My Bed* by Stan Mack
- *The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything* by Judi Barrett
- *The Big Sneeze* by Ruth Brown
- *This Is the House that Jack Built* by Luc de Heer

**Creative Teaching Press**

**Literature-Based Art Activities**
Appendix D

Kindergarten schedule
**Kindergarten Schedule**

- Calendar
- Choice Time
- Recess
- Community Time
- Workshop (Writing, Social Studies, Science)
- Rest Time / Independent Reading
- Math
- Review of day and plan for the next school day
Family Involvement

Appendix E

Supply list
Kindergarten
School Supplies

• tennis shoes
• 3 sharpened pencils
• a paint shirt
• a box of eight crayons
• a pair of scissors
• a package of baby wipes
• a backpack
• a rug for rest time
• a glue stick
• a bottle of Elmer’s glue
• 2 large boxes of Kleenex
• 1 folder
Appendix F

Developmental assets
#1 **Family support** - Family life provides high levels of love and support.

#2 **Positive family communication** - Young person and her/his parent(s) communicate positively, and young people are willing to seek parent(s) advice and counsel.

#3 **Parent involvement in schooling** - Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person to succeed in school.

#4 **Family boundaries** - Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts.

#5 **Adult role models** - Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.

#6 **High expectations** - Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

#7 **Equality and social justice** - Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.

#8 **Honesty** - Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.

#9 **Planning and decision-making** - Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.

#10 **Peaceful conflict resolution** - Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

#11 **Personal power** - Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”

#12 **Positive view of personal future** - Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.
Family Involvement

Appendix G

Volunteer sheet
Volunteer

Yes! I would like to volunteer.

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Kindergarten day parent letter
Dear Parents,

Our second evening activity is coming up. This evening is called “Kindergarten Day.” This will be a great time when you can see first hand what your child does all day. We will begin our evening at 6:30 on ________________. This evening will begin with everyone to meet in the cafeteria. If you have small children, Luther students or students from high school will be able to provide care for them. I will explain the evening, then we will proceed to the kindergarten room where we will begin our day in the life of a kindergartner. This will be a fun time when the students will be able to be the teachers and show you around their classroom and day.

Please return the bottom portion of this paper by _________________.

Thank you,

Mrs. K. Becker

_____ Yes! I would love to participate in “Kindergarten Day.”

Number of adults attending _____

Number of children attending _____

_____ No, I am sorry I will not be able to participate in the evening.

Name________________________
Appendix I

Kindergarten day agenda
Family Involvement

Kindergarten Day

Agenda

6:30- Welcome
   Introduction
   Go through agenda for the evening

6:45- Go through the day in the kindergarten room
   List activities that the children do throughout the day
   Explain why we do the activities that we do
   Answer any questions parents have about the activities we do in the
   kindergarten room

7:15- Have the parents go through the day just as the kindergartner would, only
       shortened versions of each activity
       Community Time
       Shared Literacy
       Choice Time
       Recess
       Workshop (Writing, Social Studies, or Science activity)
       Rest Time / Independent Reading
       Math Time
       Review of day and plan or the next school day

8:00- Come back together and and offer parents ideas of activities that parents can
       do with their children to develop their skills

8:15- Closure and departure

(Children will be supervised by Luther Students and/or high school students during
the time that I explain the activities that kindergartners do throughout the day. The
children will return to the room and help their parents through the day in their life.)
Appendix J

Activities for child’s time
LITERATURE-BASED ART ACTIVITIES

Written by Darlene Ritter • Illustrated by Gary Hoover
MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL Daughters: AN AFRICAN Tale

Author: John Steptoe  *  Illustrator: John Steptoe
Publisher: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard

This is a West African story about Mufaro's two beautiful daughters. One daughter is mean and self-centered while the other daughter is kind and thoughtful. In the end, one daughter marries the king, and the other works in the palace. The illustrations are extremely rich and colorful.

Hand Mirror

Setting the Stage

• Ask students if they think that it is important to be kind and fair to everyone, whether or not they are thought to be important.
• Discuss the meaning of the word "ambitious."
• Discuss the type of clothing and designs they wore in the book. Think about how they created the designs.

Materials

• 6" paper plates (1 per student)
• Tongue depressors (1 per student)
• Roll of aluminum foil
• Crayons or colored markers
• Glue
• Macaroni, gold paint, paint brushes (optional)
Family Involvement

Teacher Preparation:
1. Cut aluminum foil into 3” squares.
2. Optional: Pour gold paint into small cups.

Procedure
1. Glue tongue depressor to the back of the paper plate. Let dry.
2. Cut the aluminum foil into a circle. Glue the circle to the inside of the paper plate.
3. Decorate the paper plate with African designs using crayons and markers.

Optional: Glue macaroni on the paper plate in an interesting African design and brush with gold paint.

Additional Art Activities
1. Cut African designs into potato halves. Dip potatoes into tempera paint and stamp designs onto paper or cloth.
2. String gold-painted macaroni onto yarn to make African jewelry.
3. Make a 2-sided flip puppet on a tongue depressor to show character transformation. For example, in the story, the King changed to a snake and back again.

Integrated Activities
- Rewrite the story by changing the title to "Mufaro's Handsome Sons."
- Write what happens years later when the two sisters finally meet again. What do they look like? What has happened in their lives? What do they say to one another?
- Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the daughter in this story with Cinderella.
- Observe a real metamorphosis, such as a caterpillar becoming a butterfly and a tadpole becoming a frog.
- Draw a picture of each of the daughters and give a written description of their appearance and personalities.
- Learn how fairy tales are made in various parts of the world.

Related Books
Anansi the Spider: A Tale from the Ashanti
by Gerald McDermott
Holt

Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain
by Verna Aardema
Dial

Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale
by Verna Aardema
Dial

Darkness and the Butterfly
by Ann Grifalconi
Little, Brown and Co.
Appendix K

Scavenger hunt parent letter
Dear Parents,

October is here, and so is the Halloween season. This month’s evening is a scavenger hunt and pumpkin decorating. We will begin the evening at 6:30 on __________. We will have a scavenger hunt in the school. This will take a short time. After that I will supply a pumpkin for each family to decorate. While others are finishing up their pumpkin, families will be able to munch on snacks that I will have provided.

Please return the bottom portion of this paper by _____________ if you plan to attend this fun evening out with your family.

Thank you,

Mrs. K. Becker

______ Yes! I would love to participate in the scavenger hunt.

Number of adults attending _____

Number of children attending _____

_____ No, I am sorry I will not be able to participate in the evening.

Name__________________________
Appendix L

Scavenger Hunt
Family Involvement

Scavenger Hunt

agenda

6:15- Welcome
  Introductions
  Agenda for the evening

6:30- Scavenger Hunt
  Families will work together to look for clues and find treats along the way
  Allow child to read one of the clues and figure out where the treats are hidden
  The second to last clue will lead families to the pumpkin which they will
decorate.
  The last find will be a pumpkin in which the family will have directions to
decorate a pumpkin using materials that I have instructed them to bring from
home along with materials that will be supplied.
  There will be extra supplies for those families who need additional
supplies.

7:00- Decorate the pumpkin
  Eat snacks
  Put pumpkin in display case
  Distribute prizes to all who participated

7:45- Closure and departure
  (Snacks will be provided as the families decorate their pumpkin. These snacks can
then be eaten as I get the prizes ready to give away.)
Family Involvement

Appendix M

Scavenger hunt clues
Scavenger Hunt Clues

• Go to the place where we love to make music, find your clue there

• We love to play with Legos, find the Lego table to find your next clue

• Reading books is fun, we can check books out here, find your clue

• Find where we keep our outside toys for your next clue

• After a fun recess we like to get a drink of water, find your clue at the fountain

• We keep our book bags and coats here, look for our next clue there

• We love to spend time with our 8th grade buddies, find their room and your next clue

• Lunch is a good time to chat with our friends, find your surprise in the cafeteria
Appendix N

Alphabet potluck parent letter
Family Involvement

Dear Parents,

The holiday season is approaching and it would be great to get together. This will be a night different from others. I am asking each of you to bring a dish to share with the rest of the families. We will have a meal together and share family traditions with the rest of the families. We will begin the evening at 6:30 on _________________. This evening will finish when everyone has finished eating.

Please return the bottom portion of this paper to me by _________________.

Thank you,
Mrs. K. Becker

________ Yes! I would love to participate in the potluck.

Number of adults attending ______

Number of children attending ______

Our family will bring ________________ to share with everyone.

________ No, I am sorry I will not be able to participate in the evening.

Name_____________________________
Appendix O

Alphabet potluck agenda
Family Involvement

Alphabet Potluck

Agenda

6:15- Welcome

Introduction

Agenda for the evening

6:20- Participate in a holiday sharing.

Each family will bring a favorite holiday dish to share
Once families are seated and we have had a welcome, each family will share a tradition with the others.
Families will participate with a potluck

7:00 When families have finished their meals, children are welcome to play in the gym.

Parents are able to have time when they are welcome to talk.

Before the potluck, I will send out a letter explaining the evening.

The entire family will be together for the meal and sharing the traditions with the rest of the families.
Appendix P

Make and take game night parent letter
Dear Parents,

We have another fun filled evening planned for your family. We are calling this evening “Make and Take Game Night.” Our evening will begin at 6:30 on __________. We will have time to make a game that you will be able to take home with you and play with your family. I will provide snacks while you make your game with your family. We will have Luther students and/or high school students available to look after the little ones. This evening will last about one hour. Hope to see you there.

Please return the bottom portion of this paper to me by ____________.

Thank you,
Mrs. K. Becker
Appendix Q

Make and take game night agenda
Make And Take Game Night

Agenda

6:30- Welcome
    introduction

Agenda for the evening

6:45- Small children will go with Luther students and/or students from high school
earning credits for Confirmation. Small children will participate in an activity,
snack and free choice play time while parents and other children make games.
Families will make a game with their children that will be educational and fun.
Snacks will be provided for the families while they are making the games.
The families will be able to make and take the game home with them.

7:15 Families will have a chance to play the games with their families.

7:30 Families will brainstorm additional activities they can do at home to promote
education.

7:45 We will wrap-up the evening with a thank you and good-bye

7:50 departure
Appendix R

Activities for child's time
Monkeys cause all kinds of mischief as they imitate a cap peddler. After they take his caps, the peddler must decide how to get them back.

**Painted Paper Visors**

### Setting the Stage
- Discuss observations of monkeys at zoos. Ask students to tell how monkeys play in their cages at the zoo.
- Discuss what a peddler is and tell about peddlers from the past.
- Bring a variety of hats, caps, and visors to share with students.

### Materials
- tagboard visor pattern (1 per 5 students), page 92
- tagboard, 12" x 13" (1 per student)
- paints (tempera, puffy paint, poster paint, etc.)
- brushes
- markers
- scissors
- yarn
- hole punch
Family Involvement

Teacher Preparation
Cut visor patterns from tagboard.

Procedure
1. Trace visor on tagboard from pattern and cut out. Punch a hole at each end of the visor.
2. Paint one side of the visor.
3. When dry, use paint and markers to create designs on the painted side.
4. Tie a piece of yarn through each hole. Try on visors, adjust to fit and tie.

Additional Art Activities
1. Decorate visors to portray a favorite book. Wear these visors on a special book sharing day.
2. Create a jungle gym from tinker toys and have students make pipe-cleaner monkeys. With small scraps of paper they can make caps for the monkeys.
3. Buy inexpensive visors at a party supply store and decorate.
4. Decorate visors with collage materials.
5. Make different kinds of hats and have a hat parade.

Integrated Activities
- Dramatize the story.
- Wear favorite hats to school.
- Write stories about a group of mischievous monkeys who visit school.
- Have students mimic each other.
- Practice balancing stunts in P.E.
- Find out where monkeys live.

Related Books
Curious George by H.A. Rey
Houghton Mifflin

Arthur's Funny Money by Eileen Hood
Harper & Row

Gorilla by Anthony Browne
Knopf

The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins by Dr. Seuss
Vanguard
Caps For Sale
Pattern for Painted Paper Visor

Place on fold.
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Appendix S

Make and take games
Egg Carton Games

Use a permanent maker to mark the numbers 1-12 in the bottoms of the cups in an egg carton. Make a second egg carton with a alphabet letter in each cup, you choose the letters. Here are some games to play:

Number carton:
- Put a marble in one of the cups, close the lid and shake the carton. Be sure you keep your hands tightly on the lid. Open the carton. Write down the number at the bottom of the cup the marble is in. Every player takes three turns (or more depending on skill level) and then adds their numbers. The player with the highest total wins.

Alphabet carton:
- Put a marble in one of the cups, close the lid and shake the carton. Open the lid carefully. The player must think of a word that starts with the letter in the cup where the marble is. If a player cannot think of a word or repeats a word another player has used he or she is eliminated.

Variations:
- Use both cartons. “Shake” a number and a letter. Players must think of that number of words beginning with the letter.
- Replace letters with blends, digraphs, prefixes or suffixes.

Taken from:

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Games Galore

Materials:
- cardboard tubes
- plastic-foam trays
- cardboard or foam board
- colored paper
- scissors
- glue
- paint, crayons, markers
- plastic rings
- clothespins
- uncooked macaroni
- foam ball
- die
- buttons
- coins
- thread

1. Choose the game or games you want to make. Think about the materials you will need. You will probably need lots of tubes, so your first step may be start saving tubes several weeks ahead of time. Or contact your neighbors and friends and ask them to start saving tubes. It’s amazing how fast tubes will accumulate when lots of folks are saving them.

2. Paint or cover the tubes with construction paper.

Make the ring toss:
1. Decorate a large plastic-foam tray. Be sure to have at least two different colored sections. Put a number, such as 10, on your decorated tube and glue the tube to the tray. Put numbers in the other sections. Get two rings that are 2"-3" across. You’re ready to toss the rings and keep score. Rings that fall totally on the floor don’t get any points.

Make the clothespin game:
1. Paint a plastic-foam tray, a piece of cardboard, or a piece of foam board. Glue your decorated tube to the center of the board. Grab a friend and some clothespins, it’s game time. See how many times each of you can get a clothespin into the tube out of ten tries. To make the game more challenging, try dropping the clothespins faster and faster and/or by raising your arm higher and higher.

Make the macaroni marathon:
1. Decorate a piece of cardboard or foam board. The bottom of a large cardboard box will work well. Cut out sixteen pieces of tube that are about 1 1/2" high. Decorate them as two different sets. Cut out four pieces of tube about 3" high. Decorate two to match each set of your short tubes. Put START and FINISH on each pair. Attach the tubes to your board. Play as a toss game for two layers, seeing how many tosses it takes to get from START to FINISH.

2. An additional idea for macaroni marathon: play as a relay, each player puts
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...ten pieces of macaroni in the START cups. Take turns rolling a die and moving your pieces up your side. The first player to reach the FINISH cup with all pieces wins. Hint: You can break up a roll, for example, if you roll a six, you can move one piece up by four cups and a different piece up by two.

Make the coin game:
1. Cut and decorate a large piece of cardboard or foam board. Decorate ten bathroom tissue tubes. Glue the tubes to the base. Be sure all your numbers face the same way. You’re ready to get a friend and take turns trying to toss a coin into one of the tubes, the higher its point value, the better. Don’t stand directly over the board. As you become good at the game, stand farther and farther away.

Make the tread-the-tube game:
1. Decorate a bathroom tissue tube anyway you like. Punch a hole near one end of the tube. Get a piece of yarn or ribbon thread is 12” to 18” long. Tie one end through the hole in the tube and the other to a large button. To play, hold the tube in an upright position. Swing the button in an upward motion, trying to get it to go into the tube. Making the game is much easier than playing it!

Make the button-toss game:
1. Decorate a bathroom tissue tube and attach a small paper cup to one end. Decorate a piece of cardboard, foam board, or a plastic-foam tray. Create sections on the foam board. Draw ovals about 2” apart. The corner areas are then assigned a point value. Glue the tube in the center of the base and assign it a point value. Step back and try to toss your buttons into the cup. Play by yourself or with a friend. How many points can you get with five buttons?

2. Instead of tossing buttons in the game, put the game board on a table and try to flip or flick the buttons up and into the cup.

Taken from:
Appendix T

Game night parent letter
Dear Parents,

Our evening activity will be a little different this month. I am asking you to bring a favorite family game. We will play games with other families. We will begin the evening at 6:30 on _______________. I will have snacks provided for you and your family. Again Luther students and/or high school students will be on hand to assist with small children.

Please return the bottom portion of this paper to be by ____________________.

Thank you,
Mrs. K. Becker

______ Yes! I would love to participate in “Game night.”

Number of adults attending _____

Number of children attending _____

Our family will bring _________________ to share with everyone.

______ No, I am sorry I will not be able to participate in the evening.

Name________________________
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Appendix U

Game night agenda
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Game Night

agenda

6:15- Welcome
   
   Introduction
   
   Agenda for the evening

6:20- We will get together to play games that the families will bring.
       
       Each family will bring a children's game from home
       
       Set up the games around the room.
       
       Snacks will be served while game are being played
       
       Families will mingle and play games with the other families.

7:00  Clean up

7:15  Preview agenda for any additional meetings or wrap up from previous meetings.

7:20  Thank you and good-bye
       
       evaluations
Family Involvement

Appendix V

Evaluation
PIE Evaluation

What did you enjoy about our monthly meetings?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What was your least enjoyable activity about our monthly meetings?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What future meetings would you like to see?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Any additional comments:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Family Involvement

Appendix W

News Release for the newspaper
Family Involvement

News Release

School is beginning soon. With school comes many opportunities for you, as the community, to become involved in our future. We have many opportunities for you to be involved in our school. Some examples for you are:

- Become a celebrity reader and sign up for an afternoon to read
- Practice math facts
- Cut out materials for teachers
- Help audio-tape children reading books
- Play educational games with children
- Make educational games for children

If you are interested in participating in these or other activities, please contact:

Kathy Becker  Home:  532-7008
DeSales School  532-9353
Family Involvement

Appendices References


