

Parent Involvement Affects Behavior

The research on family involvement in education spans 30 years. It links increased student achievement with parent involvement in their child's learning. This link has also spread to student behavior as students whose parents are involved in their education show improved behavior, and lower rates of suspension, alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior (National Education Service, 2002). As part of our efforts to improve behavior in the schools, we can look to parents for support. Many agencies, including the Colorado Department of Education, rely on Joyce Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement Model to structure parent programming. This six types are listed here with a brief explanation.

Parent & Community Engagement Committee, 2004

Epstein's Types of Parent Engagement and School-wide PBS Activities

TYPE 1: PARENTING

Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.

- Offer interactive parent focus groups with different topics and knowledgeable facilitators
- Create "PBS at Home" classes for parents
- Create behavior support classes for parents and community members
- Provide training in parents' native language
- Offer family activities throughout the year to support PBS

TYPE 2: COMMUNICATING

Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.

- Provide PBS table at Back To School Night with parent surveys
- Share results of PBS assessments and surveys with parents
- Create and maintain a PBS bulletin board
- Create "PBS in Action" video
- Schedule special weeks with links to PBS (Kindness Week, Earth Day, Disability Awareness)
- Create/distribute calendars and agendas with PBS motto and matrix
- Publish a PBS Newsletter or add a PBS page to school website
- Include PBS motto on school letterhead
- Create/distribute PBS shirts, hats, book covers, mugs, bumper stickers, book bags

TYPE 3: VOLUNTEERING

Recruit and organize parent help and support.

- Create a volunteer book that describes the PBS program and behavior expectations for parents
- Have parent available to read to students as PBS incentive or reward
- Have parents help children design PBS posters
- Survey parents for creative ways to partner/volunteer.

TYPE 4: LEARNING AT HOME

Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

- Have web topic and activities available each week/month
- Purchase resources that parents can check-out that support PBS and academic achievement
- Have children explain and give examples of how PBS works with their family as "homework"
- Have PBS video available for checkout with follow-up activities



TYPE 5: DECISION-MAKING

Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

- Recruit multiple family members for PBS team
- Alternate meeting times: morning, afternoon, evening
- Pair new parents with veteran parents
- Offer "short-term" participation on PBS team, with option to renew
- Plan for care of children during meeting
- Involve parents in selection of incentives and celebrations

TYPE 6: COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY

Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and Development.

- Acknowledge employer's donation of parent time in newsletter/web site
- Invite community members with resources for parents to facilitate parent groups or teach parenting topics based on parent survey
- Make presentations to school board, community groups, site council/accountability
- Invite community and parents to PBS celebrations
- Share "PBS in Action" video at local library, town hall