



Building Stronger Relationships:

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

(Boosting Academic Performance!)



Dr. Theresa Vadala



**Applying New Knowledge:
Learning & Transfer**

Child Care Training Consultants, LLC

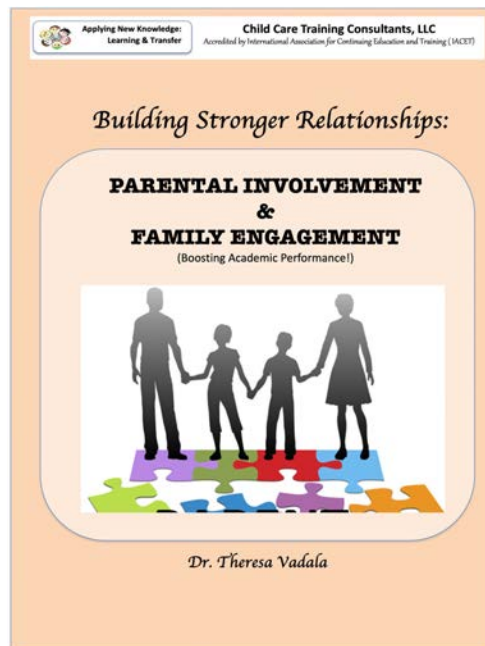
Accredited by International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET)

Building Stronger Relationships: Parental Involvement and Family Engagement

Theresa Vadala, Ed. D

Child Care Training Consultants, LLC

Las Vegas, Nevada 89139



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<p>CKA 5: Family, Community and Cultural Relationships</p> <p>Title: WY 5.A Building Stronger Relationships: Parental Involvement and Family Engagement</p>	<p>3 Hours</p>	<p>0.3 CEUs</p>
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Dr. Theresa Vadala
(Instructor & Curriculum Designer)





**Thank you for choosing
Child Care Training Consultants, LLC.,
for your Training Needs!**

Learning Assessment

Read the material provided, take the 5-10 quiz questions and
complete the training evaluation at the end of the course.

Participants must receive 100% on individual courses to obtain a certificate of
completion.

Questions?

We are happy to help.

Support Services:

Please contact us 24/7 at

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Child Care Training Consultants LLC.,

Goal

The goal is to empower educators as they take Child Development Associate (CDA) courses to make a powerful difference in the lives of young children!

Mission Statement

“Child Care Training Consultants, LLC’s is committed to provide research-based professional growth and development training courses primarily focused on the Child Development Associate. The CDA is the nation’s premier credential that is transferable, valid, competency-based and nationally recognized in all 50 states, territories, the District of Columbia, community colleges and the United State Military.

Vision

Child Care Training Consultants, LLC’s vision is to provide the early childhood community with courses based on CDA competency standards to obtain their CDA Credential and assist in reaching their goal as an exceptional early childhood educator to ultimately achieve higher child outcomes.



About the Instructor

Theresa has over 30 years experience in the field of Early Childhood Education. During that time, she served as a Preschool Teacher, Disabilities Coordinator, Program Facilitator, and Director of an Early Childcare Program. She has a Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership with Specialization in Curriculum and Instructional Design. Theresa is a Professional Growth & Development Trainer and Curriculum Designer and offers web-based courses internationally. She is the Executive Director/Owner of the training organization Child Care Training Consultants, LLC., (CCTC).

Business Description

Child Care Training Consultants, LLC. (CCTC) is an accredited provider (AP) with the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) that provides Continuing Education Units (CEU) for adult education nationally. The business is also a recognized training organization with the Council for Professional Recognition, Child Development Associate Council (CDA), National Credentialing Program.



Course Objectives

Participants will be able to identify how to engage parents and families in school activities given the tools provided during the current school year. Participants will be able to:

- 1) Identify methods and techniques to address the dynamics of parents and managing generational differences within the school community.
- 2) Apply strategies to embrace students, parents, and families from diverse backgrounds.
- 3) Recognize features of effective communication to keep parents engaged.

Activities/Exercises/Assignments

Exercise 1.1. Describe the difference between parental involvement and family engagement and provide an example of each that you have experienced in the workplace (300 words/half page).

Exercise 1.2 Identify the dynamics of parents and list their first name on the chart in the self-study guide. How can parents from each group become engaged with school activities and involved with their children? (300 words/half page).

Exercise 1.3 Create a Parent Observation Plan to use in the classroom.

Exercise 1.4 Think about the generation you are from. How can you as a teacher or administrator work effectively with other generations in the workplace? What types of strategies could you use to engage parents in school activities? (300 words/half page).

Exercise 2.5 Develop two (2) Lesson plan activities that include cultural diversity and inclusion to use in daily classroom practices. (Use lesson plan template provided in resources, or you may use your own template)

Exercise 2.6 List 5 Clarifying and Probing Questions to use with your students.

Exercise 3.7 Create a sketch of a Parent Communication Board with a minimum of 5 elements to use in the classroom.

Exercise 3.8 Develop a 10-question parent survey to gain parent needs and interests using [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)

QUIZ

Reflection: Share some ideas on strategies to engage parents in school activities. Describe how you will use the lesson plan activities on cultural diversity and inclusion to include parents



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Learning Outcomes

- Identify and list methods to addressing the dynamics of parents.
- Identify and implement strategies to embrace diverse families.
- Explain generational differences and identify strategies when communicating with parents.
- List clarifying and probing questions on handout or chart.
- Use clarifying and probing questions with students in the classroom.
- Design an effective Parent Communication Board.
- Create a Parent Survey to learn about parent needs and interests.

Transfer of Learning Strategies

- Addressing parents needs using strategies provided to reach ALL parents
- Present parent meeting with all generational differences in mind
- Use clarifying and probing questions when working with students in daily practices
- Design a parent communication board to use in the classroom
- Use the parent survey created to learn about parents needs and interests

Assessment

- Reading
- Summarize
- Question/Answer
- Design a Parent Communication Board
- Design a Parent Survey
- Assignments
- Quiz
- Reflection
- Evaluation



Building Stronger Relationships: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Welcome to Building Stronger Relationships: Parental Involvement and Family Engagement Online Training. This professional growth training course outlines how families' communication plays a significant role in building effective communications with students. As families have different values and are culturally diverse it is important for administrators to reach all family origins to ensure their needs and interests are heard and met. A disengaged parent may experience little or no emotional connectedness and have few expectations for their child. When parents have a clear understanding of the schools' expectations, it is then they begin to encourage their child with the same goals and expectations.

Research

A disengaged parent may experience little or no emotional connectedness and have few expectations for their child. When parents have a clear understanding of the schools' expectations, it is then they begin to encourage their child with the same goals and expectations. Studies show that parents who are involved in school activities and events, school decision making and advocacy, their children experience higher grades, assessment scores, have better attendance, display a more positive attitude and behavior, and have greater enrollment in postsecondary school. Research has shown that engaging families in education increases student learning, achievement, and decreases dropout rates. Effective family engagement is a set of day-to-day practices, attitudes, beliefs, two-way communication, and interactions that support learning at home, at school, after school, and during the summer. Educators are encouraged to promote engagement that is systemic, sustained, collaborated with the community, and integrated into school improvement efforts.



Agenda

- 1} Parental Involvement & Family Engagement
 - A. The Dynamics of Parents
 - B. Benefits and Barriers: Engaging Parents
 - C. Understanding Generational Differences
- 2} Understanding Diversity and Inclusion
 - A. Understanding Diversity
 - B. Clarifying Questions
 - C. Probing Questions
- 3} Parent Communication
 - A. Effective Communication Strategies
 - B. Parent Communication Board
 - C. Parent Survey

Quiz/Assignments/Reflection

References

Glossary of Terms

Evaluation

Appendixes

Lesson Plan

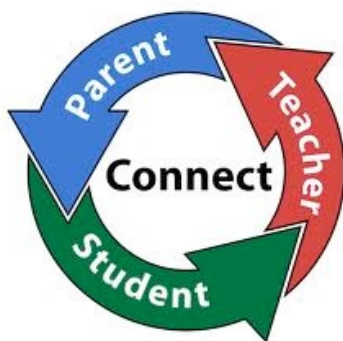
**GET !
INVOLVED!**



I. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Parent involvement is important at all ages of a student's education and the more actively parents are involved, the more benefits the child receives. As parent involvement programs have evolved and been accepted by school stakeholders, research strongly indicates that one of the most effective forms of parent involvement is when schools engage parents to work directly with children on learning activities. It does not matter whether the parent involvement engages parents actively at the school or home. Communication with parents must be meaningful, on-going, two-way, and filled with mutual respect.

Research overwhelmingly demonstrates that parent involvement in children's academic success is a positive aspect of achievement. Research also demonstrates that parent communication be _____, _____, _____ and with _____.



Parental Involvement



Parental involvement refers to the amount of participation a parent has when it comes to schooling and her child's life. Some schools foster healthy parental involvement through events and volunteer opportunities, but sometimes it's up to the parents to involve themselves with their children's education. Parent involvement is often more of a "doing to," With involvement, schools tend to lead with their mouth -- generally telling parents what they should be doing; whereas, engagement is "doing with." Engagement, is when school administration listens to parents' ideas, and by eliciting from families what they have found works best with their children. Engagement utilizes two-way conversation, through efforts like making home visits and phone calls that don't necessarily only happen when there's a problem with a child.

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Exercise 1.1.

Describe the difference between parental involvement and family engagement and provide an example of each that you have experienced in the work place (150-300 words/half page).





The Dynamics of Parents

Working in a preschool center you have encountered the many personality types of parents.

These parents are known as;

- 1) Hit and run parents
- 2) The Inspector
- 3) Go with the flow parents



There are parents who rush in, drop off their child or children and run out the door. Other parents read everything on the bulletin board, may walk in classrooms and observe what teachers do for morning instruction. Yet, other parents, hang out at the school and wait for teachers to provide a task for them.

1) Hit and Run Parents

The hit and run parent parks out the front door, runs in and drops off their child to first person they see and often ask to have someone sign their child in. Hit and run parents do not worry about what caretakers' are teaching that day, they assume all safety measures and teacher ratios are in place, and never ask about teachers' credentials. This usually occurs because parents have had their children in the program for some time and simply trust staff, or they have to get to work in a hurry and trust the teachers will take care of their children and teach them whatever it is they need to know. *After all they are teachers, and they should know everything about what goes on at the school right?* There are also parents who dislike the schools or centers where they take their children, but that is all they can afford. Parents may feel *stuck* at your center.

How to address Hit and Run Parents

When working with parents who run in the front door to drop off their child, the teacher or an administrator must be prepared to capture their attention with a quick statement or phrase. For example, saying "Good morning, (address by name) I see you are in a hurry to get off to work so I'd like for you to give us a call during your lunch break or send us an email." or "Good morning, I see you are in a hurry, so I would like to give you an opportunity to participate by helping out with special events or projects that occur in the evenings." or "Good morning, I know you are busy in the morning, so I'd like to offer you an opportunity to work at home helping by painting the set for our school program."



The Dynamics of Parents

2) *The Inspector*

The inspector parent insists on a walk-through of the entire school while they inspect the school to make sure it is good enough for their child. These parents read lesson plans, ask about safety procedures, and they sometimes want to observe different teachers giving instruction. Inspector parents also want to see teachers' credentials. Parents may call 3 times a day to see what their child is doing and explain to you how to cut the grapes in half so their child does not choke and tells you not to let their child play with *little Johnny* because his clothes does not match (you get the idea).



How to address the Inspector Parent

When a parent insists on doing a “walk-through” through your school, be willing to show them around. Start with showing parents the school vision, parent board, and procedure manual. The lesson plans, safety procedures, and curriculum outlines should be clearly posted. Do a quick walk through a classroom if time permits. Encourage and welcome parents to come to a school event or open house to talk to the teachers. Provide parents with any resources you have regarding school functions, curriculum, content standards, and the school calendar and parent newsletter.





The Dynamics of Parents

3) Go with the Flow

Yet, other parents go with the flow and take their children to school every day, wait for the front door to open so they can sign their child in, then hang out and talk to other parents as they come in to drop off their children. Go with the flow parents usually linger in the class until the teachers asked for them to leave or instruction begins. These parents will read a book to the students and help the teachers with various tasks. As teachers it is equally important to reach all parents and it is your responsibility to share daily news, upcoming event information, and what you are doing to prepare their children for the next school level. The goal now is how to communicate with each and every one of these parents.

How to address Go with the Flow Parents

Continue to encourage “Go with the Flow Parents” to assist their child’s teacher by reading a story to children, assisting with outdoor supervision, assist with lesson planning activities, and working on bulletin boards. Parents who have time to spend in the classroom also may assist with serving lunch, cleaning up, setting up for an event and becoming part of, with teacher assistance, organizing a parent committee.





Dynamics of Parents

Working in a preschool center you have encountered the many personality types of parents. There are parents who rush in, drop off their child or children and run out the door. Other parents read everything on the bulletin board, may walk in classrooms and observe what teachers do for morning instruction. Yet, other parents, hang out at the school and wait for teachers to provide a task for them.

Exercise 1.2 Dynamics of Parents

Identify the dynamics of parents at your school and write their first name on the columns below. How can parents from each group become engaged with school activities?

Hit and Run Parents	The Inspector	Go with the Flow
How can parents from each group become engaged with school activities?		



Ten Strategies to Engage Parents

Parent involvement is important at all ages of a student's education and the more actively parents are involved, the more benefits the child receives. As parent involvement programs have evolved and been accepted by school stakeholders, research strongly indicates that one of the most effective forms of parent involvement is when schools engage parents to work directly with children on learning activities. It does not matter whether the parent involvement engages parents actively at the school or home. Communication with parents must be meaningful, on-going, two-way, and filled with mutual respect. Below are ten strategies to engage students:

1. Be Human
2. Keep a Balanced Perspective
3. Create a Portfolio of Each Student
4. Create a Reflection Form for Parents
5. Create an Open Door Policy
6. Create a Parent Observation Plan
7. Collaborate with Grade Level Teachers for Parent Workshops
8. Create a Parent Classroom Volunteer Program
9. Develop a Parent Leadership Program at School
10. Create a Parent Appreciation Program



1. Be Human

Although teachers may spend hours preparing for parent-teacher conferences, parents can become anxious when discussing their children's academic and social-emotional challenges. The anticipated meeting outcome for teachers and parents is to create a healthy family-school connection. This outcome ensures that both parents and teachers can openly discuss a child's successes and challenges in the classroom and at school. When meeting parents informally, effective teachers provide parents with daily feedback about their child's performance. Ongoing formal and informal dialogue with parents can validate the parents' efforts to support their child's growth at school and in the home. Informal conversations with parents can also provide teachers with insight about changes in the family that may impact a child's performance at school.



2. Keep a Balanced Perspective

When parents meet with teachers at parent-teacher conferences, they may be excited, anxious, and eager to learn about their child's behavior and academic performance at school. Effective teachers focus on the positive behaviors of a student while also discussing any areas of concern for growth. When teachers provide parents with examples of healthy growth and an overall portfolio of the student's work, parents feel validated for their efforts in supporting their child's learning. If there are areas of concern, parents will be more receptive to hearing a teacher's suggestions for their added support in the home.

3. Create a Portfolio of Each Student

Portfolios can include a student's best work and also demonstrate a need for added academic support at home. A variety of portfolio samples can include art projects, creative writing, mathematical problem solutions, and the use of common core standards in science and social studies projects. Added documentation can include student observations completed by teachers with quoted conversations of students working together and videos of student projects.

4. Create a Reflection Form for Parents

A reflection form in the parents' home language can be given to parents before their conferences. These culturally sensitive forms can help parents prepare for their discussions with teachers. The forms can include listing areas of child growth, observations of the child's behavior at home, academic learning questions and concerns, and a note taking section to capture agreements they have made with teachers for next steps. If parents are not able to complete the form, a friend or older child can interview the parents to help them prepare for a conference.

5. Create an Open Door Policy

Teachers can coordinate with the principal's office to identify optional days and times that parents can visit their classroom to observe their child. A parent visitation can include having parents formally observe their child when completing an observation form or sharing their observations with the teacher after their visit. Parents can observe small groups of students learning together to reinforce how they can support their child's learning at home. Parents can also participate in playground sports activities, grade level projects, and assemblies.



6. Create a Parent Observation Plan

Culturally sensitive parent observation forms can be provided by teachers when parents visit the classroom. These forms can include having the parents write what their child is doing in a small group learning activity. Parents can capture the dialogue between students, record their child's reaction to others, reflect on their child's classroom behaviors, and note what learning strategies are being used in an activity (i.e. discussion, listening, reading, working on a group form, completing an individual worksheet, playing a game, helping construct a project, or observing changes in the environment, etc.). After parents complete their observation, they can meet with the teacher and other parents to discuss and reflect on what they learned about their child and grade level learning strategies

7. Collaborate with Grade Level Teachers for Parent Workshops

Teachers can partner with grade level teachers to create parent education workshops on age appropriate child development, healthy social-emotional growth, games and activities to support student learning at home, and how parents can incorporate play as a learning activity (e.g. building containers for a garden and planting vegetables, writing a family history, shopping weekly with a fixed budget for the family).

8. Create a Parent Classroom Volunteer Program

Effective parent classroom volunteer programs include a sign-up schedule, policies, and procedures on how parents can participate in specific classroom activities in small group observations, instruction, or by leading a project that incorporates art and academics (e.g. performance productions, writing and illustrating grade level books, creating science experiments, or researching historical events with artistic and culturally sensitive products). Parents can initially be invited into the classroom to observe other parents working with students in small group activities. As parents feel more confident about their ability to assist students, the teacher can assign parents to parent mentors who will help them feel successful in their classroom assignments. If a parent does not speak English, a bilingual mentor or student can provide the parent with translation and interpretation services. Trained and mentored classroom parent volunteers should keep discussions about individual students confidential, abide by the school rules at all times, and consider the needs of the students first.



9. Develop a Parent Leadership Program at School

School-based parent leadership training programs can be created by school site teacher leadership teams. Parents receive training on how they can academically support students in specific academic content areas. Trained parents may initially volunteer in their child's classroom. Through parent mentors and added teacher support, parents can be trained to become effective school leaders and serve on the school's site council, the English learner advisory committee, the school's safety committee, the P.T.A. board, or as a district leader to support state and federally funded programs and school board advisory committees.

10. Create a Parent Appreciation Program

As parents increase their leadership at the school site, principals can initiate parent coffees to encourage added dialogue with families and increased partnerships in their school community. At the end of the school year, the school's leadership team with teacher support can host a parent volunteer recognition event. This event can include a family dinner with student entertainment and recognition certificates for parents who have volunteered in their child's classroom, at the school site, and for the school district. School districts can also recognize outstanding volunteers at a board meeting and distribute the classroom parent volunteer certificates as part of the superintendent's information update. Effective and inspirational parent-teacher partnership programs ensure that parents are actively engaged partners with their children at school while also successfully supporting their children's social-emotional growth and academic success at home.

Exercise 1.3 Parent Observation Plan

The parent observation plan is used by the parent to observe their own child. When working with the parent what five (5) questions would you include in the Parent Observation Plan?



Building Trust with Parents

When building trust with parents, talk with parents and keep ongoing communication lines open. Use registration time to build a foundation with parents. Create detailed student information sheets to share during conferences. Send out parent surveys to gather their needs and interests. Make open house a special event and present a simple chart to share student expectations, rules and regulations. Communicate good news regularly and establish an “Open Door Policy.” Once trust is built with parents, they are more likely to return to your center and enroll younger siblings, volunteer, and play an important role in their child’s life.

There may be times that a parent has a question or concern about something. Refrain from being defensive. Being defensive makes it seem as though you have something to hide. Instead of being defensive listen to everything parents have to say before you react. Most of the time a parent’s questions or concerns come down to miscommunication or misconceptions. Assure parents you will clear up any issues, remain calm and in a professional manner. Listening to parents provides them the opportunity to vent about an issue that may be easily resolved.

The importance of documenting parent communication can ease any future concerns regarding specific issues. It doesn’t have to be anything in depth. Documentation needs to include the date, parent/student name, and a brief summary. Although you may never need it, it will be well worth the time if you ever need it. Documenting is so valuable. For example, a parent may not be happy about your perception on a child’s progress through the course of the year. A parent could claim that you never talked to them about it, but if you have it documented that you did communicate several times throughout the year, the parent has no basis for their claim. It is important to document every parents’ concerns, whether you know them well or not.

List 5 ways to build trust with parents?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.





Benefits to Engaging Parents

Benefits:

- Regular open communication with teachers, counselors
- Teachers who are easy for parents and others working with parents to talk with.
- Schools that are sensitive to the family's needs.
- Schools with support groups to help students and families deal with common problems, (i.e., the death of a loved one)
- Mutual respect of parent and school staff for one another.
- Support groups for parents, sponsored by the school or other agency.
- Schools who understand that most parents *do* think education is a priority.
- Schools that build parents' skills and help them communicate effectively with their child's school.

Trust, loyalty, and mutual support are key elements that underlie family-school relationships and make it possible to work together. The benefits of parent involvement in their child's school include students tend to achieve higher grades and assessment scores, better student attendance, fewer placements in special education, more positive attitudes and behavior, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education.

**Engaging Parents in
Raising Achievement
Do Parents Know
They Matter?**



Barriers of Parent Involvement

Barriers:

Many parents encounter obstacles to participating in their children's education. These barriers are brought into your center every day. Studies show that parents tend to be less involved in the educational process as their children get older. A study of the U.S. Department of Education found that nationwide, as children grow older, contacts between families and schools decline in number and in the positive nature of such contacts. This decline in involvement is the result, in part, of a variety of challenges that families face that make their participation difficult. Although these barriers make it difficult for parents to get involved with their child's education, the tips and strategies previously provided will help you to reach parents. Differing ideas among parents and teachers on what constitutes involvement include insufficient training for teachers, lack of parental education and parenting skills, time and job pressures.

Other barriers include:

- Language barriers and cultural differences
- Families past negative experiences
- Child Care constraints
- Parents who believe they do not have the ability to help their child
- Parents who do not feel that the school welcomes their involvement

List 5 benefits and 5 barriers of parent involvement?

Benefits:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Barriers:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.





Understanding Generational Differences

For the first time in history, four generations are working side by side. Different values, experiences, styles, ideas and activities that may create misunderstandings and frustrations. By the year 2014, 70 million Baby Boomer (including many teachers and school leaders) will entire retirement in large numbers. Generation X, a generation with different sensibilities and priorities than Boomers, will assume positions of leadership in schools and districts.



Traditionalists (Born 1925-1945)

Traditionalists are Pre-feminism women who stayed home generally to raise children. These women typically worked as a teacher, nurse or secretary. Men pledged loyalty to the corporation and generally kept it for life. Traditionalists are the richest, most free-spending retirees in history. Marriage is for life, divorce and having children out of wedlock were not accepted. In grade school, the gravest teacher complaints were about passing notes and chewing gum in class. Retirement meant to sit in a rocking chair and live your final days in peace. Traditionalists are disciplined, self-sacrificing and cautious.

Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964)

Baby Boomers are known to be self righteous and self-centered. Too busy for neighborly involvement, yet strong desires to reset or change the common values for the good of all. Even though their mothers were generally housewives, responsible for all child rearing, women of this generation began working outside the home in record numbers. This was the first generation to have their own children raised in a two-income household. Baby Boomers envision technology and innovation as requiring a learning process. They tend to be more positive about authority, hierarchal structure and tradition. One of the largest generations in history with 77 million people. Their aging will change America almost incomprehensibly; they are the first generation to use the word “retirement” to mean being able to enjoy life after the children have left home. Instead of sitting in a rocking chair, they go skydiving, exercise and take up hobbies, which increases their longevity.



Understanding Generational Differences

Generation X (GEN X) (Born 1965 - 1980)

Generation X often feels misunderstood by other generations. They question many major institutions, which failed their parents, or them, during their formative years. Most generation X individuals remember attending school without computers. They were introduced to computers in middle school or high school. They desired a chance to learn, explore and make a contribution to the world. They tend to commit to themselves rather than an organization or specific career. This generation averages approximately seven career changes in their lifetime. Working for one company for life is out of the norm, unlike previous generations. The GEN X generation want what they want and most are deeply in credit card debt. It has been researched that they may be conversationally shallow because relating to others consists of shared time watching video movies, instead of talking to others. Generation X may find themselves weary of commitment, self-absorbed, and find themselves intolerant of people. They are survivors as individuals, self-reliant, cautious, skeptical, and unimpressed with authority.

Millennials (Born 1981-2000)

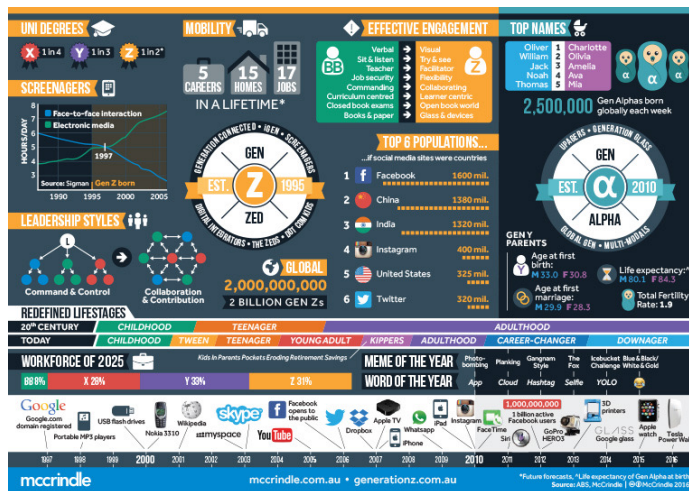
Millennials are nurtured by parents who are optimistic and focused. They respect authority; but with school safety problems they have to live with the thought that they could be shot at school. They learned early that the world is not a safe place. They schedule everything. They feel enormous academic pressure and have great expectations for themselves. They prefer digital literacy as they grew up in a digital environment and have never known a world without computers. They get all their information and most of their socialization from the Internet. They prefer to work in teams. With unlimited access to information they tend to be assertive with strong views. They envision the world as a 24/7 place and want fast and immediate information. They have been told over and over again that they are special, and they expect the world to treat them that way. They do not live to work, they prefer a more relaxed work environment and feel privileged.



Understanding Generational Differences

Generation Z (1995-2009)

Generation Z, individuals born after 2001, are just now reaching the legal age to enter the workforce. In 2006 there were a record number of births in the US and 49% of those born were Hispanic, which will change the American melting pot in terms of behavior and culture. The number of births in 2006 far outnumbered the start of the baby boom generation, and they will easily be a larger generation. For example, with computers and web based learning on the rise, children leave behind toys at a younger age. Tonka trucks and Barbie dolls are of less interests to children. In the 1990's the average age of a child playing with such toys was 10 years old, and in 2000 it dropped to 3 years old. As children reach the age of four and five, old enough to play on the computer, they become less interested in toys and begin to desire electronics such as cell phones and video games.



Understanding Today's Parents: Generation X

You have to know the people you are talking to and find ways to connect with them. It's especially important to know today's parents since the majority of them now belong to what we call Generation X. Consider what school communication experts point out about today's parents (A Nation at Risk, 1983). They have grown up hearing about "failing schools." The educational foundations of our society and the future of our education are presently being challenged by educational performance that exists today. Generation X parents expect to hear about school problems immediately—along with what is being done about them. They value their time very highly and don't want it to be wasted with school activities that don't directly help them or their child.



Five Techniques For Managing Generational Differences

The complexities of generational differences is an evolving learning process and may be challenging with new technology, work patterns, and blended workers of different ages in this day and age of technology and diverse societal influences. The National Conference of Bar Foundations (2015) provides 5 key techniques to managing generational differences.

- 1) Focus on goals and set clear expectations.** Each generation approaches their work differently, each providing strengths the other does not possess. Clear and specific goals and expectations puts each generation on an even playing field.
- 2) Mentoring and Inclusion.** Encourage each generation to mentor the other. They each provide different strengths, experiences and knowledge of today's technology. Inclusion helps to use those differences as leverage effective results.
- 3) Break the bonds of tradition.** If there is a better way to do something, take the suggestion. Although four generations may be part of the team, the right idea should always be taken. Tradition normally would take point of view of the most senior in the room. Wrong. Taking the opinion of the senior most person in the room when a better one is presented may lead you to slower or no progress.
- 4) Show employees the future.** Tell them where the organization is going, how they fit in, and how to prepare. People tend to work harder to achieve the organization's goals if they understand how it leads them on a path to their professional goals.
- 5) Encourage balance.** Depending on employees' generational culture, balance will look different. Flexible work hours and working from home are all preferences of the different generations. Understanding employees' preferences in regard to maintaining a balance of work and life will help manage the generational needs.

These five techniques provide a behavioral approach to managing generational differences. Taking time to understand and define how to manage these differences will assist in managing a successful workplace.

Exercise 1.4

Think about the generation you are from. How can you as a teacher or administrator work effectively with other generations in the workplace? What types of strategies could you use to engage parents in school activities? (150-300 words/half page).



II. UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

To serve children well, we must work with their families. To be effective in this work, we must first understand families who are diverse in ways such as culture, sexual orientation, economic status, work, religious beliefs, and composition. Single-parent families, families of divorce, blended families, extended families, homeless families, migrant families, and gay and lesbian families represent some of the diversity in families that we work with as educators. Yet no matter how different families appear to outside observers, all have certain characteristics in common. Families just show them in different ways. Examining these characteristics helps educators engage families in ways that foster optimal child development. Recognize different parenting styles and family boundaries. Educators often perceive the family who comes to meetings and responds with active and enthusiastic involvement and participation (helps with learning or discipline issues, provides materials for a special project, serves as a volunteer) as more caring and as a “good family.” The family who responds politely to requests but leaves day-to-day decisions and work on school matters to the child and teacher (allows child to experience consequences due to lack of preparation for a quiz or forgetting their share item for the day) is seen as less caring and uninvolved. Build on family strengths and avoid labeling and allowing personal bias to influence your interactions with families. Just because a student is of a certain culture does not automatically mean that student’s family is of a given religion, does not have legal status, has a certain discipline style, or has a specific socioeconomic status. It is critical for teachers to become familiar with the cultural background of individual students. Be sure to have enough chairs, snacks, and materials to accommodate extended families at events and conferences. For some families, an invitation to family night includes aunts, uncles, cousins, friends who serve as family, and even neighbors. Whether their families are disengaged or enmeshed, children need opportunities to experience who they are individually and as a part of a group. Respect families’ need for control. When introducing new ideas, materials, or experiences to children, involve families as well. Also recognize that some family members did not have positive experiences with education as they were growing up.



Cultural Diverse Integration

Diversity refers to the given categories into which individuals fit at birth such as race, ethnicity, class, nationality and gender, or it may refer to the voluntary categories that individuals adopt over time. With more cultural diverse parents speaking languages other than English or may speak several English dialects it is crucial to reach all families. Many families joining our schools today may have had different, few, or no experiences with formal education. Consequently, they bring new expectations and challenges to schools. Parents who are immigrants may be undergoing cultural dissonance, a tension or clash between two different environments and acculturation, adapting to a different culture or group.

Understanding Inclusion

Including students with disabilities into the regular education classroom requires deliberate strategies that move beyond a student's physical presence in the classroom. Actual classroom attendance is not inclusion. Students with disabilities who are included with their typically developing peers should be engaged in the same classroom lessons as their peers (using modifications or accommodations as needed), while a deliberate sense of social inclusion is encouraged.

Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

One of the most important principles of inclusion of students with disabilities is to understand that no two learners are alike. Inclusive schools include opportunities for students to learn and be assessed in a variety of ways. Therefore teachers in inclusive schools must consider a wide range of learning modalities (visual, kinesthetic, and auditory) and differentiated instruction when designing instruction. The establishment of inclusive schools benefits everyone by fostering an environment where students and their families are valued for who they are. Students with disabilities can only be successful when they are truly part of the school community. Friendships are developed, increased social relationships, increased achievement of IEP goals (Individual Evaluation Plan), greater access to resources, and increased inclusion in future environments. Families of students who attend inclusive schools experience greater opportunities for interactions, experience higher expectations, increased school staff and parent collaboration and participation, as well as integration into the community.



Cultural Diversity Integration

Benefits of Culturally Diverse Integration

- Play an important role in the learning processes of their children
- Help teachers gain access to various resources
- Teachers awareness of their own cultural awareness
- Inclusive cultural diverse materials visible in the classroom environment
- Rich and diverse inclusion influences policy and practice





Benefits of Inclusion for Students With Disabilities

- Friendships and increased social initiations, relationships and networks
- Peer role models for academic, social and behavior skills
- Increased achievement of IEP goals
- Greater access to general curriculum
- Enhanced skill acquisition and generalization
- Increased inclusion in future environments
- Greater opportunities for interactions
- Increased school staff collaboration and parent participation
- Families are more integrated into community
- Educate students about disabilities
- Practice or role play working with a variety of people
- Invite guest speakers (e.g., family members, adults with disabilities, etc)
- Provide social skills instruction
- Directly teach friendship skills
- Provide ample praise to students who are working together
- Structure class activities to encourage peer collaboration
- Teach and address stereotype
- Actively include the student in ALL classroom activities
- Create a classroom friendly environment for everyone



What are benefits of culturally diverse integration?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



What is inclusion? (Explain your answer)

What are benefits of inclusion for students with disabilities?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.





Developing Cooperative Partnerships

When we see parents as partners, we listen to each other, share ideas and respect each other's unique experience and expertise; we develop plans together and stay in touch as we carry them out. Partners do not diminish themselves by working together. They reinforce one another and create synergy from their different strengths. The more diversity there is, the less difference we find among people and families. Most parents want their children to have a great education. Parents are doing the best they know how to obtain it. In a study at Johns Hopkins University, over 90% of parents surveyed agreed that parental involvement is important. But 80% of those parents said they needed more information about how to help their children at home. Finally, considering all the learning, waking hours children have from the time they are born until they graduate from High School, they spend only about 15% of that learning time at school and the rest somewhere else, primarily at home with their parents. Parent involvement is important at all ages of a student's education and the more actively parents are involved, the more benefits the child receives. As parent involvement programs have evolved and been accepted by school stakeholders, research strongly indicates that one of the most effective forms of parent involvement is when schools engage parents to work directly with children on learning activities. It does not matter whether the parent involvement engages parents actively at the school or home. Communication with parents must be meaningful, on-going, two-way, and filled with mutual respect.

How can educators develop cooperative partnerships to promote learning?

As educators, what information would you provide parents with to help with their children at home?



Understanding Diverse Backgrounds

Educators across the United States must be prepared to teach an increasingly diverse population of students of all ages. More families from immigrant households have enrolled their children in America's schools more than ever before, and the trend is expected to continue over the next decade. Recent research indicates that teachers believe they have not been adequately prepared to teach children from cultural and linguistic backgrounds different from their own. As educators continue to look for ways to address the needs of diverse children and families, it is important for administration to listen to classroom teachers' request pertaining to specific training and strategies in working with diverse children. Cultural competence is one of the crucial goals of teachers striving to be effective practitioners who serve children, as there is now a greater awareness of the need for teachers to be responsive to children's' and families' diversity differences.



Exercise 2.5

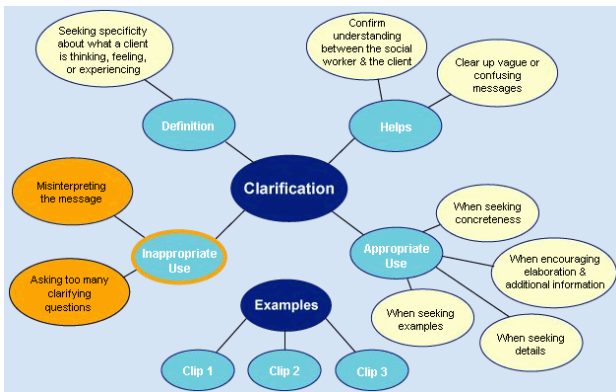
Develop two (2) Lesson plan activities that include cultural diversity and inclusion to use in daily classroom practices. (Use lesson plan template provided in resources or you may use your own template)



A Proactive Approach

A proactive approach to acknowledging diversity is the first step in working with students and their families. Identifying students and families real-lived experiences is crucial in learning about different cultures. As educators intentionally learn about students real-lived experiences in the classroom, a closer connection between educators, students, families and the community is made. As educators, taking a proactive approach in acknowledging diversity differences within the classroom is a positive step toward understanding cultures. Teachers who analyze how they react to students' cultural differences tend to have a better understanding of student and family individual needs. One method to understanding diversity differences is, for example, using clarification statements when talking to students in the classroom, such as "Can you help me understand?" or "What would you like me to do?" Clarification statements provide opportunities for teachers to hear student concerns and have a better understanding of their home and family needs. Probing Questions are intended to help the presenter think more deeply about the issue at hand. Examples of Probing Questions: Why do you think this is the case? What do you think would happen if...?

Clarification and Probing Statements





Examples of Clarifying Questions:

- 1) Is this what you said...?
- 2) What resources were used for the project?
- 3) Did I hear you say...?
- 4) Did I understand you when you said...?
- 5) What's another way you might...?
- 6) Did I hear you correctly when you said...?
- 7) Can you show me?
- 8) What did you mean by..?

It is helpful for the teacher to model using these types of questions since students may not have experience with them.

List 5 additional clarifying questions to use with students:





Probing Questions

Probing Questions are intended to help the presenter think more deeply about the issue at hand.

Examples of Probing Questions:

- 1) Why do you think this is the case?
- 2) What do you think would happen if...?
- 3) What sort of impact do you think...?
- 4) How did you decide...?
- 5) How did you determine...?
- 6) How did you conclude...?
- 7) What is the connection between... and...?

List 5 additional probing questions that you could use with students:

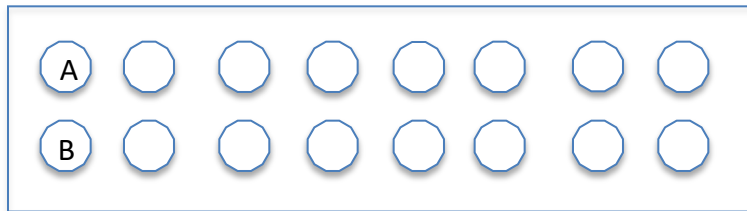


Clarifying and Probing Questions

TRY THIS EXERCISE! Group work or in the classroom with your students.

Directions:

Form two lines (A and B) of students facing each other so that everyone has another person standing directly across from her/him to partner with.



Make a statement such as: *Pizza is better than hamburgers or Cell phones are better than land lines*. Ask students to quickly get in pairs and come up with one related clarifying question and one related probing question.

Pick one set of students to share their responses. If their questions were truly clarifying and probing in nature, congratulate them and allow them to return to their seats. If they were not, recognize that more practice is needed and have them remain in the line.

Proceed in this way, offering additional statements to which clarifying and probing questions can be formed, until all (pairs of) students are successfully returned to their seats.

List additional statements for this activity.

Exercise 2.6 Clarifying and Probing Questions

List five (5) additional Clarifying and Probing Questions to use with your students.



III. PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communicating with parents can be a challenging task at times. Getting parents to attend open house, school events, or parent conferences may be the only three (3) times you see parents in the entire school year. The importance of documenting parent communication can ease any future concerns regarding specific issues. It doesn't have to be anything in depth. Documentation needs to include the date, parent/student name, and a brief summary. Although you may never need it, it will be well worth the time if you ever need it. Documenting is so valuable. For example, a parent may not be happy about your perception on a child's progress through the course of the year. A parent could claim that you never talked to them about it, but if you have it documented that you did communicate several times throughout the year, the parent has no basis for their claim. It is important to document every parents concerns, whether you know them well or not.

Personal contact, including conferences, home visits, telephone calls, and curriculum nights or open houses, are a most effective form of communication and most familiar. With the great diversity among families, it is not possible to rely on a single method of communication to reach all homes, therefore, it is essential that a variety of strategies, adapted to the needs of particular families and their schedules, be incorporated into an overall plan. Newsletters provide parents with a variety of information. You may include current activities, upcoming events, tips for parents on nutrition, discipline, etc., monthly birthdays, favorite websites, or family or student feature. Highlight upcoming events, student's quotes, poems, or stories, include a kindness column or community services section. Remember to obtain permission from parent or guardian for student photos used in the newsletter.

List 7 effective communication strategies:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.



Two-Way Communication: outgoing and incoming

Educators must regularly facilitate two-way communication with parents and guardians, using resources responsive to parent needs. A process in which information flows in two-directions; the receiver provides feedback and the sender receptive to the feedback. The goal of two-way communication is to receive feedback from parents and engage families in school and district activities.

What is the difference between outgoing and incoming communication? Give examples:

Outgoing:

Incoming:

Two-way communication: Outgoing and Incoming

A process in which information flows in two-directions; the receiver provides feedback and the sender receptive to the feedback.



Incoming Communication is one-way communication:

Teachers, schools and the community need parent feedback!

If you ask people what they think, they will tell you.

If you pay attention to what they say, you will succeed.

If you think you already know what they think,

you may be surprised.

-Author Unknown-



Communicating with Parents

- Acquire an understanding of the students lives' outside the school
- Use information from families to learn about their children's learning styles, strengths and needs
- Communicate academic successes and concerns
- Communicate behavioral concerns
- Develop collaborative solutions
- Use a variety of communication methods to connect with diverse populations
- Seek to develop cooperative partnerships
- Encourage parents/guardians to volunteer in the classroom





Exercise 3.7 Parent Communication Board

List five (5) elements you could use in a Parent Communication Board. Explain why you choose those elements and how the parent board would benefit parents.

Click [Here for Bulletin Board Ideas](#)

- Teacher Biographies
- Menu
- Lesson Plan(s)
- Copy of Content Standards
- Emergency Procedures
- Upcoming Events
- Lunch Menu
- Parenting Info / Articles
- Daily Schedule
- Policy Reminders
- Special Activities
- "What We Did Today"
- Copy of the Newsletter
- Vision Statement
- Embracing Diversity
- Upcoming Events
- Parent Engagement
- Content Areas
- Student of the Month
- Character Education
- Anti- Bullying Information
- School Safety
- Self-Esteem
- Tools for Success
- Poetry Month
- 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
- Elements of a Successful School
- Building a School Community
- Tips for a Motivated High School
- Goal Setting
- Reading
- Wellness
- Math & Science
- Empathy
- Literacy
- District Resources
- Teaching with High Cognitive Demand
- Engaging Students in Meta-Cognitive Activities
- Deployment: Rebuilding Security in Children
- Sunday School
- High School Life Skills
- Connecting Music with Other Subjects
- Art and Self-Expression
- Holiday
- History
- Technology
- Other_____

PARENT BOARD



Exercise 3.8 Parent Survey

Exercise 3.8 Develop a 10-question parent survey to gain parent needs and interests. (You may use [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com))

Benefits of Conducting Student Surveys

Most schools that administer our questionnaires, whether they student surveys or surveys meant for teachers or parents, are commended for taking an open and evidence-based approach to reform.

Consider free online survey utilities like [SurveyMonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com).

Here are a few questions to get you started.

1. What did you like best about what your child did today?
2. How could we have improved it?
3. Other comments?

Log on to [SurveyMonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com) and develop a 10 question survey.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



Reflection

Share some ideas on strategies to engage parents in school activities. Describe how you will use the lesson plan activities on cultural diversity and inclusion to include parents. (300 words. Half page)

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Glossary of Terms

Baby Boomers - Baby boomers are the demographic group born during the post–World War II baby boom, approximately between the years 1946 and 1964. This includes people who are between 53 and 71 years old in 2017, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Clarifying Questions - Clarifying Questions are simple questions of fact. They clarify the dilemma and provide the nuts and bolts so that the participants can ask good probing questions and provide useful feedback.

Culture - Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

Diversity -the state or fact of being diverse; difference; unlikeness: ... the inclusion of individuals representing more than one national origin, color, religion, socioeconomic stratum, sexual orientation, etc.:

Family Engagement - Family engagement is a family-centered and strengths- based approach to making decisions, setting goals, and achieving desired outcomes for children and families.

Generation X - Generation X, or Gen X, is the demographic cohort following the baby boomers. There are no precise dates for when this cohort starts or ends; demographers and researchers typically use starting birth years ranging from the early-to-mid 1960s and ending birth years ranging from the late 1970s to early 1980s.

Generation Y - Generation Y are often referred to as "echo boomers" because they are the children of parents born during the baby boom (the "baby boomers").

Inclusion - The term inclusion captures, in one word, an all-embracing societal ideology. Regarding individuals with disabilities and special education, inclusion secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in general education classrooms.

Glossary of Terms

Millennial - In the U.S., millennials are the children of baby boomers, who are also known as the Me Generation, who then produced the Me Me Me ...

Parental Involvement - Parental involvement in school is defined as parent reported participation at least once during the school year in attending a general school meeting; attending a scheduled meeting with their child's teacher; attending a school event; or volunteering in the school or serving on a school committee.

Partnership - A partnership is an arrangement in which two or more individuals share the profits and liabilities of a business venture. Various arrangements are possible: all partners might share liabilities and profits equally, or some partners may have limited liability.

Probing Questions - Probing questions are not just about clarifying specific details; instead, these questions dig much deeper than the surface. An effective probing question helps to get a person to talk about their personal opinions and feelings, and promotes critical thinking.

Stereotypes - A stereotype is a preconceived notion, especially about a group of people. ... Those are stereotypes: commonly held ideas about specific groups. You most often hear about negative stereotypes, but some are positive.

Student Achievement - Student achievement measures the amount of academic content a student learns in a determined amount of time. Each grade level has learning goals or instructional standards that educators are required to teach.

Traditionalists - also known as Veterans, the Silent Generation and the Greatest Generation— comprises employees and retirees born between 1922 and 1943 who are continuing to lead and/or contribute to organizations or are re-entering the workforce.

Appendixes

Lesson Plan Template

Lesson Plan Template

Name: _____ Date: _____

Grade: _____

Lesson Title:

Objectives #1:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Objectives #2:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Objectives #3:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Cultural Diversity Activities

Inclusion Activities

Parent Involvement Activities

Extended Activities



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