

EVIDENCE BRIEF

Parent/Caregiver Engagement

Academic Literature on Parent/Caregiver Engagement



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Introduction

WHAT IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

Note: Although the literature often refers to parent engagement, we acknowledge that recommendations for practice may be applicable to a variety of caregivers within families of different types and structures.

The terms ‘parent involvement’ and ‘parent engagement’ both appear in literature on this topic, and are sometimes used interchangeably. Within research on parent engagement, precise definitions and distinctions between the two are contested (meaning there is ongoing debate). Some scholars have argued that the two terms, involvement and engagement, should be seen as a continuum from “parental **involvement with school** to parental **engagement with children’s learning**” (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014, p. 399). Moreover, ideas about parent involvement have often tended to take a deficit-based approach and portray parents and families as dysfunctional if they do not conform to mainstream expectations about involvement. However, there are scholars and practitioners pushing us to broaden our understandings to make diverse ways of engaging more visible and recognized.

For the purposes of this document, we follow the lead of scholars like Baker, Wise, Kelley & Skiba, 2016, who state that moving away from traditional ideas of involvement, such as parents’ physical presence, towards engagement (using collaboration to highlight the multiple ways parents contribute) will best support families and youth wellbeing.

HOW DID WE COLLECT THIS INFORMATION?

We searched online databases using the keywords “parent involvement; parent engagement,” “out-of-school time,” “family-focused intervention,” and “African Canadian; African American; Black; racialized” to try to find information about engaging parents of different identities and experiences. We looked for articles that paid attention to the power dynamics discussed above, as well as what works, what doesn’t, and how parental engagement practice and research can be improved in the future.

Critical Approaches

Nygreen, K. (2017). *Latina/o parent organizing for educational justice: An ethnographic account of community building and radical healing. Journal of Latinos and Education, 16(4), 301-313.*

This article describes a parent organizing effort with Latina/o immigrant parents in a large, high-poverty, racially and linguistically diverse urban school district. Drawing from ethnographic research and the theoretical framework of *mujerismo*, it examines the relational processes of community building and radical healing that occurred in weekly community-based parent workshops. Findings suggest the need for more research that empirically examines the relational, embodied, and pedagogical dimensions of parent organizing work.

Khalifa, M., Arnold, N.W., & Newcomb, W. (2015). *Understand and advocate for communities first. Phi Delta Kappan, 96(7), 20-25.*

Culturally responsive parent-school relationships require educators to consider the cultural practices and understandings of families as a necessary condition of greater academic achievement. The establishment of healthy parent-school relationships is a complex and dynamic process. A school-community overlap, with a priority given to community sensibilities and histories, will help schools sustain positive relationships with parents. If communities have experienced racism or other forms of marginalization, they may become distant or uncooperative. What's more, most educators feel they were hired to teach, not to perform community outreach. But in the absence of school outreach to their communities, the strengthened relationships between schools and parents that increase the educational opportunities for children are often lost.

Luet, K.M. (2015). *Disengaging parents in urban schooling. Educational Policy, 674-702.*

Drawing on a five-year qualitative study, this article explores opportunities for and barriers to parental engagement in a small, urban school district. Two competing narratives of parental involvement emerge. In one, parents describe their reluctance to engage formally in a district that continually fails their children. In the other, stakeholders argue that schools will not improve until parents become involved. Data demonstrate that many parents actively support their children's education, exhibiting various forms of what Yosso terms "community cultural wealth." This article concludes by questioning the claim that parents are not involved, utilizing Bourdieu's theories of symbolic capital and symbolic violence to explain the prevalence of this discourse of disengagement.

Alameda-Lawson, T. (2014). *A pilot study of collective parent engagement and children's academic achievement. Children & Schools, 36(4), 199-209.*

Parent involvement (PI) programs typically represent an important improvement strategy for schools serving low-income children of colour. This pilot study offers an alternative to conventional PI approaches – collective parent engagement (CPE). The study relied on a post hoc, quasiexperimental design, and data were collected from 32 low-income, minority parents. Participants were assigned to two study groups: a CPE study group (n = 16) and a comparison group (n = 16). Using ordinary least squares regression, this study examined CPE treatment effects in children's standardized test scores and parents' empowerment scores. Consistent with the extant PI literature, these models yielded higher standardized test scores for children of parents in the CPE study group.

Parent empowerment scores for parents involved in the CPE study group also were higher than those in the comparison group. However, in contrast to extant theory, the relationship between parent empowerment and children's test scores was generally not significant. Future research is needed on the mechanisms that underlie these relationships.

Yull, D., Blitz, L.V., Thompson, T., & Murray, C. (2014). Can we talk? Using community-based participatory action research to build family and school partnerships with families of color. *School Community Journal*, 24(2), 9-31.

Research has demonstrated persistent, disproportionately negative educational outcomes for students of colour, causing national concern in this area. School personnel increasingly understand the need to engage with parents as educational partners, but parents of colour may feel marginalized in these efforts. This paper presents findings from a series of focus groups with middle-class parents of colour in a small city in the Northeast United States. Using critical race theory, this research examines the parents' experiences in the community and with the schools. Findings regarding community include lack of cultural enrichment for families of colour, isolation in the community, and experiences of colourblind racism and cultural ignorance. School-focused findings include lack of cultural competency in the schools, stereotyping, and racial disproportionality in school discipline. The discussion centers on the school district's strategic plan and the community-university partnership used as a vehicle for responding to these critical concerns.

Baquedano-López, P., Alexander, R.A., & Hernandez, S. J. (2013). Equity issues in parental and community involvement in schools: What teacher educators need to know. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1), 149-182.

In this chapter, the authors examine the literature on parental involvement, highlighting the equity issues that it raises in educational practice. Like so many educators and researchers, the authors are concerned with approaches to parental involvement that construct restricted roles for parents in the education of their children. These approaches often miss the multiple ways nondominant parents participate in their children's education because they do not correspond to normative understandings of parental involvement in schools (Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George, 2004). Moreover, these framings restrict the ways in which parents from nondominant backgrounds can be productive social actors who can shape and influence schools and other social institutions. A great deal of general educational policy on parent involvement draws on Epstein's (1992, 1995) theory and typologies, where a set of overlapping spheres of influence locate the student among three major contexts—the family, the school, and the community—which operate optimally when their goals, missions, and responsibilities overlap. Epstein's (1992) Six Types of Involvement framework provides a variety of practices of partnership, including the following strategies for involvement: assisting with parenting, communicating with parents, organizing volunteering activities for parents, involving parents in learning at home activities (such as homework), including parents in decision making, and collaborating with community. This perspective, however, can foster individualistic and school-centric approaches (see Warren, Hong, Rubin, & Uy, 2009). The authors argue that this is even more problematic when school goals are largely based on White and middle-class values and expectations. Others question the model's inattention to

power relations between educational stakeholders, which often position parents as passive or complacent, and call for an expansion of the notion of involvement (S. Auerbach, 2007; Barton et al., 2004; Fine, 1993; Galindo & Medina, 2009). The authors argue that although conceptually useful, these typologies still reflect a restricted vision of partnership centered on the school's agenda. They note that these typologies do not engage the intersections of race, class, and immigration, which are relevant to the experiences of many parents from nondominant backgrounds. Their view of parent involvement considers parents as agents who can intervene and advocate on behalf of their children, and who can make adaptations and resist barriers to education (see also Hidalgo, 1998). Their review of the literature indicates that parental participation in schools is strongly shaped by perceptions of parents' background and of the roles expected of them by school administrators and teachers and by the organizations (whether local or federal) that fund family literacy and parent involvement programs (S. Auerbach, 2002; Barton et al., 2004; Vincent, 2001). To be sure, these perceptions affect all parents, but the negative equity outcomes of these beliefs and practices particularly affect parents from nondominant backgrounds. Moreover, deficit approaches about students and families who are not from the dominant majority have constructed them as lacking and in need of support (see Valencia, 1991, 2011), reinforcing a view of dependency on school goals. The authors hope that the literature they review in this chapter helps expand notions of parent involvement and of parents from nondominant groups as productive and engaged participants in communities and schools.

Beckett, L., Glass, R.D., & Moreno, A.P. (2013). A pedagogy of community building: Re-imagining parent involvement and community organizing in popular education efforts. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal*, 6(1), 5-14.

Where dominant models of urban school reform often regard immigrant communities as obstacles that must be managed or reduced, the two projects analyzed in this study (Alianza and the Project) regard the community as a powerful source of knowledge and as partners working towards educational improvement (Nygreen, 2009). This paper analyzes the ways in which Latino parents involved in these projects come together to learn about their communities and engage in a process of community building that strengthens their capacity to resist, if not overcome, dominant ideologies and institutions. Latino parents in these projects do more than simply challenge the narrative of reform that continues to position them at the margins; they establish their own spaces of learning and solidarity that enable them to crystallize their perspectives and become agents of change in their local context. We posit that community building is key to creating sustained long-term relationships that can survive and withstand the struggle towards institutional change and open doors for Latino community empowerment in schools and the broader society.

McKenna, M.K., & Millen, J. (2013). Look! Listen! Learn! Parent narratives and grounded theory models of parent voice, presence, and engagement in K-12 education. *School Community Journal*, 23(1), 9-48.

Educators' expectations and understandings of parental involvement in the nation's schools are often disconnected from the reality of students' home lives. This qualitative

study purports that educators often lose opportunities to more fully understand and serve students, particularly when perceptions of parental involvement and home-school-community relationships are not accurate or expansive enough to appreciate the nuances of different cultural, economic, or geographic circumstances. Parent (or caregiver) engagement, as the authors define it, encapsulates both parent voice and parent presence. Parent voice implies not only that parents have ideas and opinions about their children, but also that educators are receptive to this voice, allowing for an open, multidirectional flow of communication. Similarly, parent presence refers to actions related to the voices of caregivers. Based on a grounded theory model of qualitative research, the authors used a small, theoretically derived sample of parents involved with a local parent education program to further understand parent engagement, presenting detailed descriptions of conversations and writing done by participants through focus groups and interviews. From these data, new models of parent voice and presence emerged. These models act as precursors to a reconfigured and more comprehensive model of parent engagement. Crucial to the final model is an understanding of parent participation in children's lives that is fluid, robust, and specific to context and culture. The final model presented herein is a combination of parent voice and parent presence, whereby children's wellbeing is central to the interactions.

Alameda-Lawson, T., Lawson, M.A., & Lawson, H.A. (2010). Social workers' roles in facilitating the collective involvement of low-income, culturally diverse parents in an elementary school. *Children & Schools*, 32(3), 172-182.

Social workers have pivotal roles to play in facilitating collective parent involvement in economically poor school communities. Using a community-based, participatory, and empowerment-oriented approach to social work practice

and research, this study provides empirical support for this claim. It examines the narratives of 17 economically poor parents who were involved for at least six months in a collective parent involvement program, which served a low-performing Title One elementary school in a western state. An analysis of parent interviews yielded six themes-as-facilitators for parent involvement. Parents described each facilitator in relation to their previous perceptions of (poverty-related) constraints on their own involvement and well-being. The authors conclude that school social workers implementing collective parent involvement programs can act as powerful bridging agents between families and schools. This facilitative bridging role hinges on the extent to which social workers support parents' efforts to meet their social, economic, and developmental needs.

Cooper, C.W. (2009). Parent involvement, African American mothers, and the politics of educational care. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 42(4), 379-394.

This paper explores the relationship between notions of parent involvement and conceptions of care as they relate to educators' deficit perceptions of African American mothers. Black feminist and womanist interpretations of the ethic of care are used to reframe the biased discourse on parent involvement in schools. Specific consideration is given to how educational scholarship can better acknowledge African American mothers' race-based, gendered, and class-related contexts. Data from an in-depth, qualitative study of the educational experiences, values, and choices of low-income and working-class African American mothers inform the discussion. The study offers insight about the care and justice-seeking efforts of African American women. Implications for revising parent involvement typologies and strengthening school-family relationships according to a culturally relevant framework are emphasized.

Kim, Y. (2009). Minority parental involvement and school barriers: Moving the focus away from deficiencies of parents. *Educational Research Review*, 4(2), 80-102.

There has been an alarming imbalance in recent research on minority parental involvement because it has focused on parents' variables to identify groups for effective interventions without searching for broader contextual variables. This literature review provides available research findings on the school barriers that prevent minority parents' participation in their children's school in the United States. The following school barriers were identified: (a) teachers' perception about the efficacy of minority parents, (b) teachers' perception concerning the capacity of minority parents, (c) teachers' beliefs in the effectiveness of parental involvement and developmental philosophy, (d) teachers' self-efficacy in teaching effectiveness, (e) school friendliness and positive communication, (f) diversity of parental involvement programs, (g) school policies, and (h) school leadership. Increased understanding about the nature of minority parental involvement in their children's school will lead to a more collaborative home-school partnership and ensure the long-term success of parental involvement.

Warren, M.R., Hong, S., Rubin, C.L., & Uy, P.S. (2009). Beyond the bake sale: A community-based relational approach to parent engagement in schools. *Teachers College Record*, 111(9), 2209-2254.

Parent involvement in education is widely recognized as important, yet it remains weak in many communities. One important reason for this weakness is that urban schools have grown increasingly isolated from the families and communities they serve. Many of the same neighborhoods with families who are disconnected from

public schools, however, often contain strong community-based organizations (CBOs) with deep roots in the lives of families. Many CBOs are beginning to collaborate with public schools, and these collaborations might potentially offer effective strategies to engage families more broadly and deeply in schools. This article presents a community-based relational approach to fostering parent engagement in schools. The authors investigated the efforts of CBOs to engage parents in schools in low-income urban communities. They argue that when CBOs are authentically rooted in community life, they can bring to schools a better understanding of the culture and assets of families, as well as resources that schools may lack. As go-betweens, they can build relational bridges between educators and parents and act as catalysts for change. Using case study methodology, the authors studied three notable school-community collaborations: the Logan Square Neighborhood Association in Chicago, Illinois; the Camino Nuevo Charter Academy in Los Angeles, California; and the Quitman Street Community School in Newark, New Jersey. Each case represents one of three types of collaboration identified in previous research: community service, community development, and community organizing.

Cooper, C.W. (2007). School choice as 'motherwork': Valuing African-American women's educational advocacy and resistance. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 20(5), 491-512.

This study draws on in-depth interview data to discuss the school choices and educational advocacy roles of 14 African American mothers. The narratives of the study's participants, who have low-income or working-class status, show how race, class, and gender factors influence their school choice-making and their value of education. The author asserts that the mothers' school

choice-making constitutes an important act of cultural resistance and empowerment called motherwork. Analysis of the study's findings challenges conventional notions of parent involvement and counters prevalent stereotypes that portray African American mothers as uncaring. Attention is given to the inequities that the mothers face in the educational marketplace and how they seek agency. Educators are urged to consider how the mothers perceive themselves and construct their educational involvement roles in order to engage parents in empowering and meaningful ways.

Jackson, K., & Remillard, J.T. (2005). Rethinking parent involvement: African American mothers construct their roles in the mathematics education of their children. *School Community Journal*, 15(1), 51-73.

This article presents initial findings from a study that examined how African American mothers from a low-income neighborhood conceptualized their roles in their children's mathematics learning. Based on interviews and observations focusing on 10 mothers' involvement in their children's education, the authors offer a framework that expands typical characterizations of parent involvement. This framework privileges practices that are both traditionally visible and invisible to the school and highlights how parents act as "intellectual resources" in their children's education (Civil, Guevara & Allexsaht-Snider, 2002). Their findings offer evidence that traditional understandings of parent involvement may overlook ways that low-income parents deliberately involve themselves in their children's education. The findings also identify challenges that these parents face in relation to their children's mathematics education. Some of these challenges were due in part to stereotypes held by practitioners about the families they serve in low-income urban schools.

Black Families

McWayne, C.M., Mattis, J.S., Green Wright, L.E., Limlingan, M.C., & Harris, E. (2017). An emic, mixed-methods approach to defining and measuring positive parenting among low-income Black families. *Early Education and Development, 28*(2), 182-206.

This within-group exploratory sequential mixed-methods investigation sought to identify how ethnically diverse, urban-residing, low-income Black families conceptualize positive parenting. During the item development phase, 119 primary caregivers from Head Start programs participated in focus groups and interviews. These qualitative data were content analyzed using a three-stage iterative process that resulted in the development of a final set of 72 items for a paper-and-pencil measure. In the measure validation phase of the study, initial construct validity of the 72-item measure was assessed with an independent sample of 665 respondents. Common factor analyses revealed five dimensions of positive parenting on the Black Parenting Strengths in Context scale that related in expected ways with other parent self-report measures. Black Parenting Strengths in Context dimensions provide initial support for a more nuanced operationalization of positive parenting than currently exists in any single scale for use with this group, and hold promise for better honoring the culture- and context-specific parenting goals and practices that low-income Black parents subjectively view as important for producing healthy developmental outcomes for their children.

Osman, F., Klingberg-Allvin, M., Flacking, R., & Schön, U.K. (2016). Parenthood in transition – Somali-born parents' experiences of and needs for parenting support programmes. *BMC International Health and Human Rights, 16*(1), 1-11.

Pre- and post-migration trauma due to forced migration may impact negatively on parents' ability to care for their children. Little qualitative work has examined Somali-born refugees' experiences. The aim of this study is to explore Somali-born refugees' experiences and challenges of being parents in Sweden, and the support they need in their

parenting. A qualitative descriptive study was undertaken. Data were collected from four focus group discussions (FGDs) among 23 Somali-born mothers and fathers living in a county in central Sweden. Qualitative content analysis has been applied. A main category, Parenthood in Transition, emerged as a description of a process of parenthood in transition. Two generic categories were identified: Challenges and Improved parenting. Challenges emerged from leaving the home country and being new and feeling alienated in the new country. In Improved parenting, an awareness of opportunities in the new country and ways to improve their parenting was described, which includes how to improve their communication and relationship with their children. The parents described a need for information on how to culturally adapt their parenting and obtain support from the authorities. Parents experienced a process of parenthood in transition. They were looking to the future and for ways to improve their parenting. Schools and social services can overcome barriers that prevent lack of knowledge about the new country's systems related to parenthood. Leaving the home country often means separation from the family and losing the social network. The authors suggest that staff in schools and social services offer parent training classes for these parents throughout their children's childhood, with benefits for the child and family.

Baker, G.P. (2015). *Daddy is involved: How do African American fathers participate in the education experiences of their high school children?* (Doctoral dissertation, Loyola University Chicago).

Parents have tremendous influence in the lives of their children. As a result, it is valuable to investigate how high school parents participate in their children's high school education experiences. African American fathers, in particular, have been placed under scrutiny by the media

and general population for not being involved in the education experiences of their children, while the research literature dispels this generalization. This study investigates how African American fathers, in a suburban community, participate in the education experiences of their high school children. This research study took place at a Du Page County, Illinois, high school under the pseudonym Suburban High School (SHS). The investigation of this topic uses a qualitative case study methodology and thematic analysis of interviews with 10 African American fathers, observations at academic and co-curricular events, and interviews with 10 educators, who work with African American fathers at SHS. Field notes were compiled to capture the subjects and observations at this research site illustrating the nature of parent involvement at Suburban High School. Through these qualitative methods, this study aims at developing meaningful data to compare and reify how African American fathers participate in their high school children's education experiences. This study contributes to the existing research literature about African American father involvement in their children's education experiences.

FIND IT ONLINE

<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1719469670?pq-origsite=gscholar>

McGee, E., & Spencer, M.B. (2015). Black parents as advocates, motivators, and teachers of mathematics. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 84(3), 473-490.

There is growing need to showcase the agency and determination of African American parents seeking equitable educational opportunities for their children, given that their narratives defy mainstream stereotypes of passivity, disinterest, and lack of effort. In this article the authors investigate the early role of parents in fostering sustainable mathematics and academic success among 24 high-achieving Black college students in the science,

technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. In particular, this study sheds light on the ways parents support their children's mathematics participation and learning in and outside of school settings. Black parental involvement is misunderstood. This research shows that African American parents are aware of educational inequities and respond by becoming advocates, motivators, and even early teachers of mathematics for their children.

Williams, T.T., & Sánchez, B. (2013). Identifying and decreasing barriers to parent involvement for inner-city parents. *Youth & Society*, 45(1), 54-74.

Previous studies demonstrate the positive effects of parental involvement on student grade point averages (GPAs), standardized tests scores, and other academic outcomes. Because of the positive role of parental involvement on youth academic achievement, many parents and school personnel desire more collaboration between the family and the school. However, obstacles often arise prohibiting such positive interactions, especially for inner-city African American parents. In this study, parents and school personnel at a predominantly African American inner-city high school completed in-depth interviews regarding the barriers to involving parents in their children's education. Parents and school personnel identified barriers that fit into four descriptive categories: (a) time poverty, (b) lack of access, (c) lack of financial resources, and (d) lack of awareness. Suggestions for decreasing barriers were also discussed. Findings suggest that taking family context into consideration during the planning phases of school-based programs and events improve parental involvement. Implications and recommendations for practitioners are discussed.

Griffin, D. (2011). Parent involvement with African American families in expanded school mental health practice. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 4(2), 16-26.

The positive impact of parental involvement on academic success has been well documented, but less is known about parental involvement with African American families. The studies that do exist often label African American families as uninvolved in their children's education. They often overlook the different aspects of participation that are critical to understanding the involvement of African American families. This article discusses the literature on African American parental involvement. Based on the Multicultural Counseling Competencies framework, an approach for working with African American families is described. Specific implications for practitioners working in expanded school mental health are provided.

Cooper, C.W. (2009). Parent involvement, African American mothers, and the politics of educational care. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 42(4), 379-394.

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Koonce, D.A., & Harper, Jr, W. (2005). Engaging African American parents in the schools: A community-based consultation model. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 16(1-2), 55-74.

Although it has been well established that parental involvement in school is linked to positive outcomes for children, there are a myriad of issues that make it challenging for some African American families to engage school personnel in collaborative problem solving (e.g., Hill & Craft, 2003). Some of the barriers that decrease involvement include parents' poor school experiences, intimidation by school personnel, and inconvenient meeting times. When parents' initial advocacy efforts are not effective, we must seek alternative methods. A recommended method is the collaborative efforts of community-based social service agencies and school consultants to engage African American families in

mutually beneficial partnerships with schools to facilitate successful academic careers for their children (Witty, 1982). In this article, the authors discuss the barriers that African American families face when attempting to collaborate with schools and describe a multiphase model for engaging African American families with school to effectively advocate for their children's needs. A case study is presented describing the use of this model with a student exhibiting behavior problems in school.

Health-Related Programs

Burkart, S., Laurent, C.W.S., & Alhassan, S. (2017). Process evaluation of a culturally-tailored physical activity intervention in African-American mother-daughter dyads. *Preventive Medicine Reports*, 8, 88-92.

The purpose of this study was to describe process evaluation data including intervention fidelity, dosage, quality, participant responsiveness, and program reach for the Mothers And daughters Dancing Together Trial (MAGNET) in Springfield, MA, in Spring 2013 and 2014. Seventy-six mother-daughter dyads were randomized to the mother-daughter group (CH-M, n = 28), the child-only group (CH, n = 25), or the health education group (CON, n = 23). CH-M consisted of 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous culturally-tailored dance classes for dyads. CH consisted of dance classes for the child. All groups received homework tutoring and weekly health newsletters. Process evaluation data were assessed at each intervention session (three days/week, six-months) with semi-structured questionnaires by researchers. CH dance classes were slightly longer (58.2 ± 3.5 minutes) than CH-M (54.4 ± 5.5 minutes). In both groups, participants spent the majority of the dance intervention in light intensity physical activity (PA). Participants in the CH-M group enjoyed participating in MAGNET > 90% of the time. Mothers (92%) indicated that they wanted to continue dance as a form of PA. Mothers expressed that transportation, time commitment, and assessments were barriers to participation. Participants suggested future interventions should include longer intervention length and more communications between research staff and mothers. The MAGNET intervention matched the originally intended program in most aspects. A lower intervention dose was delivered to the CH-M group potentially due to barriers described by mothers. Because mother-daughter interventions have shown minimal effects on increasing PA, it is imperative that researchers utilize process evaluation data to shape future studies.

Barr-Anderson, D.J., Adams-Wynn, A.W., Alhassan, S., & Whitt-Glover, M.C. (2014). Culturally-appropriate, family- and community-based physical activity and healthy eating intervention for African-American middle school-aged girls: A feasibility pilot. *Journal of Adolescent and Family Health*, 6(2), 6.

This study tested the feasibility and acceptability of a physical activity, healthy eating, and social support intervention. Twelve African-American daughter-mother dyads (BMI percentile: daughters= 92.6 ± 12.79 ; BMI: mothers= 38.8 ± 5.81 kg/m²) met weekly during the eight-week Intensive Phase; throughout the six-month Maintenance Phase, participants received monthly newsletters for three months and attended monthly face-to-face sessions for three months. Daughters and mothers reported positive feedback about intervention activities and educational curriculum. Post-intervention daughter survey results revealed positive trends towards increasing PA; increasing breakfast, water, and fruit/vegetable intake; and reducing sugar sweetened drink consumption. Mothers reported similar behavioural changes. This unique intervention was highly enjoyed by participants and utilized feasible, family-involved strategies to address obesity-related behaviors among African-American females.

FIND IT ONLINE

<http://scholar.utc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=jafh>

Barr-Anderson, D.J., Adams-Wynn, A.W., DiSantis, K.I., & Kumanyika, S. (2013). Family-focused physical activity, diet and obesity interventions in African-American girls: A systematic review. *Obesity Reviews*, 14(1), 29-51.

Obesity interventions that involve family members may be effective with racial/ethnic minority youth. This review assessed the nature and effectiveness of family involvement in obesity interventions among African American girls aged 5–18 years, a population group with high rates of obesity. Twenty-six databases were searched between January 2011 and March 2012, yielding 27 obesity pilot or full-length prevention or treatment studies with some degree of family involvement and data specific to African American girls. Interventions varied in type and level of family involvement, cultural adaptation, delivery format, and behaviour change intervention strategies; most targeted parent-child dyads. Some similarities in approach based on family involvement were identified. The use of theoretical perspectives specific to African American family dynamics was absent. Across all studies, effects on weight-related behaviours were generally promising but often non-significant. Similar conclusions were drawn for weight-related outcomes among the full-length randomized controlled trials. Many strategies appeared promising on face value, but available data do not permit inferences about whether or how best to involve family members in obesity prevention and treatment interventions with African American girls. Study designs that directly compare different types and levels of family involvement and incorporate relevant theoretical elements may be an important next step.

Racialized Families

Brown, J.C., Graves, E., Bradbury, K., Burke, M.A., & Triest, R.K. (2017). Involvement, engagement, and community: Dimensions and correlates of parental participation in a majority-minority urban school district. Boston, MA: Federal Reserve of Boston.

This study examines dimensions of parental participation in their children's schools and determinants of that participation. The rich literature on this issue explores questions of how parents participate and what predicts parental participation. The authors drew upon a unique survey of 400 parents of children attending public elementary schools in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The district is a majority Hispanic school district with strong ties to immigrant communities, primarily from the Dominican Republic. The study uses exploratory factor analysis to examine the widely held view that parental involvement can be understood as occurring along a single continuum. Their factor analysis of survey responses suggests that standard forms of participation can be aligned along two distinct dimensions, reactive involvement on the one hand and proactive engagement on the other. Analysis of novel survey questions reveals the existence of a third dimension that the authors term parental community. The survey and administrative data suggest that income and very recent immigration, but not educational attainment, can be important factors in involvement, while family circumstances are the main correlate of engagement. The measures of language usage and immigration status suggest that households with the closest proximity to a Spanish-language/immigrant culture feel the strongest sense of parental community. Perhaps surprisingly, educational attainment is inversely related to the sense of community. The findings may be valuable for targeting outreach efforts and programming designed to involve parents more fully in their children's schooling.

FIND IT ONLINE

<https://www.bostonfed.org/publications/community-development-discussion-paper/2017/involvement-engagement-and-community.aspx>

Nygreen, K. (2017). Latina/o parent organizing for educational justice: An ethnographic account of community building and radical healing. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 16(4), 301-313.

This article describes a parent organizing effort with Latina/o immigrant parents in a large, high-poverty, racially and linguistically diverse urban school district. Drawing from ethnographic research and the theoretical framework of *mujerismo*, it examines the relational processes of community building and radical healing that occurred in weekly community-based parent workshops. Findings suggest the need for more research that empirically examines the relational, embodied, and pedagogical dimensions of parent organizing work.

Ishimaru, A.M., Torres, K.E., Salvador, J.E., Lott, J., Williams, D.M.C., & Tran, C. (2016). Reinforcing deficit, journeying toward equity: Cultural brokering in family engagement initiatives. *American Educational Research Journal*, 53(4), 850-882.

Families are key actors in efforts to improve student learning and outcomes, but conventional engagement efforts often disregard the cultural and social resources of nondominant families. Individuals who serve as cultural brokers play critical, though complex, roles bridging between schools and families. Using an equitable collaboration lens with boundary-spanning theory, this comparative case study examined how individuals enacted cultural brokering within three organizational contexts. The findings suggest a predominance of cultural brokering consistent with programmatic goals to socialize nondominant families into school-centric norms and agendas. However, formal leadership and boundary-spanning ambiguity enabled more collective, relational,

or reciprocal cultural brokering. These dynamics suggest potential stepping stones and organizational conditions for moving toward more equitable forms of family-school collaboration and systemic transformation.

Quiñones, S., & Kiyama, J. M. (2014). *Contra la corriente (Against the current): The role of Latino fathers in family-school engagement. School Community Journal, 24(1), 149-176.*

A community-based, multisite study using mixed methods examined the experiences and perspectives of Latino students and families in a low performing urban school district in New York State. This research project was spearheaded by a Latino Education Task Force which brought together multiple stakeholders in a collaborative effort to counteract high dropout rates and deficit thinking about Latino youth and their families. The findings reported here, drawn from a thematic analysis of data collected specifically from focus groups with parents, centre on Latino fathers' perspectives and experiences. The authors utilized a conceptual framework of Latino family epistemology and alternative parental role theory to explore the role of Puerto Rican fathers in family-school engagement. Findings reveal that these fathers: (a) cultivate education as a family and community affair in order to promote school success; (b) critique dynamics within the parent-school-district system and advocate for their children; and (c) acknowledge their vulnerable positioning as fathers resisting racism and invisibility in schools and the larger community. Fathers understood middle-class forms of involvement as well as culture and power dynamics, suggesting their involvement was a form of agency—a pushing back against the system that made them distrustful in the first place. A common theme across the data sources is the idea of moving *contra la corriente* or going against the current. This research highlights the need for collaboration and community action aimed at “adjusting the sails” as we move toward educational equity.

Baquedano-López, P., Alexander, R.A., & Hernandez, S. J. (2013). *Equity issues in parental and community involvement in schools: What teacher educators need to know. Review of Research in Education, 37(1), 149-182.*

In this chapter, the authors examine the literature on parental involvement, highlighting the equity issues that it raises in educational practice. Like so many educators and researchers, the authors are concerned with approaches to parental involvement that construct restricted roles for parents in the education of their children. These approaches often miss the multiple ways nondominant parents participate in their children's education because they do not correspond to normative understandings of parental involvement in schools (Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George, 2004). Moreover, these framings restrict the ways in which parents from nondominant backgrounds can be productive social actors who can shape and influence schools and other social institutions. A great deal of general educational policy on parent involvement draws on Epstein's (1992, 1995) theory and typologies, where a set of overlapping spheres of influence locate the student among three major contexts—the family, the school, and the community—which operate optimally when their goals, missions, and responsibilities overlap. Epstein's (1992) Six Types of Involvement framework provides a variety of practices of partnership, including the following strategies for involvement: assisting with parenting, communicating with parents, organizing volunteering activities for parents, involving parents in learning at home activities (such as homework), including parents in decision making, and collaborating with community. This perspective, however, can foster individualistic and school-centric approaches (see Warren, Hong, Rubin, & Uy, 2009). The authors argue that this is even more problematic when school goals are largely based on White and middle-class values and expectations. Others question the model's inattention to power relations between educational stakeholders, which often position parents as passive or complacent, and call for

an expansion of the notion of involvement (S. Auerbach, 2007; Barton et al., 2004; Fine, 1993; Galindo & Medina, 2009). The authors argue that although conceptually useful, these typologies still reflect a restricted vision of partnership centered on the school's agenda. They note that these typologies do not engage the intersections of race, class, and immigration, which are relevant to the experiences of many parents from nondominant backgrounds. Their view of parent involvement considers parents as agents who can intervene and advocate on behalf of their children, and who can make adaptations and resist barriers to education (see also Hidalgo, 1998). Their review of the literature indicates that parental participation in schools is strongly shaped by perceptions of parents' background and of the roles expected of them by school administrators and teachers and by the organizations (whether local or federal) that fund family literacy and parent involvement programs (S. Auerbach, 2002; Barton et al., 2004; Vincent, 2001). To be sure, these perceptions affect all parents, but the negative equity outcomes of these beliefs and practices particularly affect parents from nondominant backgrounds. Moreover, deficit approaches about students and families who are not from the dominant majority have constructed them as lacking and in need of support (see Valencia, 1991, 2011), reinforcing a view of dependency on school goals. The authors hope that the literature they review in this chapter helps expand notions of parent involvement and of parents from nondominant groups as productive and engaged participants in communities and schools.

Beckett, L., Glass, R.D., & Moreno, A.P. (2013). A pedagogy of community building: Re-imagining parent involvement and community organizing in popular education efforts. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal*, 6(1), 5-14.

Where dominant models of urban school reform often regard immigrant communities as obstacles that must be managed or reduced, the two projects analyzed in this study (Alianza and the Project) regard the community as a powerful source of knowledge and as partners working towards educational improvement (Nygreen, 2009). This paper analyzes the ways in which Latino parents involved in these projects come together to learn about their communities and engage in a process of community building that strengthens their capacity to resist, if not overcome, dominant ideologies and institutions. Latino parents in these projects do more than simply challenge the narrative of reform that continues to position them at the margins; they establish their own spaces of learning and solidarity that enable them to crystallize their perspectives and become agents of change in their local context. We posit that community building is key to creating sustained long-term relationships that can survive and withstand the struggle towards institutional change and open doors for Latino community empowerment in schools and the broader society.

McWayne, C. M., Melzi, G., Schick, A.R., Kennedy, J.L., & Mundt, K. (2013). Defining family engagement among Latino Head Start parents: A mixed-methods measurement development study. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 28(3), 593-607.

Given the increasing numbers of Latino children and, specifically, of dual-language learning Latino children, entering the U.S. educational system, culturally

contextualized models are needed to understand how parents construct their involvement roles and support their children's educational experiences. Current measures of parenting and family engagement have been developed primarily with European American families and, thus, might not capture engagement behaviours unique to other ethnic groups. Lacking culture-appropriate measurement limits our ability to construct programs that adequately incorporate protective factors to promote children's successful development. The present mixed-methods investigation employed an emic approach to understand family engagement conceptualizations for a pan-Latino population. One hundred thirteen parents from 14 Head Start programs in a large, northeastern city participated in the first study, in which domains of family engagement were identified and specific items were co-constructed to capture family engagement behaviors. Then, 650 caregivers participated in a second study examining the construct validity of the resulting 65-item measure across two language versions: Parental Engagement of Families from Latino Backgrounds (PEFL-English) and Participación Educativa de Familias Latinas (PEFL-Spanish). Four theoretically meaningful dimensions of family engagement among Latino Head Start families were identified empirically. The measure was then validated with teacher report of family involvement and parent report of satisfaction with their experiences in Head Start.

Guo, Y. (2012). Diversity in public education: Acknowledging immigrant parent knowledge. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 35(2), 120-140.

Immigrant parents bring their values, language, culture, religion, and educational backgrounds to our schools, enriching our educational environments. The literature on immigrant parents, however, uses a deficit model. This study explored the value of and knowledge of immigrant parents on the margins of the public education system. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 38 immigrant

parents from 15 countries. The results of this study illustrate the significance of immigrant parent knowledge, cultural, first language and religious knowledge, and the need for teachers and school administrators to recognize and make use of parent knowledge.

FIND OUR RESEARCH SUMMARY ONLINE

<https://exchange.youthrex.com/research-summary/diversity-public-education-acknowledging-immigrant-parent-knowledge>

Crozier, G. (2001). Excluded parents: The deracialisation of parental involvement. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 4(4), 329-341.

The blanket assumption that all parents are the same, with the same needs, and that their children can be treated in the same way continues to prevail in parental involvement policy and discourse. With respect to ethnic minority parents, specifically, such an approach obfuscates the importance of tackling the nature and consequences of structural racism. This 'one size fits all' approach masks the complexity of needs, the roles that ethnic minority parents are playing or the constraints that impede their involvement. This article focuses on ethnic minority parents in order to address the deracialization of parental involvement policies and to extend the critique of parental involvement discourses. The implications of these, with respect to the opportunities for ethnic minority parents to intervene on their children's behalf as part of their commitment to supporting their children's education, are discussed. The argument presented asserts that parental involvement policies are flawed in their failure to recognize the ethnic diversity amongst parents, together with institutional racism within the education system, and that the deracialized parental involvement that is on offer may in the long run contribute to widening the gap between the involved and the uninvolved—the achievers and the underachievers.

Involvement & Support in Educational Settings

Ishimaru, A.M. (2017). From family engagement to equitable collaboration. *Educational Policy*, 1-36.

Policy makers have long seen parents and families as key levers for improving U.S. student outcomes and success, and new cross-sector collaborative policy and initiatives provide a promising context for innovations in efforts to engage nondominant families in educational equity reform. Drawing on a lens of equitable collaboration, this study examined the strategies in three organizational efforts to improve family engagement in education within a common cross-sector collaboration initiative in a Western region of the United States. Although conventional approaches persisted amid regular exchanges across organizations, the authors identified more reciprocal, collective, and relational strategies: (a) parent capacity-building, (b) relationship-building, and (c) systemic capacity-building efforts. Despite promising strategies, the dynamics of implementation in the cross-sector collaborative constrained change and mirrored limitations in family engagement practice and policy. The article concludes with next steps for research, practice, and policy in the journey toward more equitable collaboration.

Kim, J., & Bryan, J. (2017). A first step to a conceptual framework of parent empowerment: Exploring relationships between parent empowerment and academic performance in a national sample. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 95(2), 168-179.

This study tested a parent empowerment framework using a national sample of 9,982 parents from the Parent and Family Involvement Survey (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007) to investigate relationships between parent empowerment and children's academic performance. A multinomial logistic regression demonstrated significant relationships between parents' competence, self-determination, community belonging,

community participation, and academic performance, which differentiate among parents based on racial/ethnic, language, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Findings highlight the importance of parent empowerment interventions that consider structural barriers in schools.

Whitford, D.K., & Addis, A.K. (2017). Caregiver engagement: Advancing academic and behavioral outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education. *NASSP Bulletin*, 101(3), 241-255.

The Every Student Succeeds Act encourages home, school, and community partnerships as a method for improving academic achievement. Districts who seek federal funding must provide outreach to all caregivers within the district, making meaningful efforts to attract those with the greatest barriers to engagement. This review provides a thematic analysis of methods for cultivating home and school partnerships with caregivers of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse in special education. Emphasis is placed on the roles and responsibilities of school principals based on the development of culturally responsive school leadership. Student impact, as well as recommendations for practice, are provided.

Alameda-Lawson, T., & Lawson, M.A. (2016). Ecologies of collective parent engagement in urban education. *Urban Education*, 1-36.

For the past several decades, the construct of parent involvement (PI) has framed much of the literature on school-family-community partnerships. In this study, the authors used a qualitative form of meta-analysis called thematic synthesis to explore a programmatic alternative to conventional PI known as collective parent engagement (CPE). The CPE approach examined in this study was implemented in three low-income, urban school

communities. The primary goal was to help low-income parents develop programs and services that could support the strengths, needs, and challenges of children and families at school and in the community. The findings indicated that, when implemented as an isolated or “stand-alone” service strategy, CPE generally does not influence school outcomes. But when tied to a broader system of reform efforts, CPE can help transform the social-institutional landscape of low-income, urban school communities.

Hamlin, D., & Flessa, J. (2016). Parental involvement initiatives: An analysis. *Educational Policy*, 1-31.

Educational policies have increasingly promoted parental involvement as a mechanism for improving student outcomes. Few jurisdictions have provided funding for this priority. In Ontario, Canada, the province’s Parents Reaching Out Grants program allows parents to apply for funding for a parental involvement initiative that addresses a local barrier to parent participation. This study categorizes initiatives (N = 11,171) amounting to approximately 10 million dollars (Can\$) in funding from 2009 to 2014 and compares them across school settings. Although results show several key contextual differences, parents across settings identify relatively similar needs for enabling parental involvement, emphasizing parenting approaches for supporting well-being (e.g., nutrition, mental health, and technology use) and skills for home-based learning. However, Epstein’s widely used parental involvement typology conceals these prominent aspects of parental involvement. A modified model of parental involvement is presented that may serve as a guide for enhancing parent participation.

FIND OUR RESEARCH SUMMARY ONLINE

<https://exchange.youthrex.com/research-summary/parental-involvement-initiatives-analysis>

Posey-Maddox, L., & Haley-Lock, A. (2016). One size does not fit all: Understanding parent engagement in the contexts of work, family, and public schooling. *Urban Education*, 1-28.

The authors examined how parents and educators in a low-income school conceptualize parental engagement, and how school, work, and family domains together shape these parties’ practices as well as understandings of how and why parents engage. From interviews with the principal, five teachers, and 17 mothers of children at a Title I elementary school, the authors observed mothers’ varied approaches to juggling employment and caregiving responsibilities with desires to be involved in their children’s education, strategies often unknown and mismatched to the focuses of school staff. The study suggests the value of engagement opportunities tailored to families’ unique circumstances and assets.

Stefanski, A., Valli, L., & Jacobson, R. (2016). Beyond involvement and engagement: The role of the family in school-community partnerships. *School Community Journal*, 26(2), 135-160.

Research indicates that partnerships between schools and neighborhood communities support student learning, improve schools, and strengthen families and neighborhoods. These partnerships expand the traditional educational mission of the school to include health and social services for children and their families and to involve the broader community. School–community partnerships typically arise out of a specific need in the community and, as such, differ across a range of processes, structures, purposes, and types of family involvement. In previous work, the authors developed a typology to more closely examine various school–community partnerships (Valli, Stefanski & Jacobson, 2013). From that review of the literature, they identified four increasingly complex and comprehensive

partnership models. In this article, the authors reexamine the literature, focusing on the role of the family in those partnership models, and discuss implications for productive family–school–community relations. Their analysis of the literature indicates that the role of parents and families differed considerably across the four models. In contrast to the simple family involvement versus family engagement dichotomy found in much of the current literature, the authors found eight distinct ways in which family roles were envisioned and enacted. This article provides a detailed picture of those roles to guide policies and practices that strengthen the family’s role in school–community partnerships.

Mundt, K., Gregory, A., Melzi, G., & McWayne, C. M. (2015). The influence of ethnic match on Latino school-based family engagement. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 37(2), 170-185.

Research has shown that the school-based engagement of Latino families is lower compared with other racial and ethnic groups. One possible barrier to school-based engagement of this heterogeneous group of families might be the lack of cultural match between families and schools. Addressing this under-researched area, the current study examined ethnic match between Latino caregivers and teachers at seven Head Start centers in a large urban area in the Northeast. Participants were 294 Latino caregivers with children enrolled in Head Start programs and 37 Head Start teachers. Using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), findings indicated that ethnic match (defined by whether a caregiver and the Head Start teacher both identified as Latino) was significantly associated with teacher-rated family engagement. Having a Latino teacher explained a significant amount of the variance in school-based family engagement, beyond that accounted for by caregiver and teacher education. Implications for Head Start’s recruitment and training of teachers are discussed.

Pavlaklis, A.E. (2015). Reaching all families: Family, school, and community partnerships amid homelessness and high mobility in an urban district. *Urban Education*, 1-31.

Schools often struggle to build partnerships with homeless and highly mobile (HHM) families. These families are not homogeneous; they live in and engage with schools from diverse residential contexts. Using Epstein's theory and framework and drawing from 132 interviews with HHM parents, school personnel, and community stakeholders in an urban district, results suggest that (a) interviewees had divergent experiences with family, school, and community partnerships; (b) some school actors were better positioned to engage HHM families than others; and (c) the diverse residential context of HHM families molded partnership building in unique ways. Theoretical implications and recommendations for practice and policy are discussed.

Ishimaru, A. (2014). Rewriting the rules of engagement: Elaborating a model of district-community collaboration. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(2), 188-216.

In this ethnographic case study, Ann M. Ishimaru examines how a collaboration emerged and evolved between a low-income Latino parent organizing group and the leadership of a rapidly changing school district. Using civic capacity and community organizing theories, Ishimaru seeks to understand the role of parents, goals, strategies, and change processes that characterize a school district's collaboration with a community-based organization. Her findings suggest an emergent model of collaboration that engages parents as educational leaders, focuses on shared systemic goals, strategically builds capacity and relationships, and addresses educational change as political process. This emergent model stands in contrast to traditional partnerships between communities and school or district leadership that often reflect deficit conceptions of marginalized parents and

families. By rewriting the rules of engagement, parents, families, and community members can contribute critical resources to enable districts and schools to educate all students more equitably.

Goodall, J., & Montgomery, C. (2014). Parental involvement to parental engagement: A continuum. *Educational Review*, 66(4), 399-410.

Based on the literature of the field, this article traces a continuum between parental involvement with schools, and parental engagement with children's learning. The article seeks to shed light on an area of confusion; previous research has shown that different stakeholder groups understand "parental engagement" in different ways. Other literature makes it clear that the greatest benefit is derived from the furthest end of the proposed continuum, that is, parental engagement with children's learning. The continuum gives examples of each stage of the movement along the continuum. The continuum is illustrated not only in prose but as a diagram. The article concludes with a discussion of the agency of parents and schools in the movement along the continuum.

Hands, C. (2013). Including all families in education: School district-level efforts to promote parent engagement in Ontario, Canada. *Teaching Education*, 24(2), 134-149.

Parent engagement plays an essential role in student achievement and well-being, but not all families are able to participate in their children's education. This article focuses on strategies for reaching and supporting parents who face challenges to engagement such as poverty and cultural diversity. Five district-level parent engagement projects were qualitatively examined through observations, document analysis, and 47 interviews with program coordinators, educators, and parents. Coordinators

conducted surveys and community visits to learn about families and their communities. All initiatives had district support, and used strategies to address poverty and/or cultural challenges. Some initiatives engaged parents in teaching and learning, and others provided parenting support and links to community services and organizations for families. Provincial education departments or ministries, universities, and boards need to work with educators, providing human, material, and financial resources to support inclusive initiatives that promote all families' participation in their children's education.

Fathers

Pruett, M.K., Pruett, K., Cowan, C.P., & Cowan, P.A. (2017). Enhancing father involvement in low-income families: A couples group approach to preventive intervention. *Child Development, 88*(2), 398-407.

To address the problem of fathers' absence from children's lives and the difficulty of paternal engagement, especially among lower income families, government agencies have given increasing attention to funding father involvement interventions. Few of these interventions have yielded promising results. Father involvement research that focuses on the couple/coparenting relationship offers a pathway to support fathers' involvement while strengthening family relationships. Relevant research is reviewed and an exemplar is provided in the Supporting Father Involvement intervention and its positive effects on parental and parent-child relationships and children's outcomes. The article concludes with policy implications of this choice of target populations and the need to develop new strategies to involve fathers in the lives of their children.

Potter, C. (2016). 'It's the most important thing—I mean, the schooling': Father involvement in the education of children with autism. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 31*(4), 489-505.

Father involvement in education has been shown to result in a range of positive outcomes for typically developing children. However, the nature of paternal involvement in the education of children with disabilities and especially autism has been under-researched and is little understood. This study aimed to explore the nature of the involvement of 25 UK fathers in the education and their children with autism, aged up to 19 years, through the use of semistructured interviews. Findings showed that fathers were highly engaged both directly and indirectly across several dimensions of their children's education and schooling.

Key areas of indirect engagement were involvement in administrative processes necessary for securing an appropriate educational placement; and facilitating daily access to school and general support of children's progress through attendance at school-based meetings and events. Direct support for learning occurred through homework assistance and working on school-related goals. Findings are discussed in relation to diversity and generative models of fatherhood. Implications for greater father inclusion in the education of children with autism are explored with reference to a gender-differentiated approach.

Baker, G.P. (2015). *Daddy is involved: How do African American fathers participate in the education experiences of their high school children?* (Doctoral dissertation, Loyola University Chicago).

Parents have tremendous influence in the lives of their children. As a result, it is valuable to investigate how high school parents participate in their children's high school education experiences. African American fathers, in particular, have been placed under scrutiny by the media and general population for not being involved in the education experiences of their children, while the research literature dispels this generalization. This study investigates how African American fathers, in a suburban community, participate in the education experiences of their high school children. This research study took place at a Du Page County, Illinois, high school under the pseudonym Suburban High School (SHS). The investigation of this topic uses a qualitative case study methodology and thematic analysis of interviews with 10 African American fathers, observations at academic and co-curricular events, and interviews with 10 educators, who work with African American fathers at SHS. Field notes were compiled to capture the subjects and observations at this research site illustrating the nature of parent involvement at Suburban High School. Through these qualitative methods, this study aims at developing

meaningful data to compare and reify how African American fathers participate in their high school children's education experiences. This study contributes to the existing research literature about African American father involvement in their children's education experiences.

FIND IT ONLINE

<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1719469670?pq-origsite=gscholar>

Panter-Brick, C., Burgess, A., Eggerman, M., McAllister, F., Pruett, K., & Leckman, J. F. (2014). Practitioner review: Engaging fathers – recommendations for a game change in parenting interventions based on a systematic review of the global evidence. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 55(11), 1187-1212.

Despite robust evidence of fathers' impact on children and mothers, engaging with fathers is one of the least well-explored and articulated aspects of parenting interventions. It is therefore critical to evaluate implicit and explicit biases manifested in current approaches to research, intervention, and policy. The authors conducted a systematic database and a thematic hand search of the global literature on parenting interventions. Studies were selected from Medline, Psycinfo, SSCI, and Cochrane databases, and from gray literature on parenting programs, using multiple search terms for parent, father, intervention, and evaluation. They tabulated single programs and undertook systematic quality coding to review the evidence base in terms of the scope and nature of data reporting. After screening 786 nonduplicate records, the authors identified 199 publications that presented evidence on father participation and impact in parenting interventions. With some notable exceptions, few interventions disaggregate 'father' or 'couple' effects in their evaluation, being mostly driven by a focus on the mother-child dyad. The authors identified seven key barriers to engaging fathers in parenting programs, pertaining to cultural, institutional, professional,

operational, content, resource, and policy considerations in their design and delivery. Barriers to engaging men as parents work against father inclusion as well as father retention, and undervalue coparenting as contrasted with mothering. Robust evaluations of father participation and father impact on child or family outcomes are stymied by the ways in which parenting interventions are currently designed, delivered, and evaluated. Three key priorities are to engage fathers and coparenting couples successfully, to disaggregate process and impact data by fathers, mothers, and coparents, and to pay greater attention to issues of reach, sustainability, cost, equity, and scale-up. Clarity of purpose with respect to gender-differentiated and coparenting issues in the design, delivery, and evaluation of parenting programs will constitute a game change in this field.

Quiñones, S., & Kiyama, J. M. (2014). Contra la corriente (Against the current): The role of Latino fathers in family-school engagement. *School Community Journal*, 24(1), 149-176.

A community-based, multisite study using mixed methods examined the experiences and perspectives of Latino students and families in a low performing urban school district in New York State. This research project was spearheaded by a Latino Education Task Force which brought together multiple stakeholders in a collaborative effort to counteract high dropout rates and deficit thinking about Latino youth and their families. The findings reported here, drawn from a thematic analysis of data collected specifically from focus groups with parents, centre on Latino fathers' perspectives and experiences. The authors utilized a conceptual framework of Latino family epistemology and alternative parental role theory to explore the role of Puerto Rican fathers in family-school engagement. Findings reveal that these fathers: (a) cultivate education as a family and community affair

in order to promote school success; (b) critique dynamics within the parent-school-district system and advocate for their children; and (c) acknowledge their vulnerable positioning as fathers resisting racism and invisibility in schools and the larger community. Fathers understood middle-class forms of involvement as well as culture and power dynamics, suggesting their involvement was a form of agency—a pushing back against the system that made them distrustful in the first place. A common theme across the data sources is the idea of moving *contra la corriente* or going against the current. This research highlights the need for collaboration and community action aimed at “adjusting the sails” as we move toward educational equity.

Evaluation

Cooper, C.W., & Christie, C.A. (2005). Evaluating parent empowerment: A look at the potential of social justice evaluation in education. *Teachers College Record*, 107(10), 2248-2274.

In an effort to improve the nation's underperforming schools, education reformers are designing programs to educate and empower urban school parents. Parent involvement can be critical to a child's academic success, yet the education community still knows very little about the impact of specific parent programs. The authors evaluated a parent program that was part of a major school-university partnership. A responsive evaluation approach initially guided the design of this qualitative case study evaluation. The authors' social justice-oriented values, however, prompted them to revise their approach and adhere more closely to a social justice evaluation model. This change caused the authors to highlight the perspectives of low-income Latina mothers and emphasize the gap between parents' and educators' notions of empowerment. In this article, the authors describe their evaluation and highlight key findings that offer insightful implications for education practitioners, researchers, and evaluators. The findings pertain to the challenge of educators sharing power with urban parents and developing partnerships that are sensitive to the social and cultural factors that affect parents' values, goals, and modes of participation. The authors also emphasize the relationship between evaluation theory and practice and point to the potential impact of social justice evaluation in education.

Mattingly, D.J., Prislun, R., McKenzie, T.L., Rodriguez, J.L., & Kayzar, B. (2002). Evaluating evaluations: The case of parent involvement programs. *Review of Educational Research*, 72(4), 549-576.

This article analyzes 41 studies that evaluated K-12 parent involvement programs in order to assess claims that such programs are an effective means of improving student learning. It examines the characteristics of the parent involvement programs, as well as the research design, data, and analytical techniques used in program evaluation. This examination of evaluations found little empirical support for the widespread claim that parent involvement programs are an effective means of improving student achievement or changing parent, teacher, and student behaviour. The authors do not conclude that programs are ineffective. Rather, serious design, methodological, and analytical flaws inherent in studies evaluating the effectiveness of parent involvement programs must be addressed before definite conclusions about program effectiveness can be reached. The findings of this study are particularly significant given the substantial federal support for parent involvement.