

Family Engagement – Leadership  
Kids for Harmony:  
[www.kidsforharmony.org/](http://www.kidsforharmony.org/)



**NCSE**

National Center for School Engagement

# **Engaging Families in Bullying Prevention Efforts**

**Bullying Prevention Initiative  
Grantee Networking Conference**

**August 9, 2007**

# Agenda

## Framework for Family and Community Engagement

### Best Practices and Research

- *Types/Models*
- *Family/School/Community Partnerships*

### Explore What's Happening in Colorado

- *Types of Activities and linking them to bullying prevention efforts.*





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# **Group Wisdom**

*Based on your audience and programming, please answer the following questions and discuss your responses with a neighbor*

**How do you define family engagement?**

*(include example of activities and types)*

**In your experience, what are the benefits?**

**In your experience, what are the main challenges?**



# Family Engagement

Based on family-school-community partnerships.



# Defining Family Engagement

**Families take an active role** in the education of all family members and are **active decision-makers** in schools and communities

**School and program staff and educators** create a welcoming environment, actively engage family members, and **partner** with community resources and services

**Community-based service providers and community leaders** strengthen school and family programs, promote student learning, family literacy and are **advocates** for family well-being



# Family Engagement Includes....

- Guardians, relatives, and trusted friends/neighbors who are invested in school success for all family members
- AKA *parent and family involvement, family engagement*



# Research Summary

## When families are engaged...

- Students achieve higher grades and test scores
- Students have better attendance and more homework completion
- Schools have higher completion rates
- Families build skills in helping their children learn
- Families have more confidence in the school



Although family involvement has reached a **high level of acceptance** today as one of the key factors that can help improve the quality of schools, **“acceptance does not always translate into implementation, commitment or creativity.”**

*Source: The Impact of Parent/Family Involvement on Student Outcomes: An Annotated Bibliography Of Research from the Past -, [www.directionservice.org/cadre](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre).*



# NCSE and Family Engagement

*NCSE MISSION: To ensure school success for at-risk youth and their families by improving school engagement.*



# NCSE

**Strategic venture** of the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children (Denver, CO)

## **Provides ...**

- Advocacy
- Training and technical assistance
- Research and evaluation
- Online information clearinghouse

**Promotes school success** based on the

**3 “A”s = Attendance,  
Attachment and  
Achievement**



**NCSE Goal:**

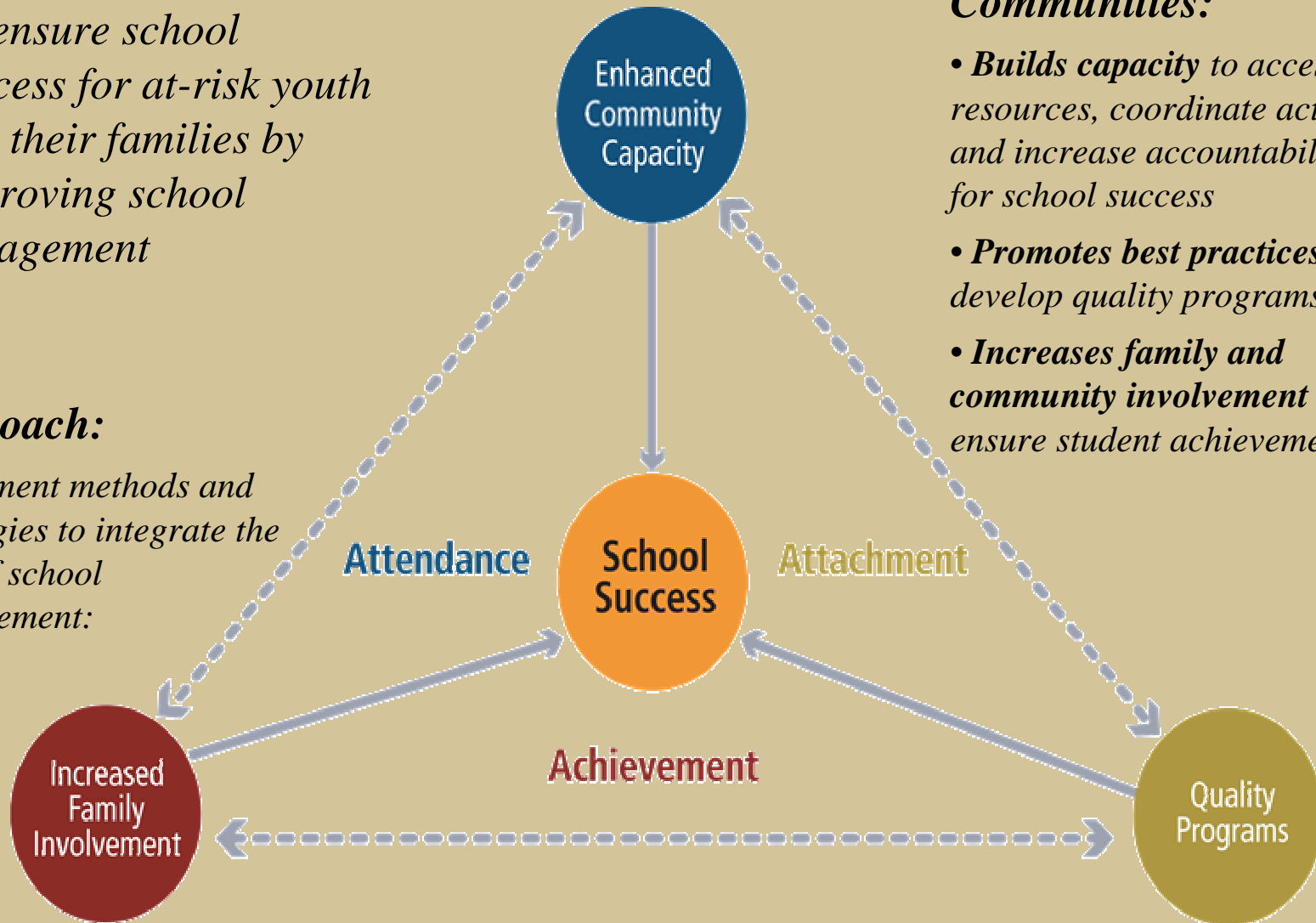
*To ensure school success for at-risk youth and their families by improving school engagement*

**Approach:**

*Implement methods and strategies to integrate the 3As of school engagement:*

**How NCSE Benefits Communities:**

- *Builds capacity to access resources, coordinate action, and increase accountability for school success*
- *Promotes best practices to develop quality programs*
- *Increases family and community involvement to ensure student achievement*





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# **Types and Best Practices**

# Family/School/Community Partnerships

- **Parent/Family Education** - Schools and families partner with private and public groups to provide training and classes for students and families
- **Family Services/Programs** - Provide health, educational, recreational and family support services (before/after school programs, bullying prevention programs, mentoring, emergency housing, school supplies drive)
- **Leadership Development** - Training, coaching for parents, students, community providers, teacher, and principals, and students to create agendas for school success



# Types of Family Engagement

## Family Strengthening and Support:

**Self Awareness** – Personal development. Learns role to advocate for self

### **Family Advocate**

- Learns role in child and family development
- Builds skills to improve family functioning
  - » Crisis Management
  - » Conflict Resolution
  - » Communication
- Develops Network of Support



# Types of Family Engagement

## Leadership and Community Engagement:

### Parent and Community Leader

- Participates in decision making
  - » Program improvement
  - » Community improvement
- Takes an active role in civic engagement

### Advocates for Change

- Develops and advocates for resources
- Creates policies
- Receives on-going support (mentoring, coaching, organizing)



# Example: Family Service Model

## CASASTART (Columbia University)

- **Collaboration** of CBO-School-Law Enforcement
- **Ongoing parent engagement** & monthly family dinners
- **Case manager & home visits** by CBO staff
- **Services in schools** with CBO staff
- **Mental health services** as needed
- **After school** and summer programming
- Evidence based outcomes: **reduced drug/tobacco use, reduced violence, improved attendance, improved achievement and engagement of students and parents, reduction in gang involvement and juvenile delinquency**



# Example: Full Service Schools

Project Respect/Risley Middle School (Pueblo, CO)

- **GED and Adult Education** for parents
- **School-based Health Center** for Youth
- **Public Library** Branch
- **Job Training** for parents
- **Family advocates** for youth & families
- **After school/summer programs** for youth
- Improved outcomes in **attendance, youth achievement, grade completion, parent engagement, better continuation in HS**



# Parent Leadership Model

## Parent Leadership Exchange (Boston, MA)

- Training program through **Institute for Responsive Education** to promote family involvement activities that support student learning
- Leaders for Change/Family Involvement Certificate Programs
- Train parent leaders
- Train teams of school administrators, teachers, and parents during a 3-day summer institute and two full-day sessions (*Achievement through Partnership*)
- Evaluated through parent interviews, pre/post surveys, and questionnaires



## Example: Leadership

**Logan Square Neighborhood Association (Chicago)** – Nationally recognized model of successful collaboration between a community organization and public schools, creating a community-centered school that serves immigrant families.

Initial actions addressed issues of safety and overcrowding in schools



# Best Practices: Family Engagement Programs

- Build on family and cultural strengths
- Develop mutually-respectful relationships between students, families, and school staff
- Recognize the experiences and perspectives parents bring and a value of working together with parents toward common goals
- Decision-making is shared by parents, school personnel, and service providers



# How to Increase Family Engagement

- Identify goals and define success
- Clarify the roles of all parties involved – expectations are explicit
- Establish community partnerships
- Utilize research-based best practices
- Adopt best practices that “fit” locally



## Best Practices Research Says

- Provide a **variety of opportunities** for schools, families, and communities to work together.
- Base programs upon “**mutual respect and interdependence of home, school, and community.**”

*Source: The Impact of Parent/Family Involvement on Student Outcomes: An Annotated Bibliography Of Research from the Past, [www.directionservice.org/cadre](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre)*





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**EXAMPLES**  
**What's Happening**  
**In Colorado**

# Family Involvement Activities in Colorado

- **Advocacy and Leadership** - Policy development, action planning, bullying prevention advocacy, promoting school choice, and school accountability
- **Educational Services** - Literacy programs, language classes, peer-based home visitation services to parents and families, and other skill-building courses.
- **Cultural brokering** – Creating awareness, promoting understanding among diverse families and systems
- **Conferences, Trainings, and Classes** - Offered to statewide, regional, and local audiences.
- **Evaluation** - Services to evaluate efforts and activities, project outcomes, and policies that impact parental involvement in children's education



# Family Involvement Activities in Colorado

- **Funding** – In-kind services, cash awards, and donations for special events.
- **Material distribution and Resource Referral** – Helplines/warmlines; resource lists; child development information; publications/newsletters
- **Networks** – Membership and Technology-based Networks to promote information sharing (associations, committees, call centers, listservs, website)
- **Professional Development** – Instruction for educators, school leaders, and program practitioners
- **Technical Assistance** – To understand and comply with legislation and policies. Supports development of Family-school-community partnerships.



# Family Involvement Activities in Colorado

- Many training and technology-based services are offered on statewide basis. Call centers, help lines, and conferences are available to parents, families, community leaders, educators, and school administrators throughout the state.
- **Direct service type of programs**, specialized instruction, family literacy, program evaluation, and funding activities are primarily available in urban and suburban areas the Front Range.

*Source: Assessment of Family Involvement by Colorado Foundation for Families and Children, (2006)*



# Key Questions to Consider Before Utilizing Models and Strategies:

- What is the culture of the family or families involved?
- Taking into consideration culture, how will the strategies be received and implemented?
- Is the strategy primarily based on the needs of the program or the needs of the students and their families?



# Contact Information

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