

## Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement

Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University has developed a framework for defining six different types of parent involvement. This framework assists educators in developing school and family partnership programs. "There are many reasons for developing school, family, and community partnerships," she writes. "The main reason to create such partnerships is to help all youngsters succeed in school and in later life."

Epstein's framework defines the six types of involvement and lists *sample practices* or activities to describe the involvement more fully. Her work also describes the *challenges* inherent in fostering each type of parent involvement as well as the expected *results* of implementing them for students, parents, and teachers.

The following information is excerpted from Epstein's work.

### Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement and Sample Practices

1. **PARENTING:** Help all families establish home environments to support children as students
  - Parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g., GED, college credit, family literacy).
  - Family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services.
  - Home visits at transition points to pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school.
2. **COMMUNICATING:** Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
  - Conferences with every parent at least once a year.
  - Language translators to assist families as needed.
  - Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications.
3. **VOLUNTEERING:** Recruit and organize parent help and support.
  - School and classroom volunteer program to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents.
  - Parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, resources for families.
  - Annual postcard survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers.

4. **LEARNING AT HOME:** Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
  - Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade.
  - Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.
  - Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work.
5. **DECISION MAKING:** Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
  - Active PTA/PTO or other parent organizations, advisory councils, or committees for parent leadership and participation.
  - Independent advocacy groups to lobby and work for school reform and improvements.
  - Networks to link all families with parent representatives.
6. **COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY:** Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.
  - Information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs or services.
  - Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.
  - Service to the community by students, families, and schools (e.g. recycling, art, music, drama, and other activities for seniors or others).