



# NCPIE Update

A Publication of the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education

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### Culturally Specific Parent Training: Meeting the Needs of Parents from the African American and Latino Communities



Guest speaker for the October 2004 NCPIE meeting was Dr. Kerby Alvy, Founder and Executive Director of the Center for the Improvement of Child Caring (CICC), based in Studio City, California.

Dr. Alvy shared a 4-pronged presentation that addressed the following:

1. The need for parenting programs that are culturally specific
2. The research on the parenting world views of African-Americans and Latino parents
3. CICC's parenting skill-building programs: *Effective Black Parenting* and *Los Ninos Bien Educados*
4. The CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System

Our review of CICC's work and Dr. Alvy's presentation will focus mainly upon providing an overview the *Effective Black Parenting* and *Los Ninos Bien Educados* parent training programs.

### **An Overview of *Effective Black Parenting***

CICC's *Effective Black Parenting Program* is based on an achievement orientation to African-American parenting and is presented in a learning and re-learning context.

A research study with African American parents was conducted prior to the creation of this program. The study focused on actual parenting practices that parents employed in

numerous situations with their children. It also explored their general attitudes about family, children, and raising and disciplining them. The results of this study, which appear in the book, *Black Parenting: Strategies for Training*, lead to selecting the content and emphasis of the program.

An overview of topics addressed include culturally specific parenting strategies such as:

- The Achievement Orientation to Parenting: Pyramid of Success for Black Children
- Traditional Black Discipline vs. Modern Black Self-Discipline
- Pride in Blackness: Positive Communications, Coping with Racism, Avoiding Black Self-Disparagement
- Finding Special Times for All of our Children: Chit-Chat Times

General Parenting Strategies addressed are:

- Social Learning Ideas, and Pinpointing and Counting Behavior
- The Thinking Parent's Approach
- Family Rules are Like a Coin, and Family Rule Guidelines
- Children's Developing Abilities
- Children's Thinking Stages and the Developmental Swing Between Belonging and Independence

The training then takes a look at basic parenting skills and teaches them in what CICC terms a culturally-sensitive manner with the goal of teaching a series of child management skills from within a Black frame of reference. Throughout the teaching of the strategies and skills, the importance of pride in blackness is stressed.

### **An Overview of *Los Ninos Bien Educados***

This training is a five-day intensive workshop built around the value of raising children to be "bien educados," i.e. well-behaved in a social and personal sense, as well as educated in an academic sense. The program explores parental definition of what constitutes "bien educados" and looks at how these definitions get expressed in traditional family, gender, role and age expectations of children. From this cultural framework, the program teaches parents a wide variety of strategies and skills for promoting and maintaining those child behaviors that they define as constituting "bien educados" and for reducing those that they see as reflecting "mal educados."

The basic parenting skill building strategies used in *Los Ninos Bien Educados* are essentially the same as those found in *Effective Black Parenting*. However, what is different about this training is its approach to culturally specific parenting strategies, outlined below:

- A. Defining Bien and Mal Educados
- B. Family Role Expectations Are Like a Coin
- C. Adjustments to the United States
- D. Using Dichos (Spanish Proverbs)
- E. Availability in Spanish

A new initiative of CICC is the *CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System*. A web-based and interactive tool that consists of a series of age-specific questions that help parents and others quickly identify a variety of learning, communication, motor skill and behavioral problems that may not have been recognized or simply overlooked. It also connects them immediately to important community services and agencies throughout the U. S. that can help.

For more in depth information about these programs visit: [www.ciccparenting.org](http://www.ciccparenting.org).



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### **Spotlight on *The Evidence***

*A continuing column highlighting parent involvement research found in “A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement” by Anne Henderson and Karen Mapp.*

This month we spotlight a 2001 paper by Lee Shumow and Richard Lomax presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research, Seattle, WA, found on page 176.

#### ***“Parental Efficacy: Predictor of Parenting Behavior and Adolescent Outcomes.”***

This piece of parent involvement research investigated feelings of parental efficacy and its impact on student achievement. Specifically, it was an examination of parent’s feelings about their abilities at influencing their adolescent aged children and how those feelings in turn, affect student achievement.

Using a national sample of 929 racially/ethnically diverse families with children between the ages of 10-17, it was found that “family background, income, and neighborhood all affected feelings of efficacy.” Which then in turn, affected parental involvement academically, thus finally impacting student achievement.

#### **Efficacy Defined:**

Shumow and Lomax defined efficacy as parents’ belief that they were successful in:

- Having a positive influence on teenagers’ academic, social, and emotional development
- Overcoming negative influences from their children’s friends and associated
- Having a positive impact on schools and other community agencies for youth

The goal in this definition was to find out if parents believed that they could help their children succeed academically and influence their social emotional development. Additionally, the definition incorporates parents' feeling about how successful they feel at reducing risk taking behavior, like using drugs or drinking and finally, how successful they felt about serving as advocates for their children and other youth to the broader community.

### **Is Parent Involvement Related to Feelings of Efficacy?**

As a part of the research, parents and students both responded in telephone interviews to three sets of questions about how parents are involved with their children. The questions were grouped based on:

1. Involvement in school:  
Examples include a parent reporting of involvement measured by attendance at school events, talking to teachers, attending parent meetings, volunteering and visiting the school
2. Monitoring children's activities:  
Examples include both parents and children reporting on parents' knowledge of child activities and communication with child when away from the home
3. Communication with their children:  
Student reporting about parents talking with them about drugs, dating, problems with friends and family, and family values.

The findings from these questions were then related to parent reports on how well students fared academically, i.e.; students' grades, academic level, and general behavior while at school.

### **Findings and Conclusions:**

There is a link between parental efficacy and adolescent outcomes. Families with increased feelings of efficacy turn out to be more involved in their children's school and more involved with their children at home. It is important to note that family income alone did not predict these feelings of efficacy. Higher income families did not always have increased feelings of efficacy, and lower income families did not always report lower feelings of efficacy.

There were many racial and ethnic differences that appeared from the research:

1. Family income and education level was not as important to feelings of efficacy in Hispanic families as it was in white and African-American families.
2. Quality of the neighborhood was not as connected to feelings of efficacy in African American families as it was in white and Hispanic families.

The authors strongly caution that the goal of parent involvement programming should be to strengthen parents' sense of efficacy but note that there is not much research on exactly how to change parents' feeling of efficacy.

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## **Parent Involvement and Engagement Resources & Meetings**

### **New NCLB Handbook Designed with Parents of Children With Disabilities In Mind**

No Child Left Behind requires schools to have a plan to help low-achieving children, including the almost 3 million children with learning disabilities, meet higher academic standards. The National Center for Learning Disabilities and Schwab Learning has developed a handbook to help parents navigate and coordinate the federal No Child Left Behind and the Individuals with Disabilities Education acts.

The new 22-page guide addresses the law's emphasis on accountability, an explanation of the requirement of schools to improve test scores in math, science and reading over the next decade, and what happens if a school doesn't meet its goals. "Making the 'No Child Left Behind Act' Work for Children Who Struggle to Learn: A Parent's Guide" can be downloaded from the Web sites of the Center for Learning Disabilities and Schwab Learning.

Access this new guide on the Net at: [www.LD.org/nclb](http://www.LD.org/nclb) or [www.schwablearning.org](http://www.schwablearning.org)

### **New Web Log Site For Family Friendly Schools Makes Debut**

With the popularity of "blogs" growing daily, Family Friendly Schools hopes to begin a national discussion among educational practitioners, researchers, and policy makers on-line.

Visit [www.ffstoday.com](http://www.ffstoday.com) to read reports from schools around the country that are participating in the Family Friendly Schools Institute and other programs as a way to encourage others to participate in making families a priority.

### **New CADRE Resource Comprehensively Examines Parent and Community Involvement in Schools: Educating Our Children Together: A Sourcebook for Effective Family-School-Community Partnerships**

This sourcebook was designed to identify and describe promising practices in family-community-school involvement occurring in pre-K-12 school environments across the country. The book includes guiding principles for family-school-community involvement, tips for getting started, and a self-assessment tool to determine current practices, strategies, and program descriptions.

CADRE is the Consortium for Alternative Dispute Resolution in Special Education. To review the Sourcebook, please click the link below:

[http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/EducatingOurChildren\\_01.cfm](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/EducatingOurChildren_01.cfm)

*Don't forget to check the NCPIE web site periodically for new information on parent involvement at [www.ncpie.org](http://www.ncpie.org).*

### **Upcoming Meetings and Presentations**

**December 15, 2004 NEA - State Dining Room**

*\*\*\*Remember that the December NCPIE meeting is the last of the year and includes a special holiday brunch and celebration. Please join us for the festivities.*

Last year, the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) sent a survey to every family, teacher and school administrator, to get their opinion on family involvement. The survey was based on 22 focus groups with families, students, teachers and community members.

As an urban district, whose families come from 92 countries and speak 66 different languages, ACPS used a customer satisfaction approach to discover what aspects of school-family relationship are most related to family and faculty satisfaction with their school and with ACPS.

We will hear about the results of this survey from Rebecca Perry, ACPS Superintendent; Karen Parker Thompson, ACPS Family and Community Involvement Coordinator; and Scott Broetzmann, President of Customer Care Management and Consulting. Anne Henderson, who worked as a consultant to ACPS on this project, will introduce the speakers.

Superintendent Perry will discuss the importance of hearing from the community and responding to their recommendations. Karen Parker Thompson will describe the focus group process and the survey design. Scott Broetzmann will present his analysis of the findings.

Their presentation will cover:

- The three areas that families identified as most critical to their satisfaction and loyalty to the schools and ACPS
- The two areas of family involvement that faculty feel are most important to them.
- The information and outreach approaches that families feel are most effective
- Family, faculty and student recommendations for school and district policy
- The steps ACPS is taking to act on the findings

Everyone attending will receive a copy of the report, *Listening to Families and Faculty: A Report on Family Involvement in the Alexandria City Public Schools*. This meeting should be of special interest to area school district staff, families and community members, and to organizations that are looking for ideas for improving family involvement in schools and districts.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Sue Ferguson at [ferguson@ncea.com](mailto:ferguson@ncea.com) or 703-359-8973.

***Oops, our mistake:***

In the October edition of *The Update*, we presented an overview of the Public Education Network's Schools and Communities Initiative, which we shortened to CIS. CIS is actually a trademarked acronym of Communities in Schools, Inc. headquartered in Alexandria, VA. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.