

Barriers to Parental Involvement in the
Pre-Kindergarten Classroom

J. Leigh Savacool

Missleigh3@gmail.com

Date of submission May 2nd 2011

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated my mother, who taught me that even the largest task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time.

Table of Contents

Abstract ----- Page 4

1.0 Introduction -----Pages 4-5

2.0 Literature Review -----Page 6

 2.1 Social and economic Background ----- Page 7

 2.2 Parental involvement ----- Pages 7-8

 2.3 School attendance-----Page 8

 2.4 School Influences----- Page 9

 2.5 Individual and family Influences----- Pages 9-10

 2.6 Teacher and Parent Communication----- Pages 10-13

3.0 Methodology -----Page 13

 3.1 Sampling----- Pages 13-14

 3.2 Instruments-----Page 14

 3.3 Procedures-----Pages 14-15

4.0 Data Analysis----- Pages 15-16

5.0 Results and Findings ----- Pages 16-19

6.0 Discussion----- Pages 19-20

7.0 Limitations----- Page 20

8.0 Implications----- Pages 20- 21

9.0 Recommendations for further research----- Page 22

10. 0 Conclusion-----Page 22

11.0 References-----Page 23-25

Appendixes-----Pages 26-32

Abstract

Research has shown that parental involvement affects children's achievement more than school procedures especially in the primary years. Researchers have also shown positive effects on children, families, and school when schools and parents continuously support and encourage a child's learning and development. However, there is little research that has been done to help teachers better understand why some parents choose not to be involved with their child's education. Using questionnaires and interviews, this research investigated the barriers and struggles parents face as well as the difficulties teachers face with parents who are not involved in their child's classroom.

1.0 Introduction

My research topic deals with the different barriers that keep parents from being involved in their child's education. Currently I am working at a child-care center where I come in contact with parents in the morning, when they drop off their child, and at night when they pick them up. In the elementary schools most teachers do not get the pleasure of talking with the parents daily. Since I do, I learn how their child is doing at home and what the parent's concerns are.

The reason why I choose this research topic was because we have many parents who seem to have some obstacles that hinder them from being more involved in their child's education. The first verbal contact with the child's teacher, in many ways, is the most important. This is the time you are building a rapport and developing a relationship of trust between parent and teacher. Depending on the parent and their routine, sometimes a phone call or a note is sufficient for communication. The best interaction is a face-to-face meeting. Some barriers which I have witnessed are financial hardship, language, or whether time permits in the morning before they have to go to work.

Growing up my parents were involved in my education, and most importantly in my extra curricular activities. I remember many times when I was in high school marching band, my dad worked nights and still managed to see my competitions. Parents being involved in a child's education do not necessarily mean they have to attend parent teacher conferences or help with homework. It is just as important being involved and interested in what friends they have, reading to them at bedtime and going to their games. Parental involvement supports the child and helps make that child become successful. Children these days have a lot on their plate from the amount of schoolwork to dance classes, sports or which parent's house is home. This is a balancing act than can be overwhelming and children need parental support and guidance.

Schools have a hard time reaching parents and capturing their attention, while on the other hand parents have a hard time knowing how to get involved in their child's school. There is a big disconnect between schools and families because of communication barriers and busy life styles. Assumptions are often made incorrectly by both parties. Throughout my time working at a childcare center, I have often heard comments such as, "I do not have the time," "I do not know why this is important" and "I do not know what to do." All Parents know that education is important to their child's success in life, but all too many do not see why they need to be partners with schools in educating their children. Parents need to rely less on it being "the teacher's job" and work together for the benefit of the child. The key idea for my research is how to help connect parents and teachers to build a relationship that benefits the child.

2.0 Literature Review:

Some common themes which became apparent in the literature that I reviewed were that most parents were not sure how to become involved, and many teachers were quick to blame parents for students' low performance on the parents.

While researching about parent involvement, it came to my attention that this is an extremely widespread problem. One study I looked at compared poor attendance and low attainment tend to occur with parental variables such as low socio-economic status, conflict, neglect, a criminal record and mental illness. (Sheppard, 2009). There have been studies showing a connection between social disadvantages and school achievement.

The following categories are some of the factors which contribute to parent/school relationships:

- Social economic background
- Parental involvement
- School attendance
- School influences
- Individual and family influences
- Teacher/Parent Communication

2.1 Social Economic Background:

“Middle-class families tend to have culturally supportive social networks, use the vocabulary of teachers, feel entitled to treat teachers as equals and have access to childcare and transportation, all of which facilitate parent engagement in schooling. This social capital allows them to construct their relationships with the school with more comfort and trust.” (Goodall, 2007, 280) So the reverse leads me to believe that low-income families have less trust and feel inadequate in communicating with educators and therefore are reluctant to include themselves in their child’s education.

I was very fortunate that my mother did not work outside the home. When something occurred at school she could be there. This is not common in today’s economic times. I also came from a two parent home. It is well documented that single parents are overwhelmed with balancing work and school commitments and especially evening commitments. I have witnessed parents who drop off their children at pre-school knowing they are ill but cannot afford a day off from work to care for them.

2.2 Parental Involvement:

Parents will become involved in their children’s education if they believe that it is an important and a required part for the success of their child. They will also get involved if they feel they are capable, knowledgeable and if the teacher encourages their participation.

“While the literature highlights that parental engagement makes a significant difference to education achievement and learning, we still need to know more about the

ways in which parental engagement can be enhanced and facilitated across different sectors of society.” (Goodall, 2007,285)

“Research has shown that parental involvement affected children’s achievement more than school procedures especially in the primary years.” (Sheppard, 2009,105)

I found that when I student-taught, children were eager to show off their grades when parents were interested and supportive. It was discouraging when we would have parent teacher conferences and kids who were doing well had parents who were not interested in coming or had other obligations and couldn’t come. You could see the disappointment on their faces when they told me that Mom and Dad wouldn’t be attending. Students can see when parents value education.

2.3 School attendance:

“A study by Morris and Rutt (2004) showed that there was an uneven association between school attendance and attainment in 14 and 15 year old pupils. Boys showed underperformance compared to girls with the same level of attendance. Better attendance among black Caribbean pupils than white pupils was not reflected in higher attainment. The relationship between attendance and attainment varied by subject, with poor attendance being associated with poor attainment in English, but not mathematics. Although better attendance may lead to an increased probability of higher attainment, more absence did not necessarily lead to a decrease in that probability.” (Sheppard, 2009,110)

In other words, being at school does not necessarily mean you are learning at school. Surveys have indicated that during secondary school years, attendance decreases

and class absences occur more. This means that curriculum is a major cause for student's leaving school early.

2.4 School Influences -

Parents generally feel that learning in the primary school is easier. Many parents miss the interaction with other parents and teachers when students attend upper grade levels. Once you get to secondary school the atmosphere is more intimidating to parents because of size and student body numbers. There are many more teachers involved in their child's education, whereas in primary school you only deal with one teacher. Some parents feel frustrated, stressed and overwhelmed by the lack of personal interaction. Low literacy is a barrier when communication consists of emails and letters instead of phone calls. Schools need to make parents feel welcome and informed no matter what the grade level.

In the elementary grades, schools seem to guide and inform parents more than when students reach middle and high school. Unfortunately some parents continue to need the support of school teachers and administrators when their children enter the upper grades. This is not always forthcoming and parents may be hesitant to ask for guidance for their child.

2.5 Individual and Family Influences:

Parental involvement in school is much more than going to PTA meetings and attending Parent/Teacher conferences. Unfortunately, children are often responsible for parents not being involved due to peer pressure. It's not "cool."

Poor attendance is associated with social disadvantages and they also tend to have low literacy levels. Elementary schools try to reach out to poor students and their families to get the children to attend school on a regular basis. A study conducted by the High/Scope Longitudinal group in the US showed where parents of pre-school children received training in how to help with their child's education and had results lasting into adulthood (Sheppard, 2009).

Research shows that children are more likely to succeed academically and are less likely to engage in violent behavior if their families are involved in their education. Many parents say, however, that they feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in their children's schools. Teachers feel under attack by parents who are highly involved. (Starr, 2009)

2.6 Teacher/Parent Communication:

During the beginning years of school, parents are very eager to be in communication with their child's teacher. Unfortunately this does not necessarily continue through Elementary School and usually not after Elementary School.

Some teachers perceive minority parents as not having time, interest, money, or energy to support classroom learning so they bypass them thinking they are helping them by not bothering them (Kim, 2009). Educators need to recognize that these assumptions are not necessarily accurate. They need to "build a bridge" of communication between the school and families to better serve the child. Teachers need to make sure their first contact with parents is positive and welcoming. They need to communicate openly and honestly without using educational jargon. All parents should have easily accessible

information about the classroom schedule, curriculum, and district news and teach expectations so there is no disconnect between parents and schools. Parents should feel free to voice any concerns, questions and opinions without feeling judged inferior. Accommodating a parent's work schedule is very important in today's economy since most parents work. Some school districts require parents to come into school to receive their child's first semester report card in the hope of creating a good relationship with the parent and insuring that a face-to-face meeting happens at least once during the school year. Research has shown that when parents are involved in their child's education, the child benefits in many ways. Researchers have evidence for the positive effects of parent involvement on children, families, and school when schools and parents continuously support and encourage the children's learning and development. Children generally achieve better grades, test scores, and attendance. Children consistently complete their homework. Children have better self-esteem, are more self-disciplined, and show higher aspirations and motivation toward school. These children are generally successful the higher they advance in school, they do homework and also have better self regulatory skills. These skills do not just affect elementary grades but continue with their higher grade levels. Not only do students benefit from a parent's involvement but so do the teachers. Teachers help to grow an alliance with parents. This takes away stress and has the well being of the student in mind. Parents also seem to have more respect for teachers when they are more involved and they understand the teacher's point of view. (Flynn, 2007). Davies (2009) argues that

Families need information to be partners in their child's education. To be able to best support their children's learning, adults at home need to know what their child is studying and what else is going on in the classroom. Brief, regular communication gives them a window into their child's daily school life. Frequent contact fosters positive school-home relationships. Sporadic communications focused on problems do little if anything to foster positive school-home relationships. If, on the other hand, we communicate small bits of good news all year long, families feel encouraged and supported, and they are more apt to encourage and support us, as well. Collaborative problem-solving requires trust. Frequent positive communication helps families trust that you believe in their child's ability to learn and to be a productive member of a classroom community. With that trust in place, it is much easier to work collaboratively on difficult issues that might come up during the year. (59)

Parents will become involved in their children's education if they believe it is an important and a required part for the success of their child. They will also get involved if they feel they are capable, knowledgeable and if the teacher encourages their participation. Goodall (2007) reminds us that "While the literature highlights that parental engagement makes a significant difference to education achievement and learning, we still need to know more about the ways in which parental engagement can be enhanced and facilitated across different sectors of society" (281). Lack of communication on both ends is to blame. Teachers are overwhelmed by what they have to do throughout the day. They need to be able to ask parents for help but parents may not know what to do. Schools try to draw parents into the classroom by creating programs that form a bridge between home and school. Parents are encouraged to participate at school by reading to children, helping students on computers, having lunch with their child, being a room mother for classroom parties, and participating in other programs to help parents realize their importance in their child's education.

Research shows that when parents are involved in school, their child's achievement improves, when parents are aware of what their children are learning, they are more likely to help when they are requested by teachers to become more involved in their children's learning activities at home. Children make friends more easily and are more successful learners. Children whose families participate in school activities stay in school longer and take more advanced classes. The greatest benefit to children of a successful home-school partnership is that children are more motivated to succeed. To connect parents with school, teachers need to learn the best ways to share information and thereby build bridges and strong ties with families. They need to find ways to establish positive relationships by shifting from a focus on children's problems to affirming children's strengths. Such approaches can improve classroom-home communications and encourage all families to become involved.

All the literature I reviewed highlights the overwhelming fact that a parent being involved in their child's education has a positive effect on their educational career. The question to ask then is how teachers can help strengthen this relationship, and what strategies teachers can put into place to encourage parent's participation.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Sampling:

To help me better understand the perspective of parents and teachers at an upstate New York child care center, parents and teachers were invited to participate. The teachers had a range of experience, from teaching less than five years to teaching for over fifteen

years. These teachers taught in the three year old program as well as the four year old program. The three teachers consisted of two from the three year old program and one from the four year old program. One teacher has been at the school one year; one teacher has been at the Child care center for less than five years while the third teacher has more than ten years experience at the school.

The parents were all from the 3 year old classroom. Some of these parents had one child while others had multiples. A few parents have been sending their children to the school for years while others only had their children attending for a short time. With the two parents that participated in the interviews, one has sent their child to the school for less than one year and the other for only a few months. This makeup was a good sampling for my interviews because of the diversity in experience it provided.

3.2 Instruments:

Questionnaire: The first instrument that I used was a questionnaire that was given to the teachers both in the three year old program and the four year old program. I also gave out a questionnaire to the parents in my three year old classroom. The teacher/parent questionnaires were broken down into eleven multiple choice questions. This survey helped to assess how teachers and parents view parental involvement in the classroom. The types of questions I asked parents involved participation in their child's school, confidence in the teacher, and their level of communication with the school. The

teacher questionnaire consisted of eleven questions concerning parent involvement with their child's learning. (Appendix A, B)

Interviews: The second instrument was interviews with parents and teachers. I interviewed three teachers and two parents. I used questions from the questionnaire and had the participants expand upon them and explain their thoughts. (Appendix C, D)

3.3 Procedure:

Prior to approval by the SUNY Oswego Human Subject Committee, I obtained permission from the Director of the child care center to conduct my research. The Director reviewed and approved the parent/teacher questionnaires and consent forms before distribution. This is the approved procedure for this school. Any type of paperwork that goes out must be reviewed and approved by the Director. Once I obtained approval from the Director, I distributed the parent consent forms and questionnaire forms in their child's cubbies. A cubby is the child's mailbox for their school projects and also notices that need to be sent home for the parent. I felt the cubby was a good place to put the forms because this is where parents look for important information about their child. I had set a three-week deadline for returning the questionnaires and consent forms and I did stress that this was a voluntary activity. I also distributed the teacher questionnaires in their mail boxes and gave them the same deadline. During the second week, I reminded both the parents and teachers about completing and returning the questionnaire. After a friendly reminder was distributed,

more questionnaires began to come in. During the last week of my research I made phone calls to the parents reminding them to bring in the questionnaires. In total I received 10 questionnaires from my teachers and I received 14 parent questionnaires.

4.0 Data Analysis:

The first few questions on both questionnaires were to help me better understand the demographics of my participants. The rest of the questions were asking both the parents and teachers their feelings about how their child was cared for by the opposite individual. Both parents and teachers were able to choose answers from a multiple choice selection that pertained to their feelings on that question.

Teachers and parents both agreed they are satisfied with the policies set at the school to ensure safety for their child. On the other hand, parents and teachers were split about their feelings of talking to each other with concerns about the child. I wasn't very surprised by the results I received from either questionnaire.

5.0 Results and Findings

While conducting my research, one common theme I observed were that all the teachers interviewed agreed the need to create a strong bond between teachers and parents. This alliance in the classroom can only benefit the student. One teacher stated, "I see these parents as advocates for their children. They know their children better than we do, and having both of us on the same page will only benefit the child in the end."

Both parents and teachers felt that there was never enough time to build a strong relationship due to balancing work, family and other commitments.

Both parties truly want what is best for the child and sometimes they weren't sure how to obtain that knowledge. 50% of parents agreed the need for strong communication in the classroom (See figure 1)

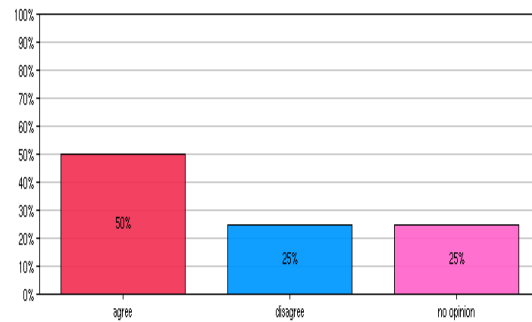


Figure one

When I asked the parents about what they felt was important in their child's classroom, one parents explained: "to have a teacher that is open to my concerns, willing to listen and cares fully about my child." Teachers need to be friendly and gentle when dealing with parents. It is the teachers' job to help ease a parent's worries and satisfy their need to feel like their child is being cared for in the safest way. The teachers also agreed that there needs to be strong communication between parents and teachers and that parents listen to the teacher's concerns. (See figure two)

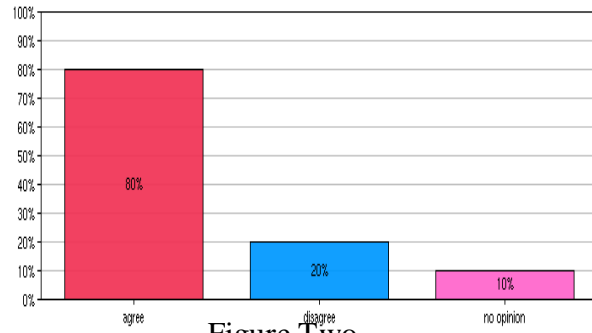


Figure Two

The school that I did my research at has a policy where parents are welcome and also encourages their participation in their child’s classroom. This policy is called the “open door” policy. One teacher I interviewed stated that “having parents in the classroom would be wonderful because they would see what their child is interested in at school, and also they would see behaviors that we (the teachers) are trying to discuss with the parent that may not be seen at home.” On the other hand, while most teachers do like this policy and try to encourage parents to participate, one teacher discussed a scenario where having this policy backfired. “I had this parent who came into our classroom once a week to have lunch with her child, which in theory seemed like a great idea. This parent had a hidden agenda as she was trying to catch us (the teachers) doing something wrong. She was doing this because she had a bad experience at another preschool. It was our job to make her feel welcome and ease her transition to a new school.” 70 % of parents liked the idea of their child’s classroom having an “open door” policy. 91% of teachers liked the idea of having the “open door policy,” (See Figure three)

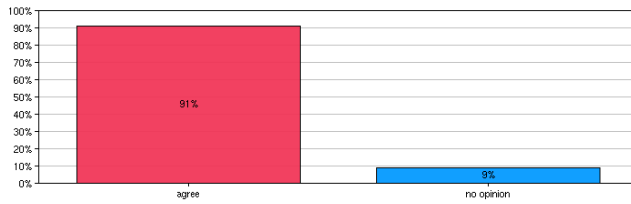


Figure three

and the parents' perception of the school is greatly improved showing stronger ties and commitment to the school. Parents are more aware of, and become more active regarding, policies that affect their children's education when parents are requested by the school to be part of the decision-making team.

While conducting my interview one teacher stated that “we have these grand plans for parents becoming more involved in their child's classroom. We send home newsletters about upcoming events and invite parents to participate in school programs, but the missing link seems to be time. The biggest hindrance that I have noticed in my 15 years of teaching is there is never enough time.” Parents also agreed that not having enough time was a big problem and kept them from being more involved. These parents truly want what is best for their children but working a full-time job, and other obligations make involvement at school challenging.

When questioning and interviewing the parents, most agreed that they were overwhelmed and weren't sure how to help out in their child's classroom. One teacher stated that she like talking to parents because they get to know both the child and the parent on a personal level. On the other hand, it is frustrating when some parents want the teacher's undivided attention. One teacher handles this by explaining to each parent

that their concerns and questions are important and she schedules a time to meet with each parent individually.

Both teachers and parents agreed that creating a partnership not only benefits the child but also the parent. Behaviors at home are often reflected at school. If parents could see what their child is doing at school, (behaviors) maybe they wouldn't be so quick to blame the teacher.

6.0 Discussion:

Many educators and parents would agree that it is important for parents to spend time in their children's classrooms (for conferences or "open house" nights), to closely monitor homework, and to read to their children at home. For many parents, a phone call home from a teacher means trouble. The result - when a teacher gets in touch, parent's anxiety levels and defensive barriers automatically go up. If the communication is not favorable, it may reduce the parent's potential to participate as a partner in their children's education. It does not have to be that way. Teachers should regularly contact a student's family when nothing is wrong, just to share that the child is doing well and inform them about what is going on in the classroom. Parents will become involved in their children's education if they believe it is important and a required part for the success of their child. They will also get involved if they feel they are capable, knowledgeable and if the teacher encourages their participation. Schools try to draw parents into the classroom by creating programs that form a bridge between home and school. The greatest benefit for children of a successful home-school partnership is that children are more motivated to succeed.

To connect parents with school, teachers need to learn the best way to share information and thereby build bridges and strong ties with families. They need to find ways to establish positive relationships by shifting from a focus on a child's problems to affirming a child's strengths. Such approaches can improve classroom-home communications and encourage all families to become involved.

7.0 Limitations:

Low participation: Out of a possible 30 teachers, only 10 returned their questionnaires giving me 33% participation. Likewise with parents, only 14 out of a possible 50 participated giving me 28% participation

Convenience sampling: I was able to access only the population in the school where I work. Therefore generalizability cannot be assumed.

Time: The study took only four weeks to complete.

8.0 Implications:

Teachers continually blame parents, especially those from low-income homes for their students not living up to their full potential. Most parents care very much about their children's education. The reason why teachers blame parents for lack of communication is because teachers are not taught to understand parents and how to network with them. Another issue I discovered through my research is that most schools

limit a teacher's access to parents. I am very fortunate at my school to have face-to-face time with my parents to talk to them about how their child is doing. In many schools, especially in the upper grades, parents may never get the chance to meet or speak to their child's teacher. Many of these assumptions that teachers have about parents have come about because of the limited parent-teacher relationship. The communication bridge has been broken. "First knowing about the perceptions and motivations of parents helps teachers recognize that the assumption of parental lack of interest is misplaced" (Lazar, 1999,16) Teachers tend to see a child falling behind or struggling and think that their parents are not helping that student. Instead of making assumptions, teachers need to help build better communication to keep the child's best interest in mind. Time is a factor when it comes to building a parent/teacher relationship. One way to help build this bridge is to send out weekly newsletters about what things their child has done throughout the week. This newsletter will let the parents become aware about what their child is learning. Sending home letters that describe upcoming projects, inviting parents into the classroom and making them feel welcome will make parents more willing to become involved. Teachers also need to be more understanding that more parents than ever are both working and it is harder for parent classroom participation. This is why open communication is important and necessary for a child's success.

If teachers are willing to educate themselves about parents and their background, what may seem to be two separate worlds can be ultimately join.

9.0 Recommendation for Further Research:

Replicate the research with a more diverse and larger sample with more time. In addition, more research needs to be done on teacher preparation programs that help develop more understanding about parents and their backgrounds. These programs could help teachers with their own concerns and assumptions about parental involvement. This program could help build alliances and provide new opportunities to develop a variety of skills and strategies for successful teacher/parent programs.

10.0 Conclusion:

While all the literature that I have reviewed has concluded that parent involvement is important for not only academic success but also for social and emotional development, there are many benefits for the student when their parent is active and willing to build teacher-parent collaboration. The classroom teacher plays a key role in helping parents overcoming obstacles. By opening up communication and developing an open door policy, parents will feel more welcome. Teachers also need to overcome their own assumptions about parents and help to foster an alliance with parents.

11.0 References:

Davis, C, and Yang A. "Keeping in Touch with Families All Year Long By." *Education Digest* 75.1 (2009). Web. 25 Apr. 2010.

This journal shows how children may develop anxiety at the early age of preschool children. It talks about why children get it, and what kind of signs a teacher should look for and how this is preventable. Parents who helped their children through their preschool experience, showed that children were least likely to get anxiety.

Flynn, G. V. (2007). Increasing Parental Involvement in Our Schools: The Need to Overcome Obstacles, Promote Critical Behaviors, and Provide Teacher Training. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning*, 4(2), 23-30.

The author of this article wrote about the opposite side of this argument, which was written very well. This journal was about why some parents don't want their children attending preschool. It was very thought out material that had reasons that did make sense. I was interested in the other side because of the fact you don't normally hear why parents don't want their child to attend a preschool setting.

Goodall, J and Harris, A (2008) 'Do parents know they matter? Engaging all parents in learning', *Educational Research*, 50: 3, 277-289 doi;10.1080/013188002309424

This journal gives ideas for teachers about to involve parents more in the classroom and uses statistics to support why parent involvement is a positive thing.

Lazar, A., & Slostad, F. (1999). How to Overcome Obstacles to Parent-Teacher Partnerships. *Clearing House*, 72(4).

This is a great journal that helps parents become advocate for their children and help improve ways to tear down the barriers that they might have with their school.

Nalls, A., Mullis, R. L., Cornille, T. A., Mullis, A. K., & Jeter, N. (2010). How Can We Reach Reluctant Parents in Childcare Programs? *Early Child Development and Care*, 180(8), 1053-1064.

This Journal was well organized because, he broke down the different levels of preschool and explained what they were in depth. The author also described how important it was for a child to attend preschool and what kind of outcomes could happen and how a child could be affected for the rest of his/her life. The author also explains what kind of programs are out there and what kind of children are effect by them. He also describes the process for a teacher to become a good one. I really enjoyed this book because it was very straight forward with the information and helped me also understand more about this topic.

Rubie-Davies, C. M., Peterson, E., Irving, E., Widdowson, D., & Dixon, R. (2010). Expectations of Achievement: Student, Teacher and Parent Perceptions. *Research in Education*, 83(1), 36-53.

In this scholarly article the author made references which discussed about different studies that were conducted that help prove or disprove why “No Child Left Behind Act” Is important to have she also stresses that this is most important for children who may normally fail at school because of how they were brought up or where they grew up. I liked this journal because of the studies and how the “No Child Left Behind Act” was broken down.

Sheppard, A. (2009). School attendance and attainment: poor attendee’s perceptions of schoolwork and parental involvement in their education. *British Journal of Special Education*, 36(2), 104-111. Retrieved February 15, 2010.

This journal looks at how parent involvement affects students on an academically, and they use research and studies to support their claims.

Appendix A

Parent Questionnaire

Please answer these questions and return the survey along with your signed consent form.
Please be honest.

General Information.

How old is your child? _____

How long have you been sending your child to The Childcare Center? _____

Is your child male or female? _____

Questions 1-11 will consist of a list of statements. For each one, indicate whether you agree or disagree.

1. I believe I am well informed about how my child's day.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

2. Do you feel there is a strong communication between parents and teachers in your child's classroom?

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

3. I am comfortable with the "open door" policy in my child's classroom.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

4. I feel guilty about leaving my child at school all day.

_____agree
_____disagree
_____no opinion

5. I agree with the policies set at The Childcare Center.

_____agree
_____disagree
_____no opinion

6. I find talking to my child's teachers to be overwhelming.

_____agree
_____disagree
_____no opinion

7. I feel that working with my child's teachers to be very rewarding and beneficial.

_____agree
_____disagree
_____no opinion

8. I do not know how to help in my child's classroom.

_____agree
_____disagree
_____no opinion

9. I feel welcomed in my child's classroom.

_____agree
_____disagree
_____no opinion

10. I struggle to do home activities with my child.

_____agree
_____disagree
_____no opinion

11. I feel unaware about how to connect with my child's teachers.

_____agree
_____disagree

_____ no opinion

\

Appendix B
Teacher Questionnaire

Please answer these questions and return the survey along with your signed consent form.
Please be honest.

Tell me a bit about yourself:

What age level do you teach? _____

How long have you been teaching at The Childcare Center?

_____ less than five years

_____ 5-10 years

_____ 11-15 years

_____ 16-20 years

_____ 20 + years

Approximately how many children do you work with? _____

Questions 1-10 will consist of a list of statements. For each one, indicate whether you agree or disagree.

1. I believe that parents listen to my concerns.

_____ agree

_____ disagree

_____ no opinion

2. Do you feel there is a strong communication between parents and teachers in your classroom?

_____ agree

_____ disagree

_____ no opinion

3. I am comfortable with the “open door” policy in my classroom.

_____ agree

_____ disagree

_____ no opinion

4. I enjoy the age level I am with.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

5. I get discouraged when parents don't follow school policies

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

6. I find talking to parents to be overwhelming.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

7. I feel that working with my parents to be very rewarding and beneficial.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

8. If parents are overly demanding, I find different strategies to meet their needs.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

9. I would welcome more opportunities to work with parents.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

10. I believe working with parents to be worth the time and effort I invest.

_____ agree
_____ disagree
_____ no opinion

Appendix C
Parent Interview

1. Is the classroom environment set up in an inviting way that interests your child?
If not how can we improve?

2. What things do you like to do with your child outside of school?

3. What issues do you (as a parent) face on a day-to day basis?

4. Describe your feeling about interacting with the teachers in your child's classroom?

5. Please describe how you feel when you drop your child's off at school?

6. What does a typical day look like for your child at home?

7. Please describe any other information you feel is important about interacting with your child?

Appendix D
Teacher Interview

1. What is your opinion of parent involvement in your classroom?

2. What strategies do you use to interact with parents?

3. What issues do you believe parents face on a day-to day basis?

4. Describe your feeling about interacting with the parents in your classroom?

5. Please describe strategies you use for parents who are overly demanding?

6. Do you have many parents who choose not to participate in the classroom?

7. Please describe any other information you have about interacting with your students' parents you feel is important?