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Ethnocultural Diversity and the Home-to-School Link

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Ethnocultural Diversity and the Home-to-School Link

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This volume is dedicated to the children and families who have struggled to see their humanity and their power respected in US schools today. We hope that they will see something of their lived experiences represented here.
And, to our families, who teach us daily about the critical importance of setting aside our own lenses to really see and hear one another:
Nathan, Addison, and Emme
Brent, Jean-Luc, and Soraya
Steve, Erin, and Keevan

Foreword

Family-school partnerships (also referred to as home-school partnerships) are a salient theme in discussions of student learning, schooling, and well-being. The discussions build upon an assumption regarding families' responsibilities—i.e., that parents and families will support children to become ready to learn and succeed in school. New conceptualizations of the role of schools over the past 30 years increasingly raise questions about an equally perennial question: What are the responsibilities of schools to be prepared for the students and families whom they are charged to serve?

This edited volume offers a critical perspective on a broad range of issues that respond to this question. It achieves this in two ways. First, it positions the concept of partnership in relation to how schools engage parents and families in the acts, content, and processes of schooling. Second, it makes the case for schools and teachers to become deliberate in learning from families, understand their diversity or what I have described as family cultures (Gadsden, 1998), and build upon the beliefs and practices that families hold as most valued (see National Academies of Sciences, 2016). Penetrating in its analyses and intellectually textured, this volume does more than argue for the importance of families in children's learning. It challenges research and practice on family-school linkages that have been constrained in their ability to capture the range of possibilities that can promote smooth transitions between and across the major contexts that shape students' day-to-day learning and experiences. The individual chapters of the volume and the paradigm that drives it not only examine the unique dimensions of these transitions but also suggest approaches to advancing frameworks that are assertive in their attention to ethnicity, culture, race, and class. They build upon social ecological theories that highlight the bidirectionality of learning, but they call upon several other relevant theoretical analyses as well.

In particular, the editors and authors describe the need for a shift in the focus on schools as the primary repositories of learning to a focus on homes as similarly rich contexts for learning and as sources of knowledge about the abilities, wisdom, and strengths that children and families bring to schools and schooling. As the editors and authors suggest, such a shift will require embracing different methodologies

and approaches to practice and formulating policies that enhance efforts and options to enter into and sustain dialogue with parents and families. In proposing to "flip the script," the editors ask that schools reclaim their commitments to address the needs of the whole child (see Fantuzzo, LeBoeuf, & Rouse, 2014). They also urge readers to redirect our attention to unpacking how schools promote learning and how home and family inspire and motivate children to learn. This expansive conceptualization suggests that family-school partnerships require a deep commitment by educators, researchers, and policymakers to understand parents on their own terms and in ways that elevate them as resources for their children and for their children's teachers.

The debates regarding families and their involvement in children's learning have a long, complex history, particularly around race/ethnicity, culture, and poverty. Among the most contentious discussions were those that occurred in relation to Black children and families in the 1960s. Researchers, across fields, in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movement, responded with mixed results from controversial studies and reports. One of the most widely known was the Moynihan Report (1965), which described the poverty and discrimination that Black families were enduring as creating a cycle of pathology and leading to entrenched deficits in their ability to support their children. Schools were seen as a last hope for these children, and families were seen as obstacles that schools had to overcome, not as assets to embrace and support.

Over the next four decades, several strides were made. Research on student learning (e.g., literacy and early childhood development) increasingly highlighted the social dimensions of learning, sociocultural theory, and family development and family processes. In the 1980s, research on school-family-community partnerships, including Epstein's typology (Epstein, 2001), was taking form. Most of the literature largely focused on how schools might engage parents and reaffirmed the school as the primary site for learning and parent involvement. Almost all school reform efforts during this time began integrating issues of family involvement and family engagement, a practice that continues today in school district offices of family involvement. One point of distinction was that the relationship still privileged schools as the source of power, evident in the reference to school-family connections or partnerships.

By the 1990s, the focus became notably more provocative, as questions were raised regarding the influences of multiple factors that affected children and families: e.g., culture, race, racial discrimination, intergenerational poverty, social stratification, and diverse family contexts. Work by Purcell-Gates (1997) focused on poor, white families, and the definition of family itself was being redefined. Researchers were challenged to focus on the diversity of families (e.g., Black, Latino, mother-headed, father-headed, immigrant, poor, and gay/lesbian) and on different cultural definitions of families or parents (e.g., aunts, grandparents, and other family in the household responsible for the care of children). The heightened attention to fathers and families, beginning in the mid-1990s, was critical in thinking outside of mother-child dyads. Researchers and policymakers began to focus on the cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of men who are fathers and on the barriers facing fathers from historically marginalized groups (see National Center

on Fathers and Families, 1995). In the 2000s, emerging discussions about intersectionality and identity were also beginning to be integrated into public narratives about the school and home experiences of children, youth, and families.

This historical progression from the 1960s to the present has created a context for schools building reciprocal partnerships with families. Such partnerships are the hallmark of early childhood and K-12 efforts, as well as of efforts between and across universities and schools. As is reflected in Head Start's performance standards, parents and families are seen as the most essential of multiple influences that create expectations for performance. However, family-school partnerships are complicated. Such partnerships are laden with issues of authority and power that affect the flow of communication; that are open to assumptions, differences in sociopolitical histories, and stereotypes that influence choices, interactions, and decisionmaking; and that may reduce the options for family outreach.

The question of match or mismatch between the experiences and histories of families and the teachers and educators in schools persists as a knotty problem with the potential to weaken family-school partnerships. Some of the mismatches may be minor, while others may be fundamental to whether and how communication is sustained and whether and how parents feel honored and respected. The problems may be especially complex when teachers and students have vastly different socioeconomic experiences, racial and cultural identities, linguistic practices, and experiences with bias, discrimination, and access. The issues of race, class, gender, and difference, more broadly, become enormously complicated, as neither teachers nor parents represent a singular identity. A looming possibility is that narrow assumptions about families rather than meaningful interactions will inform expectations and practices of teachers, schools, and researchers. Rather than having shared goals, family-school partnerships may appear coercive and exacerbated by mistrust.

In the chapters of this volume, the authors weigh these potential challenges and the evolution of discussions in the field. They articulate a core valuing of parents and families. By pointing to the importance of schools reaching out to parents and families, they argue for an approach that not simply invites parents and families to school but primarily engages them in respectful and positively consequential ways—in ways that accept and embrace their knowledge, practices, and expertise. Hence, the editors and authors not only flip the script; they also flip the order of the conceptualization, from school-home to family-school. At the same time, they acknowledge that the pathway to schools and teachers building relationships with parents, families, and neighborhood institutions is not clear-cut, as is true of any phenomenon or effort in practice or research.

This volume is being released at a time when the diversity of families is being recognized within practice and policy and when the possibilities for the field to create new frameworks proffer countless opportunities for children and families, schools and communities, researchers and practitioners, and policy and policymakers. Many, myself and the editors of and authors in this volume included, have argued against a "one-size-fits-all" approach, denoting that such universal applications work against the goal of understanding the social and cultural histories and priorities of families and of promoting educational access and equity.

How then do parents, teachers, and administrators co-construct and communicate their goals and expectations in ways that promote synchrony between home and school? This volume, and the thought-provoking chapters in it, reaches inwardly to address this and a range of other questions related to the roles and responsibilities of schools to engage ethnoculturally and racially diverse families. It offers us the space to rethink how research can enhance schools' efforts and asks us to interrogate how students and families are enriched from these efforts. The volume motivates readers to work for positive change and compels us to translate our commitments to positive change into approaches that support ethnoculturally and racially diverse children and families in achieving their promise.

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Family-School Partnerships in Ethnocultural Communities: Reorienting Conceptual Frameworks, Research Methods, and Intervention Efforts by Rotating Our Lens

Christine M. McWayne, Fabienne Doucet, and Jayanthi Mistry

Respect and caring, a commitment to two-way communication, and the recognition that sometimes we have to work outside of our comfort zone or our typically defined roles are at the core of an ethical approach to education (Noddings, 2012). These elements characterize approaches to family-school partnerships that seek to "flip the script," that is, to disrupt the status quo with respect to where authority and expertise are located within home-school connections in ethnocultural communities. Specifically, in this chapter, we will advocate for a reorientation from a "school-to-home" perspective to a "home-to-school" perspective. It is our assertion that such reorienting could revolutionize programmatic and intervention efforts. The quotes below from Head Start faculty and staff, taken from our research, illustrate such an approach:

> [Families] see how they're respected by the staff. . . the importance of them to be involved in their child's education from the very first minute they come through those doors, that's what we stress, that they're the first teachers and [they're] as important. Because we have parents that say, "Oh, you're the teacher. I'm not." No, you're the teacher, you're the first teacher, we're professional teachers but you are your child's primary teacher because they spend more time with you than they do with us. So you're also an educator. – Family Services Coordinator,[1] United Voices Head Start, Brooklyn, NY

> Then usually in Head Start or as a teacher… we always have the newsletter or activities, handing back to home for the parents, "that's the curriculum we have in school, that's what you can do at home with your kids." But, I am really learning something now. As the teacher,

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we can get activities and ideas from home to school, extend it, and put it into 1All names are pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants.

the curriculum…We do a lot of involvement, but now it's not just involved, it's engaged. It's two-way, not just one-way. – Teacher, Action for Change Head Start, Boston, MA

I mean, you can't work here and not have a heart and not be creative. And you know, this is our field, and we all have to wear different hats. I'm a family assistant and enrollment coordinator, but at the same time, I'm a custodian, I'm a teacher; we all wear different hats. Wherever we're needed; reception, we go downstairs to be a receptionist.– Family Worker and Enrollment Coordinator, United Voices Head Start, Brooklyn, NY

Head Start has an open-door policy….They always involve parents in the classroom, and ask them to help, and try to give ideas how to help parents with their children at home. But now we're making it a circle. We don't just want teachers to give ideas to the parents and bring [them] *home…. We also want to get ideas <u>from</u> the parents… I think that piece is very important.* – Teacher, Action for Change Head Start, Boston, MA

In this fourth volume of the series, the authors will explore the question of how family- school partnerships can be most meaningful and effective. Specifically, the authors will explore how schools and teachers can reconceive their role *together with* families to support children's learning within diverse ethnocultural communities and how research that crosses paradigms and disciplines can illuminate new under-standings. *The authors of this volume will help readers to see that building a new imagination for family engagement is not coming up with new and creative solutions to increasing family presence at school, per se, but is about forging a community of respect around parents and families, and about recognizing the deeper ways in which parents and families are and can be "present" in their children's education and in relationship with their children's schools* (Doucet, 2011a; McWayne, 2015).

Problematizing the Dominant *School-to-Home* Lens

Although research has acknowledged that family engagement in children's school-ing occurs in many forms, most studies continue to focus primarily on school-based participation, or the *school-to-home* link. One explanation for this predominant focus on "getting parents to the school" is grounded in the belief that through their contact with educators, parents might become socialized in the ways of the school and gain valuable information about how to best engage their children's learning at home (Doucet, 2008). Implicit in this conception of family-school partnership is the notion that school-based participation serves as a precursor to effective home-based engagement (Hill, 2010). However, for many low-income, ethnic minority and immigrant families, sociocultural and sociolinguistic differences between families and educators often translate into significant discontinuities between home and school contexts. Conflicting values, socialization goals, role demands, and commu-nication expectations and styles can place young children at risk for difficulties as they traverse the two settings (Lareau & Horvat, 1999; McWayne & Melzi, 2014). Despite the fact that many educators agree family-school partnerships are impor-tant, as Mapp and Hong (2010) report, they often "harbor beliefs, attitudes, and

fears about families that hinder their ability to cultivate partnerships" (p. 346). What's more, these divides work to ensure that educators do not have access to the potentially powerful home-based educational engagement that does occur in many families, but might manifest in culture-specific involvement that remains largely unaccounted for and invisible (Doucet, 2011a; McWayne, Melzi, Limlingan, & Schick, 2016). Several implications follow from this state of the field. Effects of home-based family engagement on children's success are likely underestimated because assessments of this relationship have not been sensitive to culturally contextualized behaviors and values of increasingly diverse families in the United States (Hall, Yip, & Zárate, 2016). This state of the knowledge base has also likely undermined intervention efforts, as interventions have not been built on a clear understanding of the cultural-contextual realities or the specific family strengths we should leverage within socioculturally diverse families (McNamara, Telzrow, & DeLamatre, 1999). Though there may be great value in the kinds of school-based activities and outreach typically represented in the family-school connections research, these significant gaps need to be better understood to inform our intervention efforts.

The Need for New Lenses to View Family Engagement

The inadequacies of this school-to-home perspective for informing culturally relevant intervention efforts in schools necessitate that we adopt new points of view. Some scholars are calling for greater understanding of the ways in which family engagement is relationally situated. In the first volume of this series, Kim and Sheridan (2015) foregrounded the *relational* aspects of family engagement as providing a larger context for the oft-more-studied *structural* activities of family engagement. In doing so, these authors underscored an important shift that the field needs concerning the ways we conceive of the family-school connection. They advocated for studying the mesosystem relationship, both as a means for promoting student success and an "end in itself," and, thus, offered a productive point of focus for future theory-building and research. The ubiquitous emphasis on structural activities of family engagement, those specific school-centered practices "demonstrated by parents to provide support for their child's education" (Kim & Sheridan, 2015, p. 3), such as homework help or volunteering at school, has, in many ways, served to constrain family-school partnership research and practice.

There are clear implications of this shift for understanding the interpersonal elements that foster or impede successful family-teacher relationships. As Kim and Sheridan state, "some partnership practices may be experienced as foreign or uncomfortable to family members" (2015, p. 7). The question then becomes, what do we do about it? The most typical response to any incongruity is to try to overwrite or alter family practices, bringing them into closer alignment with what mainstream practices we believe to be most effective (see Melzi, Schick, & Scarola, forthcoming). However, researchers, such as Kim and Sheridan (2015), have pointed to the

need for research concerning "co-determined" activities, as well as more research on constructs such as "joint engagement" between teachers and parents. This fundamental shift to a relational approach brings into focus the need for a radically different orientation toward family- school connections, as well as the need to reconceptualize current delivery models of family engagement programming. We argue that this is especially needed for research and practice within ethnocultural communities, which are underrepresented in our conceptual frameworks and research studies (see also McWayne, 2015). However, if the goal these researchers lay before us (i.e., "parents and teachers work[ing] jointly together to provide cross-setting opportunities and experiences for children's learning and development") is to be truly strength-based, then we must recognize cultural and familial resources as a starting point (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 2005). These ideas have not been fully integrated into our theorizing or empirical study of family-school partnerships, though there is a rich tradition of this line of inquiry in the qualitative body of research on family-school relations (see, e.g., Crozier & Davies, 2007; de Carvalho, 2001; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991, 1994a, 1994b; Graue, Kroeger, & Prager, 2001; Hong, 2011; Lightfoot, 2004; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González 2005; Valdès, 1996).

One of the major contributions of this qualitative work has been an explicit and deliberate focus on how issues of power and inequity shape the dynamics of family-school partnerships.

Scholars such as Fantuzzo, McWayne, and Childs (2006) and Fine (1993) have noted that researchers and practitioners must grapple with the issue of power in relationships in order to facilitate more just and authentic partnerships. Thus, it is critical for those with institutional authority in the family-school relationship (i.e., teachers and administrators) to challenge themselves around what issues of power and inequity mean for the initiation, development, and maintenance of relationships with families (Hanhan, 2003; Hong, 2011; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003).

Moreover, as a field we need to understand what we are asking of teachers and education programs when mandates for family engagement reflect a one-size-fits-all endeavor, or when these mandates are viewed as a panacea for the entrenched and unjust structures that reproduce and perpetuate the very ills ("the achievement gap") that we seek to ameliorate through increased family engagement (McWayne, 2015). These are not simple matters. As we continue to construct new theoretical models, it will be important to find additional ways to conceptualize these larger ecological forces that are part of a developing child's exosystem (e.g., district policies) and macrosystem (i.e., mainstream ideologies and social/institutional structures) as they impinge on the relationships in a child's mesosystem (Downer & Myers, 2010).

What this present volume will emphasize is that a one-size-fits-all model of family-school partnerships *will not* meet the needs of socioculturally diverse families served by education programs today and that in addition to a relational approach we also need approaches that are culturally informed and situated. There is a specific need for culture-contextualized ways of understanding bridge-building with families and for understanding why families might seem resistant to building such bridges. For example, Doucet (2011a) found that what seemed like resistance to bridging home and school among Haitian immigrant families actually reflected acts

of agency by parents who were worried about their children becoming too Americanized, a concern many immigrant families have. As Hill (2010) aptly stated, "In some cases, teachers will have to build bridges over valleys they did not create and mend wounds that they did not cause in order to reach families" (p. 121). When parental concerns are understood, fostering such two- way bridges between parents and teachers can provide teachers with access to the rich cognitive and cultural resources of families (Moll et al., 2005) and the opportunity to see families as equal partners in their work (McWayne, Mistry, Brenneman, Greenfield, & Zan, 2018). Such views hold great promise for advancing children's learning in the diverse sociocultural contexts that characterize the landscape of children, families, and schools across our nation and the globe.

Consistent with the purpose of this book series, the overall objective of this volume is to set forth futuristic thinking and articulate significant directions that address the underrepresentation of ethnocultural diversity in the area of family-school partnerships research. In a recent *American Psychologist* paper, Hall et al. (2016) defined ethnocultural diversity as "the cultural differences within and between cultures of ethnic groups" (p. 40), and in their paper they advocate for an "inside-out" (emic) approach to conducting research that privileges the perspectives of members of ethnocultural communities that are underrepresented in research as "a matter of scientific rigor and responsibility" (p. 41). It is to their call that the writers of this volume respond.

A focus on culture-specific frameworks, constructs, measures, and methods is consistent with the tenets of sociocultural perspectives on human development and education based on Vygotsky's (1978) theory, specifically the core notion that concepts of human functioning are culturally and contextually situated and, therefore, need to be understood from an emic (i.e., culture-specific or "inside-out") perspective (see also Berry, 1969). Applying a sociocultural perspective to our core construct of "family engagement" foregrounds the need to gain an insider's understanding of how the construct is understood by the particular ethnocultural community/communities that are served by an educational setting. Before we elaborate on this application of sociocultural theory to family engagement, we broaden the lens with a brief explanation of how cultural diversity is viewed within this perspective.

Ethnocultural Diversity and Schooling from a Sociocultural Perspective

We argue that how culture is defined has clear implications for how cultural diversity is understood and, therefore, for how we, as researchers and educators, attempt to understand families from diverse backgrounds. Culture can be defined to highlight two levels of analysis, specifically: (a) the broadly generalizable *ideologies and practices shared by ethnocultural groups* and (b) *the meaning-making processes* through which individuals interpret their physical and social environments by drawing upon the shared ideologies available to them as members of groups

(Mistry et al., 2016). The integration of both of these perspectives on culture overcomes the limitations wrought by an exclusive focus on culture as shared ideologies. When culture is operationalized as specific ideologies, it tends to be overgeneralized to whole ethnocultural communities without regard for within-group variation. It should be noted that the existence of shared ideologies is not an issue. The danger lies in the attribution of the shared ideology to all members of a group, in the absence of assessing the extent to which the ideology is espoused by the participants in a study.

As Mistry et al. (2016) have argued, incorporating an understanding of how individuals use cultural meaning-making can address the tendency to overgeneralize ideologies to all members of an ethnocultural group. For example, when culture as shared ideology is the only way we conceptualize culture, then we tend to take the "cultural differences" approach. Within this approach, for example, the most typical implication drawn for teachers is that they are called upon to "learn about" the "cultures" of all the children in their classroom. This is unrealistic. In contrast, when we foreground "culture as meaning making," then the implication is the need to make explicit the "frames of reference" that are being used in a particular context – such as the classroom – that might not be shared by or familiar to all children in the classroom. For example, for a child who is entering a preschool classroom for the first time, the segmenting of the classroom day into specific time-bound activities like "circle time" or "story time" is not likely to be a familiar frame of reference.

We argue here that to facilitate *all* children's transition to school, in addition to being sensitive to the perspective of families, it is also essential to recognize that we as educators use interpretive frames that are often implicit in what we take for granted as normative or typical. Sociocultural concepts facilitate a raised consciousness and can enable us to make explicit the "hidden" assumptions that are embedded in what we see as "normal" in classrooms and schools. So, how might we raise consciousness about "normative" experiences of the dominant group that are already represented in classrooms? As Pufall-Jones and Mistry (2019) argue, using sociocultural theory as the lens through which educational settings and processes are viewed enables educators to recognize their own implicit frames of reference. According to Vygotsky (1978) culture is integral in higher mental functioning because it is represented in the tools and signs (mediational means) by which we organize, understand, and communicate our thoughts about our physical and social world. Books, calculators, and computers are common examples of *physical artifacts or tools* of our present-day literate and technological society that mediate how we engage with and manage our social and physical world. So, for example, we overcome the limitations of face-to-face interaction by tools such as books through which we can engage with the thoughts of authors who are separated from us in physical time and space. On the other hand, written language, the alphabet, numeral systems, the decimal system (as a way of organizing numbers), and the calendar (organizing time into years, months, days) are all examples of *signs* or the symbolic tools through which we manage or regulate internal or mental human functioning (our thoughts and schemas). For example, the distinction we learned to recognize between expository texts and narratives (as signs or symbolic frames) primes us to

different mindsets for understanding what we are going to encounter when we begin to read a newspaper column versus a novel.

Another core assumption underlying sociocultural perspectives (Cole, 1996; Mistry & Dutta, 2015; Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978) is that culture-specific symbol systems, or tools and signs, are historically developed, institutionalized, and privileged in the institutions, practices, and valued activities of communities. Schools are examples of cultural communities because they share particular values, understandings, and mediational means (such as the tools and systems of written literacy) which are historically institutionalized and privileged in the valued activities of this community. For example, knowledge or facts represented in books or the written word are considered the core component of the formal curriculum in schools because written literacy is institutionalized and privileged in educational settings in the United States.

Finally, from a sociocultural perspective, learning and developmental processes are viewed as transformations in the use of mediational means (tools and symbols) and in the nature of participation in communities of shared practices. Thus, learning and development within classrooms can be conceptualized as children's transformations in ways of using the tools and signs that are valued and privileged in the activities of the classroom communities. Take the following example: in a preschool classroom, children gradually transform their participation in the classroom as they become experienced in activities such as "free play" and "circle-time," which may be institutionalized and privileged by virtue of the prominence given to these activities in the daily schedule. Similarly, shared practice within a preschool classroom may include particular expectations of what constitutes a "story" that can be shared during "circle time" and what does not. In this case, stories that follow a linear or chronological structure around a central topic (or story plot) are often privileged during story time, because this is the predominant narrative structure of written storybooks typically found in preschools in the United States. This particular definition of "story" then becomes the internal script that must guide a child's storytelling in order to be considered acceptable in the classroom. By contrast, a more freeform style of storytelling that does not follow a clear linear structure because it is interjected by jokes, or interrupted by side stories – such as might be told by a grandparent during a shared family activity of shelling peas – would not be acceptable in the classroom and would be corrected by teachers in an effort to "help" the child tell stories the "right" way.

Family Engagement from a Sociocultural Perspective

Using this frame, it might seem obvious now that parents and guardians from different ethnocultural backgrounds might not share the mainstream educators' concept, or framing, of family engagement. In such cases, educators need to be open to other perspectives about family engagement and willing to take the perspective of the families being served. This emphasis on taking an emic perspective provides part of

the rationale for why the home-to-school flow of information is critical. It is only when we, as educators and researchers, are able to "see" how families are making sense of their roles and education in general, or of classroom activities and routines in particular, that we will be able to facilitate their children's successful entry and transition to the classroom community.

The writers in this volume seek to make explicit the mediational means and shared practices of "family engagement" that are taken for granted as representing the *right* way to be involved (e.g., making brownies for the bake sale) or to show oneself to be a *good* parent (e.g., chaperoning field trips) and will provide alternative ideas about and for family engagement within ethnocultural communities. Doucet (2011b) framed the tools and symbols (mediational means) and shared practices of traditional family engagement as rituals. For example, just as circle time is part of the daily ritual of many early childhood learning spaces, the parent-teacher conference is a ritual in which parents and teachers participate at least once or twice an academic year. Rituals play important socializing and normalizing functions for group inclusion and thus also define the boundaries for group exclusion (Doucet, 2011b). In schools, rituals help to order the school day, to bring predictability and routine, to establish a local culture, and to pinpoint nonconformity (McLaren, 1999). They also serve to teach students behavioral expectations, community values, and their roles vis-à-vis teachers and other school personnel (Kapferer, 1981). Examined as a set of interconnected practices, rituals can be understood as part of a system with underlying unwritten rules or cultural codes, or root paradigms (Turner, 1979).

Through this lens, the mainstream construction of family engagement can be seen as a ritual system undergirded by at least three root paradigms: (1) *A Cult of Domesticity*, within which the "proper" ways of performing involvement are best carried out by (white, middle-class) mothers; (2) *A Cult(ure) of Capital*, which assumes that parents will and should activate all available resources to advance their children's educational experiences, even as this activation should not look too aggressive or critical; and (3) *A Cult of Pedantocracy*, which undergirds the ritual system of family engagement by prescribing that the best way for parents to participate in their children's education is in a supportive role (Doucet, 2011b, p. 406).

Recent research with families from both Haitian and Latino immigrant communities in the United States, as well as African American communities, provides illustrations of the tensions inherent in the assumption of these root paradigms across ethnocultural communities.

Specifically, these root paradigms were applied as an analytical lens to understand Haitian immigrant parents' engagement with schools (Doucet, 2011b). Violating the *cult of domesticity*, Doucet found that in Haitian families, a male family member often served as the public representative for the family, a practice that was sometimes misunderstood as a power play within a system that expects mothers to do the work of connecting home and school. Haitian immigrant families also expected schools to be in the business of providing students with a good education and access to resources as a matter of course, contrary to the assumptions of the cult(ure) of

capital in which parents are expected to aggressively pursue their individual children's interests. Nasir also (2004) wrote about this issue with respect to African American families, arguing that research criticizing Black parents' lack of involvement is built on the unfair "assumption that parents should know that they have to fight the system to get a good education for their students" (p. 113; see also Lareau & Horvat, 1999). Interestingly, with respect to a school-centric framing of the relationship between home and school, Haitian parents did feel that schools should be in charge. At the same time, they also expected schools to support their efforts in the same way that they supported the efforts of the school (reciprocal support). In another study conducted with African American families, Doucet (2008) found a similar expectation of reciprocity, as illustrated by this middle-class father's statement: "I mean, to me, school should reinforce what you teach, as far as outside of academics. I mean academics, we reinforce what they teach, if it's correct. So if I'm trying to…I'm like look, 'You can't go left.' The school should reinforce, 'You can't go left.' That's how I do it" (p. 124). This reciprocity is often missing in the traditional construction of the school's role vis-à-vis families.

Importantly, traditional parent involvement models operate on the assumption that family-school partnerships are derived from consensus and cooperation, that is, parents are already operating in consensus, complying with the notion that their role is a supportive one (Lareau & Horvat, 1999). These models – although perhaps well-intentioned – fail to acknowledge that home-school relations are a reflection of broader social inequalities and that "schools' devaluing of the resources and values of, for example, lower SES families, constrain parents' involvement options, inclinations, and relations with schools" (Auerbach, 2007, p. 251). For example, the predominant conceptualization of the "engaged" caregiver in mainstream US culture places great value on parents "showing up" as well as parental initiation, if not assertiveness (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). However, values at the core of what it means to be a member of a particular ethnocultural community (e.g., *respeto*, or respect for elders/authority, for many Latinx families) can pit the cultural scripts of caregivers against the mainstream expectations for parent engagement in schools (Auerbach, 2007). As has been stated, this can have the unintended consequence of painting many caregivers as less involved than their mainstream counterparts (Doucet, 2008). In their work with Latinx immigrant families with low income, for example, McWayne and Melzi (2014), McWayne, Foster & Melzi (2018), and McWayne, Melzi, and colleagues (2013, 2016) have documented the wide range of home-based family engagement practices in which Head Start Latinx families engage but which might go unnoticed by their children's teachers (e.g., engaging in *consejos* about how to lead "a good life," teaching children about their cultural heritage, developing children's social-emotional skills in specific contexts). Thus, a shift in focus from *school-to-home* to *home-to-school* requires a more intentional "flip" of the script or "rotation of our lens" to allow conceptualizations of family engagement to be understood emically (from the inside-out; as culturally situated, using parents' own conceptualizations). In sum, we have much yet to learn.

Understandings Gleaned from Studies of Family Engagement that "Flip the Script"

In addition to the body of quantitative and mixed methods research that has contributed to our understanding of family engagement, ethnographic research provides accessible examples of educational spaces that turn the traditional model of family engagement (i.e., unidirectional school-to-home approach) on its head. Hurtig and Dyrness (2011) provided a helpful review of ethnographic studies on family involvement in school, with an emphasis on studies of Latinx families because, as they noted, much of the ethnographic work to date has focused on this population. These authors proposed that the qualitative tradition has produced two distinct bodies of research: "critical" ethnographies that use critical race, feminist, constructivist, and resistance theories to understand the ways social inequalities are produced and reproduced in family-school relationships; and "activist" ethnographies, which can also be described as participatory action research in that they involve the ethnographer working with families to generate "alternative forms of parent engagement, through which critiques of conventional forms of parent involvement often emerge" (p. 533).

For example, Hurtig described her work with parent researchers through the community writing and research project she codirects. The writing workshops provide parents an opportunity to express and share issues of concern, which may then lead to research projects, such as an evaluation of the school's parent programs, a documented history of the community's fight for a new high school, or a report on the consequences of the forced departure of a beloved principal. These research projects often lead to written reports and/or presentations that will be shared with stakeholders. Participants often also produce magazines of their writings that are shared with teachers and distributed to libraries, and from which parents read their stories to their children at such events as family literacy nights, shifting the way children see their parents within the school.

The Latina Mothers (or *Madres Unidas*, as they named themselves) with whom Dyrness worked also became researchers at school and in the community, conducting focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and participant observations in order to address family-school relations practices that parents felt were exclusionary. Since they involved students, parents, teachers, the principal, and community organizers in their study, the mothers were able to gain a rich picture of the dynamics at play. Ultimately, they proposed and created a Parent Center at the school run by and serving the needs of parents. Summarizing the power of this type of activist research, Hurtig and Dyrness (2011) wrote: "Through the collaborative efforts of parents and researchers to critique and transform the ascribed roles and expectations of parents in schools, activist ethnography generates unique insights into the cultural production of parent involvement, as well as a practical understanding of the possibilities and challenges involved in transforming parent– school relations" (p. 533).

Another example of a "flip the script" approach to family engagement was described by Sooh Hong (2011) in *A Cord of Three Strands*. In this book, Hong presented an elegant account of the ways in which a grassroots organization in

Chicago—the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA)—empowered immigrant parents to become advocates in their children's schools. The "three strands" to which Hong's title refers are family, school, and community, and were identified as such by one of her participants. In the 1990s, the LSNA began partnering with Chicago public schools by training Parent Mentors who volunteer in classrooms to assist teachers and tutor students. Describing the shift this program engendered, Hong wrote, "As parents move from the periphery to the center of school life, they begin to take notice, speak up, and intervene in ways that change the nature of relationships. Rather than viewing teachers and school staff as final authorities on school practice, they begin to see them as partners" (p. 137). In addition, the program, which is still active, includes having Parent Mentors set personal goals, such as earning a GED or taking English classes, and engaging Parent Mentors in broader community issues. Hong found that this type of empowerment led participating parents to begin to see themselves as leaders within the community as well as the school. Parent Mentors then became liaisons between the school and the community, deepening feelings of trust from nonmentor parents as well as students.

In her ethnographic work with Latinx communities in California, Delgado-Gaitan (1991) highlighted the importance of perceived *meaningfulness* as a critical component of parents' involvement efforts. Specifically, when working with the parent and educator communities in Carpinteria schools, Delgado-Gaitan found that the "active" parents and those deemed "less active" differed primarily in that the "less active" parents were not yet convinced that their participation at the school was important or relevant. She found that, "[t]he conventional parent-involvement efforts [such as parent-teacher conferences]. . . were not, by any means, appropriate occasions for teaching parents how the school operates or skills to help their children at home.

The goals for these activities were incongruent between the home and the school. The parents expected more instruction and frequent communication from the school, while teachers expected the parents to take more initiative to enquire about their child's progress on a regular basis" (p. 30). Among the many insights her work provides is that key needs and assumptions of individuals within both stakeholder groups impact the course and eventual outcome of the family-school partnership (McWayne, 2015).

In addition, Delgado-Gaitan's (1991) documentation of the COPLA (*Comite de Padres Latinos*) organization offers a poignant example of how collective realization, empowerment, and coordinated action can be achieved, while also providing a model for working through conflict that inevitably arises when power-sharing is sought. As she notes, ethnically diverse families "often face sustained isolation from the school culture, which can lead to miscommunication between parents and school...Schools facilitate the exclusion of students and parents by (consciously or unconsciously) establishing activities that require specific majority culturally-based knowledge and behaviors about the school as an institution. Frequently, these ideas are assumed and are not made explicit" (p. 21). COPLA provided a space for Latinx parents to work together and support each other's efforts to advocate for their children's needs, by gaining information about how the educational system works and by sharing with each other their experiences. Because school staff was invited

to participate with the COPLA members in many of their meetings, it provided a structural mechanism whereby communication between families and teachers could occur. The parents' commitments to each other and to ensuring that their voices were heard, along with the school leadership's willingness to recognize the committee's presence and function, facilitated a unique and powerful family-school partnership. In the Carpinteria community, it was essential, first, for parents to be supported in their own collective process and then for school personnel to be brought into the conversation on the parents' terms. This "stacking of the deck" was a necessary part of the partnership to ensure that families' perspectives were taken seriously and treated with equal respect to that of the school's.

A final example is taken from the RISE (*Readiness through Integrative Science and Engineering*) Project, a curriculum and professional development research study conducted with Head Start programs (see McWayne, Mistry, et al., 2018). Specifically, the Home-School Collaboration (HSC) component of the RISE approach highlights the importance of immigrant families' contributions to their preschool children's learning, the value of a school curriculum that reflects children's familiar knowledge and prior experience, and the importance of respectful, trusting, and nonhierarchical dialogue between parents and teachers. These researchers argue that by understanding and appreciating the knowledge and support already available to students at home and in the community, teachers can make connections between these experiences and the classroom curriculum in ways that are truly powerful for students. In the RISE approach, diversity is a source of strength in home-school partnerships and curriculum development efforts, not "a complication to be overcome" (Pope Edwards & Kutaka, 2015, p. 35). Therefore, the approach rejects a deficit model of low-income, immigrant families, instead focusing on the resources families bring to the endeavor of educating their young children. Because educators need and deserve support to do this important work, a critical goal of RISE is to provide educators with tools and strategies to learn from families and build on children's experiential knowledge. Essential to such a reconceptualization of family engagement is that the home-to-school flow of information is just as important as the school-to-home flow, with a particular focus in RISE on science, technology, and engineering (STE) learning as the family-school bridge. Therefore, home-school collaboration efforts in RISE go well beyond the home extension activities that typically constitute the home involvement component of early childhood curricula. By framing family engagement as emphasizing information flowing from the home to the school, in addition to the more typical school-to-home flow, teachers can make a subtle yet profound shift in their expectations about how to engage families, as the quotes at the beginning of this chapter illustrate.

As teachers spend more time gaining access to families' experiential knowledge, learning about what children see and do every day, and about what family routines are important, possibilities emerge for alternative views about family engagement (Weisner, 2005). In RISE, children's homes and neighborhoods become rich resources for STE curriculum. For example, teachers use home visits at the beginning of the school year to look for important "tools" in the home that can be brought into the classroom related to a particular STE concept (e.g., special spoons for noodle soups or chopsticks provide examples of the relationship

between *structure and function*). Another common routine among early childhood classrooms is doing neighborhood walks; teachers can readily identify relevant STE concepts in children's communities (e.g., the ramps in the block center relate to ramps coming off service trucks, at curb cutouts, and going into the local grocery store; patterns on a leaf can be used to teach about mathematical patterns children encounter every day at home or in nature).

RISE integrates the notion of parent-teacher dialogues (Adair & Tobin, 2008) and families' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2005), with joint activities being a key strategy to foster partnership and communication between teachers and families. A fundamental premise is that when individuals engage with each other in joint activities that involve shared goals, they come to understand each other as equal partners. This respectful and reciprocal relationship between teachers and parents is then extended to another forum, Parent-Teacher Discussion groups (PTDs), where with support, teachers and parents can come to question their assumptions about one another, even disagree, while building toward understanding (Adair & Tobin, 2008).

Through these joint activities and discussion groups, teachers gain access to what Moll and colleagues (2005) termed "families' funds of knowledge," defined as immigrant parents' knowledge of the local environment and community, and the expertise they have developed to function within their various contexts (work, neighborhood, social networks, political activities, etc.). By supporting teacher-parent communication and relationship-building in this way, the principal innovation of RISE is the coconstruction of more inclusive early childhood curriculum, conceptualized as a process of reciprocal engagement between parents and teachers to develop curriculum that empowers teachers and families to work jointly as equal partners and to incorporate home and community funds of knowledge into the formal curriculum of the preschool classroom (see McWayne, Mistry et al., 2018).
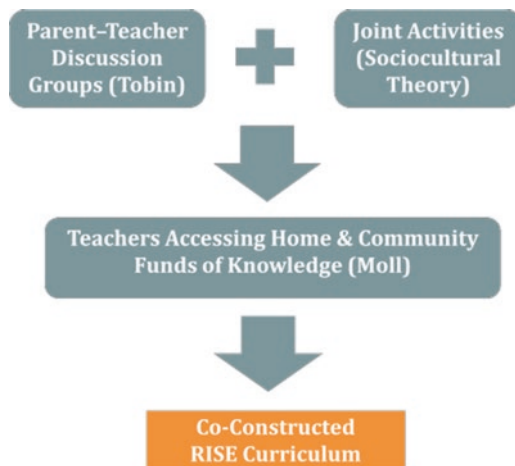
These examples of engaging families in the educational experiences of their children, that have come out of the qualitative research tradition, may be particularly effective for: (a) developing family-school relationships built on trust and

mutual respect, (b) supporting family engagement that is culturally responsive and meaningful for families and teachers, and (c) addressing barriers to family engagement often experienced when mainstream expectations for parental involvement are the only normative reference.

Primary Aims of Volume IV of the Series

Informed by sociocultural theory, critical ethnography, and our own research (using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches) in ethnocultural communities, we argue that recognition of the need for a *home-to-school* directional change is a productive way of promoting a more inclusive focus for research and practice. However, to successfully rotate the lens that has predominated the study of family-school partnerships we need emic approaches (Hall et al., 2016), multidisciplinary approaches (borrowing methods and tools from across paradigms), and transnational research to interrogate the very interpretive frames we use to guide our inquiry (Pope Edwards & Kutaka, 2015). *What we know* and *how we know* are intricately connected. An issue as complex as family-school partnership necessitates a dialogue that brings together the best knowledge across disciplines, methodological traditions, practical settings, and research contexts; knowledge that is situated both locally and globally. Having such dialogue will allow us to scrutinize prevailing notions about family-school partnerships that have failed to be responsive to the lived experiences of members of ethnoculturally diverse communities. We should persistently ask: How do we better understand the contexts within which particular knowledge has emerged and question our own epistemological biases concerning family-school connections? How can we become more aware of how those biases permeate the research questions that drive and perpetuate our inquiry? How can we better capture critical aspects of the family-school partnership construct, especially in light of a culturally situated approach? How, within the realm of family-school partnerships, do we ensure that the lived experiences of the stakeholders involved are central in our research and intervention work? How can we better reflect the goals, questions, and challenges these stakeholders hold and encounter? Relatedly, how do we allow for new perspectives on this phenomenon of family-school partnership to influence what we think we already "know," as well as how we go about pursuing new understandings? (see also McWayne, 2015).

In our own collective work, we find ourselves constantly guarding against the tendency to rely on or promote notions of (decontextualized) "best practices" but rather seek to understand ways to promote an evidence base that is inclusive of and valid for ALL families. The specific danger we are susceptible to lies in the fact that much of what we consider evidence-based practice is conducted with the people who "show up" and who, for a whole host of reasons, are able to comply with our research and interventions (perhaps because of shared implicit understandings). It is important for researchers and interventionists to understand how to locate the barriers to participation in a family-school partnership (i.e., why people might *not* "show up" for research or an intervention program or to the school) and then how to

develop more inclusive home-school connections to overcome these barriers (Fantuzzo et al., 2006). The experience of disproportionate barriers to family engagement within ethnocultural communities is a reality with which we hope future researchers will meaningfully contend, because the accuracy of our identification of problems, the validity of our assertions, and the effectiveness of our solutions depend upon this.

Toward this aim, the authors of this volume provide the best and most current thinking to help us as we strive to move the research base forward on the topic. Rather than focusing on the "state of the field" or what is already known, the primary objective of each chapter is to articulate future directions, primary questions, and research needs. In this way, we hope to "turn traditional chapters on their head" by presenting more unknowns than knowns, and by focusing on uncharted directions rather than past accomplishments (as per Sheridan & Kim, 2015). We have invited experts from a variety of disciplines (e.g., clinical psychology, developmental psychology, cultural psychology, sociology, education, anthropology) and methodologies (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, indigenous research) to contribute to the volume. The perspectives that each brings will add both breadth and depth and allow for cross-fertilization of knowledge, ideas, methods, and questions, which is critical to address the needs in the field of family-school partnership research with ethnocultural communities. With a focus specifically on culture and context in this volume, and the home-to-school link, we will amplify the most innovative thinking with regard to the increasing sociocultural diversity of families and schools.

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Considering Race within Early Childhood Education: A Misunderstood and Underexplored Element of Family-School Partnerships in Child Care

Kay Sanders and Monica Molgaard

Research reveals that when the link between the school and home is strongly connected and consistent, children experience higher academic achievement and educational outcomes (Monti, Pomerantz, & Roisman, 2014; Yoder & Lopez, 2013). A key aspect of creating this strong connection is the involvement of parents in their children's education (Wen, Bulotsky-Shearer, Hahs-Vaughn, & Korfmacher, 2012). Schools tend to reflect European American, middle-class values and expectations (Case, 2002). It is critical for schools to recognize that not all families, especially ethnoculturally diverse families, approach these relationships in the same manner, and schools must not treat all relationships as though they are identical (Nagayama Hall, Yip, & Zarate, 2016). Differences in beliefs and values can occur because families and teachers come from diverse cultural backgrounds that bring different perspectives and expectations about their roles to these relationships (Nagayama Hall et al., 2016). Such incongruence may potentially contribute to unsuccessful family-school partnerships, especially for those families that are ethnoculturally diverse (Doucet, 2011; McCormick, Cappella, O'Connor, & McClowry, 2013).

The focus of this book is on articulating future directions in the area of family-school partnerships, specifically on ethnocultural diversity as it pertains to family-school partnerships. This chapter explores family-school partnerships within the early childhood educational context by considering what "partnership" means within a racialized society and whether attention to racial ethnic socialization practices within the child care[1] context can further strengthen the family-school partnership relationship.

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[1] For the sake of brevity and style, the authors use the term "child care" in a general sense to mean early educational settings prior to K-12 education, such as preschool, pre-K, child care centers. The authors use a specific type of child care (i.e., pre-K) when only that kind of early educational setting is meant.

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Family-School Partnerships within a Racialized Society

Theories pertaining to family-school partnership emphasize the distinct and inter-connected contexts of childhood development. Family traditions, neighborhood fac-tors, and the school culture are important and key considerations within many of these models, including the funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992), family-school partnerships (Epstein & Sanders, 2006), and the family empowerment approaches (Dunst & Trivette, 1987; Kim & Sheridan, 2015).

The seminal theory of Bronfenbrenner (1988, 1995) undergirds much of the family-school partnership approaches. What the child brings to his/her own devel-opment and surrounding proximal and distal levels of context, which interact with the child's developing self, form the central focus of ecological systems theory (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). The first level, the microsystem, includes the direct members in the child's world (Grant & Ray, 2016). These include family members, friends, teachers, and neighbors. The mesosystem, the second level, rep-resents the relationships between microsystems of a child, such as parent-teacher relationships (Keyes, 2000). The exosystem contains the influences that do not have direct contact with the child but still influence the development of the child, such as family financial hardships or school policies. The fourth level, the macrosystem, includes the larger influences, such as cultural beliefs and values (Grant & Ray, 2016). The belief that school readiness is a desired and important skill for preschool-aged children to attain is an example of a macrosystem value/belief. The final level, the chronosystem, includes the major transitions that occur in a child's life, such as divorce or death of a parent as well as the historical events of the day that might impact child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). These levels exemplify how context is multifaceted yet a relevant contributor to the development of the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1988, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Schools are a crucial socialization context in the United States, perhaps second only to the family, where time in school (even in child care) takes up a large propor-tion of children's waking hours (Child Trends, 2016). Bringing these two important environments together to work toward the betterment of all children is the founda-tion of the family-school partnership literature and policy initiatives. Carol Keyes (2000) adapted Bronfenbrenner's model to represent the teacher-parent relationship by focusing on the micro- and mesosystems within the family-school dynamic. This adaptation model was created to help teachers and parents see one another as indi-vidual people and display the skills that are necessary to come together and build a successful partnership (Keyes, 2002). While such a focus is important, since much of children's experiences happen at this intimate person-to-person level, by not incorporating the macrosystem and its distal impact on the interrelations of individu-als with each other, such an approach misses the racialized experiences of people of color who function within the ethnoculturally diverse context of the United States. The macrosystem of the United States is racialized, so the conversation about family-school partnerships, particularly when the focus is on ethnocultural diversity, neces-sitates acknowledgement of social stratification mechanisms (e.g., racism, discrimination) that are part of a racialized society (Garcia Coll et al., 1996).

Racial ethnic socialization has not been a prominent feature of K-12 school discourse although it has been examined in recent scholarly publications that focused on secondary education (Aldana & Byrd, 2015; Byrd, 2014, 2017). Within psychological developmental literature, the primary focus of racial ethnic socialization research has been the messages children receive in the home about race and ethnicity (Hughes et al., 2006). The authors of this chapter claim that child care settings play a crucial role in the racial ethnic socialization of young children. For children of color, racial ethnic socialization is not an inert construct. It predicts and correlates to predominantly positive developmental outcomes, such as reduced behavior problems (Boykin & Toms, 1985), academic achievement in African American boys (Joe & Earl, 2009), and increased scores in cognitive tests for African American girls (Caughy, Nettles, & Lima, 2011). To deal with family-school relationships effectively, schools must also deal with their role as racial ethnic socialization agents. To unpack this claim further, we define what a racialized society is and provide a brief review of relevant literature on racial ethnic socialization to provide context to the chapter. We follow this discussion by addressing why early educators need to care about their role in children's racial ethnic socialization experiences. This will be followed by an examination of important elements of racial ethnic socialization in child care and our proposal for the family-school partnership field to add the school's role in the racial ethnic socialization of young children to the understanding of *partnership*.

What Is a Racialized Society?

A racialized society is one in which there are racial inequities in socioeconomics, education, health, housing, and psychological well-being. While there is no biological basis for race and racial categories, from a critical race perspective, in a racialized society, racism is normative rather than an abnormal or atypical societal condition (Delgado, 1995). By racism, we do not only mean personal acts by individuals, but also, societal systems that support and reinforce white privilege. Too often, racism in the United States gets reduced to an individual aggressive act, effectively neutering the systemic racism that is perniciously undermining the well-being of communities of color in the United States. As a former slave society, the United States is historically a racialized one, and it has not freed itself successfully from the mantle of racism in the modern day (Coates, 2017; Shapiro, 2017). African Americans and Latinxs are disproportionately represented in poverty figures (Institute for New Economic Thinking, 2017; Proctor & Dalaker, 2003). Housing segregation, which prohibited African Americans from moving into European American neighborhoods, established race-based neighborhood segregation that continues to persist today (Rothstein, 2017). These are some examples of the deeply embedded yet normative structures of racism within the American social system.

While the above examples are more systemic, racism makes itself apparent on an interpersonal level, too. According to Fenton (1999), patterns of dominance and

subordination are reproduced in everyday life in racialized societies. In child care, this can be apparent during peer interactions when a child who differs from other children by racial, ethnic, and language markers is excluded or has greater difficulty integrating him/herself into peer interactions (Howes, Sanders, & Lee, 2008). As with Bronfenbrenner's explanation regarding the process of individual development, racism and discriminatory practices between individuals do not occur in isolation. The individual functions, rather, within the structures of a racialized society (Fenton, 1999).

What Is Racial Ethnic Socialization?

Racial ethnic socialization entails verbal and nonverbal communications to children regarding the customs, values, attitudes, and perceptions of race and/or ethnicity (Hughes & Chen, 1997). It is also the means through which children become familiar with the status and/or privilege of a particular racial ethnic group. For children of color, when racial ethnic socialization is effective, it is the means through which they can become *race resilient*, or able to take pride in and deflect the negative stereotypes or status of their race.

Historically, racial socialization focused primarily on African American parents' racial socialization strategies (Hughes et al., 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Sanders, 2016). Comparatively, researchers use the term *ethnic socialization*, when describing this process in Latinos, Asians, and Caribbean groups (Aldana & Byrd, 2015; Hughes et al., 2006). While there is some overlap among these two terms, *racial socialization* is used mostly when describing African American families. In this chapter, the authors use the term *racial ethnic socialization*, generally, to encompass both racial socialization and ethnic socialization and either term when the specific construct is the focus. A glaring omission regarding the majority of racial and/or ethnic socialization research is the absence or small representation of and discourse about European American children, particularly young European American children. This is most likely because European Americans view themselves as race-neutral (Lund, 2010). However, in a racialized society, whiteness matters in terms of power, prestige, and privilege (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Whiteness, based on critical race theory, is imbued with meaning. It connotes power, beauty, the middle class, and maleness (Ladson-Billings, 1998). The freedom to be race neutral is, essentially, a manifestation of race – a privilege of whiteness (Hart, 2001; Wildman, 2000).

To unpack the complexity of racial ethnic socialization practices, Hughes et al. (2006) identified four major dimensions of racial ethnic socialization: cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, and egalitarianism (which includes silence about race). Cultural socialization refers to teaching the racial history or heritage and culture of a racial ethnic group and building pride in children about belonging to a racial ethnic group (Hughes & Chen, 1997). This is the most common type of racial ethnic socialization and young children tend to experience this form most often at home. Preparation for bias helps children become aware of

discrimination and provides them with coping mechanisms against any prejudice they may encounter (Friend, Hunter, & Fletcher, 2011; Hughes & Chen, 1997). Promotion of mistrust refers to practices intended to instill in children caution toward other races (Hughes & Chen, 1997). In contrast, some parents teach children egalitarianism, the belief that all people are equal and should be treated with respect regardless of what race they may be (Hughes et al., 2006). A subcategory of egalitarianism, silence about race, is when parents do not discuss race at all with their children; this approach is synonymous with being color-blind (Walton et al., 2014). Silence about race is not common among African American parents but is more commonly reported by European American parents and European American parents of biracial children who lack African heritage (Caughy et al., 2011; Rollins & Hunter, 2013).

Parents may employ one or more of these racial ethnic socialization methods, and these strategies are also dependent on a variety of environmental factors (immigration status, education, income, the parents' own racial ethnic identities, and discrimination experiences) and child characteristics (child age, racial ethnicity, and gender) (Hughes et al., 2006; for a comprehensive review, see Priest et al., 2014). Cultural pride and preparation for bias tend to be linked to positive outcomes for children in the psychosocial and academic realms (Brown, Tanner-Smith, & Lesane-Brown, 2009; Hughes et al., 2006), while promotion of mistrust is associated with risk during adolescence and emerging adulthood (Liu, 2013). Most studies indicate that children gain higher family and peer self-esteem when they experience cultural socialization and preparation for bias (Hughes et al., 2006) and that this form of racial ethnic socialization is linked to positive outcomes for racially and ethnically diverse children, in particular (Caughy & Owen, 2015). Additionally, Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph, and Nickerson (2002) found that African American preschool children raised in an Afrocentric home environment, an environment that promotes and supports African heritage and cultural pride, experience higher factual knowledge and problem solving. Racial ethnic socialization positively connects to greater anger management, especially for preschool-age boys, and fewer externalizing and internalizing problem behaviors (Hughes et al., 2006).

Although children's central source of racial ethnic socialization is their parents, as children age, they experience socialization from other contexts such as child care and school settings (Aldana & Byrd, 2015). In these settings, children are in contact with peers and teachers who create new educational contexts that contribute to their racial ethnic socialization experiences. Research on racial ethnic socialization, therefore, must not only include the family but also extend to the child care context.

Why Should the Field of Early Education Care About Race?

Race matters in child care. The field of early education must understand the relevance of race in the lives of young children for the following reasons. First, young children engage in racial ethnic stereotyping and hold beliefs defined as prejudiced

as early as between three and five years of age (for reviews see Aboud & Amato, 2001; Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2001; Cristol & Gimbert, 2008; Hirschfeld, 2008; Nesdale, 2007). Second, informally, schools racially socialize children because they are an environment where children interact with peers who may not share the same racial ethnic background as they do (Aldana & Byrd, 2015). This creates the potential for young children to enact biases in their play and peer interactions when not attended to by teachers. Studies reveal that children as young as preschool age show preference for peers who have similar identities to themselves (Lee, 2016). This racial-ethnic preference can create negative experiences for children who are racially/ethnically different from their peers. For example, in a study conducted by Howes et al. (2008), toddlers who attended racially and ethnically diverse child care centers were observed in terms of their facility to enter peer groups and form relationships with teachers at the time of entry into the program and six months later. The findings from this study indicated that children who lacked peers with a shared ethnic heritage and children who spoke a different language at home than the language most often used in the classrooms experienced difficulty with peer interaction six months after entry into the peer group. Conversely, children in classrooms with the most ethnic diversity and who had a peer who shared his/her ethnic heritage engaged in more complex peer play six months later than those children who did not have a similar classroom environment ethnically. The tendency to prefer playmates and choose friends who are similar in race and ethnicity emerges in early childhood and continues through adolescence (Raabe & Beelmann, 2011). Teachers, therefore, must intentionally work to prevent group segregation and create an environment where racial ethnic bias does not occur (Lee, 2016). Additionally, teachers must be aware of their own racial biases and how these biases send racial and ethnic messages to children.

The framework by Garcia Coll et al. (1996) further identified how schools provide a promoting or inhibiting environment for children of color. This means that schools can either be supportive of the development of all children by ensuring that the experiences for children of color do not include social stratification via racism, sexism, discrimination, and segregation, or, schools can be an inhibiting context for children of color in which the mechanisms of social stratification are ignored or allowed to flourish. As such, frameworks pertaining to family-school partnerships in ethnoculturally diverse contexts must place the constant experience of social stratification mechanisms, such as racism, oppression, and segregation at the center (Johnson, Jaeger, Randolph, Cauce, & Ward, 2003). To do nothing or be color-blind in a racialized society most likely reinforces prejudice (Apfelbaum, Sommers, & Norton, 2008; Ullucci & Battey, 2011) or white privilege (Derman-Sparks, LeeKeenan, & Nimmo, 2015; Farago, Sanders, & Gaias, 2015).

Unfortunately, many early childhood teachers do not, overall, engage effectively with young children on the topic of race nor do they make race a focus of their pedagogical practice (Doucet & Adair, 2013; Farago et al., 2015; Priest et al., 2014). This means that early childhood teachers are most likely not countering social stratification based on race within their classrooms but potentially allowing it to take root. Early childhood teachers' lack of effort or awareness to counter racial ethnic bias seems to run in opposition to the expectations of non-European American parents of

young children. Anderson et al. (2015) revealed that Korean, Latinx, and African American parents of preschool-aged children already discussed racial ethnic bias with their children and believed that racial ethnic socialization was an important aspect of school readiness.

Racial Ethnic Socialization in Child Care

Child Care Teachers Are Racial Ethnic Socializers

Given that teachers, like parents, serve as significant attachment figures for young children (Howes & Spieker, 2008), teachers of young children are also primary socializing agents, and they, therefore, engage in racial ethnic socialization. The factors associated with parental racial ethnic socialization provide some direction in identifying racial ethnic socialization experienced by young children in child care. Similar to parental racial ethnic socialization, child care racial ethnic socialization is influenced, most likely, by teacher characteristics and experiences in addition to the classroom environment.

Although there may be parallels between parent and teacher racial ethnic socialization, it is not certain that the types of racial ethnic socialization methods used by teachers map onto the four types of racial ethnic socialization methods found in parents. Given that teachers care for a large group of children who are approximately the same age, rather than children within a family of varying ages, and that racial dissonance is more common in teacher-child dyads than parent-child dyads, the types of racial ethnic socialization strategies within child care may be unique. Preliminary research, mainly in countries outside of the United States, and in elementary school rather than child care, indicates that racial ethnic socialization strategies in schools most closely parallel the egalitarian method (Walton et al., 2014). However, two studies, one conducted in the United States and one conducted in Australia, found that a minority of socialization practices by elementary school teachers mirror preparation for bias (Smith, Atkins, & Connell, 2003; Walton et al., 2014). Similar to parental racial ethnic socialization, the strategies employed in schools interact with the racial ethnic composition of the school as well as the teachers' own racial attitudes (Walton et al., 2014). For example, in schools that are composed of predominantly European American children, ethnicity and racism were not considered pressing issues that must be discussed, and in some schools, it was even considered completely unnecessary to explore (Walton et al., 2014).

It is apparent from this preliminary work on racial ethnic socialization in elementary schools that the definition of egalitarian racial ethnic socialization is not a unitary concept and may be more nuanced than the egalitarian form of racial ethnic socialization used by parents. The study in Australia by Walton et al. (2014) reveals that egalitarian methods do not necessarily equate to a color-blind stance (or silence about race). These researchers identified three types of egalitarian racial ethnic socialization messages: procedural justice, distributive justice, and color muteness

(which most closely resembles silence about race). While both procedural- and distributive-justice approaches emphasized a shared humanity, the distributive-justice approach actively and openly discussed injustices and supported antiracism strategies in classrooms (Walton et al., 2014).

It appears that the procedural-justice and color-muteness orientations tend to be most commonly employed in schools (Aukrust & Rydland, 2009; Priest et al., 2014), while the more proactive and antibias approach of distributive-justice egalitarianism is less common. For example, in one of the rare studies to include preschool-aged children, researchers in Norway found that teachers only responded to differences and issues pertaining to racial ethnicity when it was brought up explicitly by the children, and teachers' responses tended to de-emphasize the topic (Aukrust & Rydland, 2009). Norway values equality highly and an equality emphasis is part of the curriculum. Given such an equality-focused culture, teachers most likely felt uncomfortable discussing racial ethnicity with children, which inevitably must include discussion about differences with children (Aukrust & Rydland, 2009). Despite this reality, children are still at risk when this topic is ignored.

Research on racial ethnic socialization practices by teachers is in its infancy. While studies point to promising directions in terms of identifying the categories and correlates to racial ethnic socialization in early education, they also create many questions for the field. These studies also rely on small purposive samples and, therefore, it is difficult to apply these findings beyond the limited environment from which they came. However, those small sample studies that employ an emic approach provide important context and meaning from within child care communities. Paralleling the small sample conundrum, these studies have an overabundance of European American teachers, and the students are also primarily European American (with the exception being the Walton et al., 2014 study, which purposefully sampled schools based on racial ethnic demographics of students). It is unclear whether racial ethnic socialization in schools that are more diverse with teachers who are also ethnically diverse would yield similar findings. Given that the teachers who taught in the most racially and ethnically diverse schools were also the ones to employ a more distributive-justice orientation (Walton et al., 2014), who is being taught and by whom is an important consideration. Finally, the research findings regarding racial ethnic socialization practices in schools stem from a preponderance of samplings from elementary-aged children rather than preschool-aged children. Given that children do enact bias at an early age, it is crucial to conduct this work with the under-K group.

The Contribution of Curriculum and Materials to Racial Ethnic Socialization in Child Care

As with the home environment, the physical environment of the classroom and what materials teachers provide for children are an element of racial ethnic socialization in child care. Multicultural curriculum is probably the most researched aspect of racial ethnic socialization in schools but it is not articulated as being racial ethnic

socialization explicitly. For children of color who need to develop race resiliency, the importance of multicultural and antibias curricula becomes increasingly relevant (Derman-Sparks & Olson Edwards, 2012). Multicultural and antibias curricula also benefit white children who need to develop an awareness of their race and interracial dynamics (Derman-Sparks & Ramsey, 2011; Doucet & Adair, 2013; Paley, 1979/2000). Schools provide cultural materials (pictures on walls, books, toys, and art supplies) for children that can demonstrate respect for the differences represented within their classrooms and use these materials as a learning tool (D'Angelo & Dixey, 2001). Some research on multicultural educational environments found that children were open and appreciative of diversity when classrooms contained racially diverse materials (D'Angelo & Dixey, 2001). The majority of curricula currently used in the United States do not support racial ethnic diversity (Milner, 2005).

Furthermore, reviews on multicultural curricula reveal a more varied portrait as to their actual effectiveness on racial attitudes. The effect sizes are small (Okoye-Johnson, 2011) and the evidence suggests that multicultural elements in a classroom may improve children's racial awareness by exposing them to new ideas and increasing their knowledge about race but this exposure does not necessarily change racial attitudes (Aboud & Levy, 2000; Bigler, 1999). Additionally, limited research indicates that what teachers do with these multicultural materials is probably more important than just having them in the environment (Sanders & Downer, 2012).

The intent of traditional multicultural curricular initiatives is to develop tolerance toward all peoples. While such a stance is helpful, children of color who are members of groups who experience racism and discrimination need more than tolerance. The authors of this chapter believe that multicultural curricula need to go beyond equality and also confront bias. In line with critical race theory (Ladson-Billings, 1998), curriculum in racialized societies is a "culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script" (p. 21). Meaning that stories of racial ethnic minorities are "muted and erased when they challenge dominant culture authority and power" (p. 21). Therefore, intentional practice regarding racial ethnic socialization also requires careful examination and critique of curricular approaches because curricula may either support racial dominance (implicitly or explicitly) or intentionally make efforts to counter it.

Considering Racial Ethnic Socialization Practices as Part of Family-School Partnerships

In the introductory chapter to this volume, the editors articulate the importance of culturally situated practices and the need for partnerships between home and school to follow a home-to-school rather than a school-to-home path (McWayne, Doucet, & Mistry, 2019). These authors make a compelling argument that a balanced partnership requires an emic approach in practice and in research. Sociocultural theory is foundational to the paradigm shift promoted by family-school partnership models

for our increasingly ethnoculturally diverse society. What we ask is: "Where does race fit within this new paradigm?"

Earlier in the chapter, we discussed, in some detail, how the United States is a racialized social system and that "whiteness" is not an inert concept but quite meaningful within such racialized societies. One cannot consider culture, we believe, without considering the "racialization of multiple cultural forms" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 8), meaning that racialization is about more than our outward appearance but integral to how we make meaning. Culture is not race and race is not culture but the "meaning-making processes" (McWayne et al., 2019, p. 1–15) within the United States are imbued with race.

Responding to the call by critical race theorists to *name our reality* (Ladson-Billings, 1998), we employ the use of storytelling to make our point (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) and we share an experience from one of the authors of this chapter (Sanders): I attended a predominantly white Episcopalian girl's high school although I was neither white nor Episcopalian but black and agnostic. At a reunion luncheon several years ago with a few of my classmates from this earlier time, one of the four white women in a group of five people, looked at me, paused (after I shared that I had completed my Ph.D. and obtained a tenure-track position at a university) and said, "You know, Kay, I realize, we never really thought of you as black but as just *Kay*." This was meant as a compliment.

What this story highlights is that my achievements seem to have triggered in my friend an awareness that I was part of a category reserved more for whites than what I physically represented. Additionally, she used the term, "we." Was she speaking for the other three white women at the table, the entire student body of this majority white school, or some other racialized entity of collectivity to which I do not quite belong? The calling out of my blackness while complimenting my supposed lack of it (through my achievements) essentially relegated me to a liminal racial state: not quite white but also not black.

We cannot isolate this comment as an individual act of thoughtlessness or racism. In fact, this friend is no more racist than any of us. What she articulated or, rather, made blatant, was the racialized subtext within our society and how race and the privilege of whiteness is part of the interpersonal exchange we have with one another. The interaction with Sanders' friend calls out how easily the process of meaning-making – the interactions, negotiations, and even the support toward one another – is not fully realized if we do not question our assumptions about race and how it mitigates the expectations and interactions we have with others in an ethnoculturally diverse environment.

The lack of naming race, of making race explicit, within a Vygotskian-based model is problematic because embedded within this theory, as well, are westernized assumptions regarding education, childhood, and adults' roles toward children. These assumptions are reflective of European, middle-class values that may not necessarily map neatly onto the roles and expectations of children within alternate cultural communities (Doucet, 2011). The recommendations in the introductory chapter that urge us to examine the hidden assumptions of what we consider *typical* or *normal* as researchers and practitioners is an essential step toward removing the reification of whiteness from our assumptions.

Part of this questioning should include examinations of the westernized expectations undergirding the Vygotskian-based direction of family-school partnership models articulated in the introductory chapter of this volume. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is widely viewed as foundational to the shift in direction of family-school partnership models. However, criticisms of Vygotskian theory must be considered to ensure that we actually do move toward more successful partnerships. As Lancy in his classic work on childhood and culture stated, the western use of, "Vygotsky's theory also suffers from ethnocentrism" (Atran & Sperber, 1991 as cited in Lancy, 1996, p. 21). Goodnow and Collins (1990), as well, criticized Vygotskian-based theory's emphasis on a westernized view of childhood that contains a kindness associated with it, in which children and adults function within a neutral and gentle world where both children and adults are working toward a common goal that supports the learning of the child. It places adults, teachers, or parents in the role of the "expert," in juxtaposition to the child who is the "learner." In reality, is the world so kind? Do all children have a desire to be learners and do all adults view their role as the *expert other* (Goodnow & Collins, 1990)? Globally, this idealized view is not the reality of children's experiences given that 263 million children (or approximately the equivalent of one quarter of the population of Europe) lack access to education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics). Most likely, when one looks beyond white, middle-class contexts within the United States and Western Europe, this vision of childhood and learning becomes blurry. What this means is that using a theoretical lens that is entrenched within westernized understandings of childhood must also be approached with caution and employed sensitively.

Vygotskian-based theories help us to consider the meaning undergirding our and others' cultural activities. However, we must also be sensitive to the fact that culture is not a linear process and does not always have an underlying supportive function for children's development. It is erratic, nonlinear, and downright messy and may or may not work toward the optimization and betterment of children's development (Wells, 2015). We caution that in our zeal to embrace the sociocultural contexts of communities in the service of education, we, too, can readily fall into the belief that maximizing a child's educational potential is the primarily desirable and necessary outcome of cultural practices involving children.

By *maximization*, we are referring to the Western, middle class, and predominantly European-American propensity to optimize the experiences of childhood in service to achievements later on or successes in adulthood. The optimization or maximization of childhood is closely aligned to the reification of whiteness (Sanders & Obregon, 2016). An example of this in the child care field is apparent when one considers the history of the Head Start movement. Child care systems were not immune to the social stratification and reifying of whiteness that is well-documented within the K-12 educational context. Child care was bifurcated by class and race with European American, middle class families accessing private child care services primarily for working parents or respite care for stay-at-home-moms; and poor, predominantly families of color, accessing publicly funded early education programs, such as Head Start, whose primary policy goal included the eradication of poverty through early education of the young (Sanders & Obregon, 2016). With the former, parents were assumed to be competent, whole and healthy individuals who

just needed some extra support to care for their children while they worked or needed some personal time. With the latter, parents were viewed as incompetent and in need of assistance. These two systems continue to be integral to the child care system of today and race and class are deeply embedded into the expectations educators hold toward their roles with each set of children and families (Sanders & Obregon, 2016).

The question becomes, then, how do we ensure that the partnership between schools and families does not privilege whiteness? We propose that to do so, we must make race explicit. We make race explicit by examining, questioning, and unearthing the racial ethnic socialization processes enacted upon children within our early educational settings. We strive to create racial ethnic socialization processes, similar to the recommendations in the introductory chapter pertaining to home-to-school pathways that are cocreated with parents.

The Cocreation of Racial Ethnic Socialization Practices

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), the majority of teachers of young children are European American (77% of preschool/kindergarten teachers), but approximately 50% of young children in the United States are not (US Census Bureau, 2012). This creates a situation in which children of color experience racial ethnic socialization in child care that may not fit with the racial ethnic socialization practices of their home.

Since many child care teachers do not share the same racial ethnicity as their students, they should pay close attention to enacting practices with young children that are culturally responsive (Sanders, 2016). Culturally responsive pedagogy requires what the authors refer to as "racial ethnic intention." Racial ethnic intention entails asking hard questions: How do we care equitably for all children? Who is given preference and who is not? D'Angelo and Dixey (2001) suggest that teachers question their racial biases by honestly answering,

Do I believe some races are more capable of learning and have greater intelligence than other races? Do I model respectful and positive attitudes in the classroom for all races and ethnic groups? Do I integrate race and ethnic issues in the curriculum exclusively through thematic units, holidays, and celebrations? (p. 84).

Subtle shifts in attention, care, and acknowledgement teach children about what is important or who is important versus who is not. All of these group dynamics can be enacted, even without teachers realizing it, in a manner consistent with racial privilege. To be effective in their role as racial ethnic socialization agents of young children, teachers must be self-aware.

Cultural responsiveness, then, is the exact opposite of the color-blind approach, which is so entrenched within the early educational mindset of teachers of young children. Self-reflection is not easy to do, but to improve teacher practices, particularly around something as deep-seated as race (Lin, Lake, & Rice, 2008), self-reflection is a critical first step (LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2012). For effective

self-reflection, teachers need to confront their established belief systems. Ways to do that may include sharing research on race awareness in children so that teachers become aware that children do see race and take actions based on racial difference. It cannot stop there, however, because teachers may understand that children are not color-blind but still may not realize that the actions they take contribute to racial biases in their classrooms. The work by the National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education, which videotapes teachers in action with children and then uses these tapes with teachers via structured self-reflection and mentorship, is a successful technique to improve teaching quality (Downer, Kraft-Sayre, & Pianta, 2009). Such a method can be used to focus specifically on addressing racial ethnic equity in classroom practices.

A second step toward the cocreation of racial ethnic socialization practices is to explore the topic of race and racism with families. Parents' emic awareness of racial dynamics can help to enlighten and inform the practices enacted in schools. Furthermore, educators' sharing of research regarding racial awareness in children and prejudice development can help European American parents understand their role in the development of white privilege.

These are not easy conversations. Inviting community members who are involved in antiracist work to dialogue with teachers and parents and to observe teacher practices can help to facilitate these conversations. Additionally, creating reading/discussion groups that include teachers, parents, and community members, with a focus on antiracist literature, can provide supports for these conversations. Earick's (2009) work on the maintenance of white privilege and the creation of antibias classrooms and Summer's (2014) writing on her racialized awakening after being called a "racist" by a parent are examples of literature that could guide dialogue between teachers and parents to cocreate awareness, understanding, and intentional practices pertaining to race. Such partnerships must make sure that individuals within the child care community have equal access and ability to engage in dialogue about these readings and the topics they address. This will require creative modes of transmission given that approximately 30 million adults are below basic literacy levels in the United States and that African American (20%) and Latinx (39%) adults are overrepresented in this category (National Center for Education Statistics, *National Assessment of Adult Literacy*, 2003). Given these statistics, more research needs to be conducted on what are the best modes of transmission that will reach this specific population and ensure that they are a critical and essential part of the conversation.

Conclusion

Racial ethnic socialization in early childhood education settings is an understudied yet potentially strengths-based approach that can contribute to supporting family-school partnerships. In a racialized society, child care programs contribute to the racial ethnic socialization experiences of children, and these experiences can

reinforce racial ethnic bias and privilege or support the diversity that is increasingly present within child care programs in the United States. This chapter reviewed some of the key elements of racial ethnic socialization research, articulated essential elements of racial ethnic socialization within child care programs, and suggested practical approaches toward initiating intentional racial ethnic socialization in child care that is cocreated with families. With the increasing diversity of child care programs in the United States, educational systems can no longer adhere to a one-size-fits-all approach toward the education of young children. Racial ethnic socialization is an underexplored yet fruitful area ripe for contribution to family-school partnerships in our ethnoculturally diverse society.

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Fathers and Their Role in Family-School Partnerships

Gregory A. Fabiano and Kellina Pyle

Fathers and Their Role in Family-School Partnerships

Fathers contribute to many aspects of positive child development. For instance, fathers' use of complex vocabulary words during informal interactions and shared book reading with young children uniquely contributes to language development, which may impact school readiness (Pancsofar & Vernon-Feagans, 2006; Pancsofar, Vernon-Feagans, & The Family Life Project Investigators, 2010). Fathers also uniquely contribute to the development of emotion regulation, social cognition, and focused attention, which all play a role in forming appropriate social relationships (Parke, 2002). Further, increased father involvement is associated with improved academic grades and achievement (Forehand, Long, Brody, & Fauber, 1986; McBride et al., 2005; Nord, Brimhall, & West, 1997), and fewer mother-reported behavior problems (Amato & Rivera, 1999). In their meta-analysis of outcome studies, Amato and Gilbreth (1999) reported non-resident fathers who utilize effective parenting strategies had children with significantly fewer externalizing and internalizing problems. Recently, McWayne, Downer, Campos, and Harris (2013) expanded on the findings of Amato and Gilbreth (1999), demonstrating even stronger relationships between fathering and young children's self-regulation. These results suggest that this developmental period, which is essential to later success (e.g., Duncan et al., 2007), is particularly influenced by father behavior.

The findings that fathers contribute to multiple aspects of positive child development are tempered by the continued report of low father involvement and engagement in schools (Downer, 2007; U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000). The US Department of Education stated, "Research has shown that fathers, no matter what their income or cultural

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background, can play a critical role in their children's education" (p. 1; U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000), yet, fathers are often absent from school activities. With fathers identified as key contributors to social and behavioral outcomes that promote learning, the lack of involvement and engagement in school activities must be addressed. Thus, promoting a stronger and more consistent home-school connection through authentic partnership is a key goal for both parents and educators. Schools provide a unique context for family-based services, with the ability to access children across developmental levels and provide both social and academic support within their communities (Gresham, 2004). Having effective interventions in place to promote positive father involvement during a child's early school career is clearly needed, particularly because some evidence suggests early involvement by fathers in their child's schooling results in continued positive involvement (McBride, Dyer, Liu, Brown, & Hong, 2009). After reviewing domains that are likely to be included in father-focused programming, we will describe intervention approaches that "flip the script" and effectively engage and retain fathers to help them support their children.

Key Domains to Target in Father-Focused Interventions

To build a rationale for the inclusion of father involvement initiatives, and to outline potential goals of interventions, it is useful to briefly discuss some of the key functional domains that may be targeted in family-school partnership interventions. Three core areas of positive father involvement related to the school setting are: parenting, academic skill building, and peer relations. Parenting is a proximal area for intervention, representing the collection of behaviors a father uses to manage, support, teach, and interact with his child. Academic skill building and peer relations are more distal foci for positive father involvement and interaction that are directly and indirectly influenced by father behaviors. All represent potential targets of intervention. These three areas were chosen as they represent both viable areas to address in interventions to improve home-school partnerships, and they are areas where the larger research literature indicates fathers make important contributions to children's development. Each will be reviewed and described briefly.

Parenting   Fathers play an important role in disciplining, monitoring, and supporting a child throughout development. Fathers spend an average of 3–4.5 hours with or available to their child each day (Hoffreth, Steuve, Pleck, Bianchi, & Sayer, 2002), suggesting they represent a large potential resource that with greater attention and engagement could be leveraged to improve family and/or child functioning. The time fathers could potentially dedicate to positive interactions with their children is especially meaningful for families with children who have challenging behaviors, or those who need supports in academic or social domains, as these children typically require an even higher level of support in developing appropriate academic and social behaviors than their peers without such needs. However, it is

also clear that when fathers attempt to parent in a situation where a child is exhibiting challenging behaviors, they are at times unsuccessful as measured by objective observations of parent-child interactions (Fabiano et al., 2012; Schuhmann, Foote, Eyberg, Boggs, & Algina, 1998). When co-parenting is considered, mothers report a need to increase consistency between co-parents to promote effective parenting before they welcome increased father involvement (Arnold, O'Leary, & Edwards, 1997). Thus, to ensure fathers' increased engagement is viewed as an asset rather than a liability for promoting positive school outcomes, effective supports are likely to be needed.

Parenting represents a complex constellation of behaviors that often occur in concert and are applied over time in diverse settings and situations. Parenting behavior may include monitoring – what the child is doing, who the child is with, and where the child is located. Parenting behaviors also include training and teaching – helping the child negotiate developmental milestones, supporting the child as steps are made toward developing new skills, and providing extra support or instruction when required. Fathers are also involved in providing attention, praise and encouragement for meeting goals, and exhibiting appropriate behaviors. Finally, fathers are also responsible for managing discipline in situations where the child requires correction. Together, these are all areas that contribute to effective, or ineffective, parenting interactions. For this reason, behavioral parent training programs are often utilized to promote fathers' use of effective parenting skills (Evans, Owens, Wymbs, & Ray, 2017), but they are not often well-attended by fathers (Fabiano, 2007; Tiano & McNeil, 2005), possibly due to misalignment between fathers' expectations or preferences for intervention content.

Academic Skill Building   Children's academic progress throughout schooling is a key developmental goal. Fathers contribute to academic achievement in unique ways. Some of the influence of fathers comes from early interactions with infants and toddlers, where their use of more complex language predicts greater increases in vocabulary in early childhood (Pancsofar & Vernon-Feagans, 2006). Fathers have been shown to provide practice and facilitate skill development within the area of early literacy through shared book-reading (Chacko, Fabiano, Doctoroff, & Fortson, 2018). Findings with adolescents also indicate that positive and supportive father involvement (e.g., helping an adolescent with homework and school projects) reduces the negative impact of attending school in a disadvantaged community (Gordon, 2016).

When we consider the role of fathers in academic skill building, it is important to acknowledge the research cited above, which illustrates fathers are not typically physically present in schools (Nord et al., 1997). This does not indicate a lack of potential contributions to children's school success, however. Fathers' contributions to academic achievement may be indirect through academic supports provided in the home (e.g., monitoring of academic grades; assistance with completing homework; picking up a child from after-school academic support programming). Supporting fathers as key partners in their child's academic skill building will likely

require new strategies to invite fathers to actively participate within specific learning activities (e.g., Chacko et al., 2018), and the types of activities addressed should be inclusive of a variety of fathers' roles, across settings.

Peer Relations Fathers contribute to many aspects of their child's development, including the development of emotion regulation, social cognition, and focused attention, and likely because of these factors, appropriate peer relationships (Leidy, Schofield, & Parke, 2013; Parke, 2002). One specific area where effective father involvement may result in beneficial outcomes is in recreational sports activities, a setting where children frequently interact with their peers. Children engage in recreational and social activities in schools during recess, during physical education, within the classroom, during school-sanctioned sports, and during other unstructured times in school. These recreational activities are interwoven into the fabric of school settings, and are among the most common pastimes children engage in outside the home (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). They also provide an important context for children to learn important life skills such as working with others on a team, being a "good sport," and dealing appropriately with success and disappointment. Further participation in recreational sports is influenced by access/opportunity rather than gender at the elementary and middle school levels (Sabo & Veliz, 2008), meaning this is an important activity for boys *and* girls.

Sports activities can be a setting where children exhibit similar behavioral concerns observed in school. For example, children with disruptive behavior disorders such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are characterized as having low frustration thresholds, problems with aggression and peer interactions, difficulties with sustaining attention, and following rules in the classroom, and there is evidence that the same challenging behaviors occur in recreational sports settings (e.g., Pelham et al., 1990). These challenging behaviors may make it especially difficult to parent in this setting. Thus, although fathers have the potential to contribute positively to the child's social and behavioral outcomes in these settings (e.g., Fabiano et al., 2012), they may struggle to do so without specific supports. The common involvement of children and their fathers in these activities also provides a logical entry point for initiatives that aim to engage fathers in school-based interventions as it meets fathers where they are rather than attempt initial contact in unfamiliar situations (e.g., parenting classes; meetings to discuss negative child behavior). Thus, before-school and after-school activities, school-sponsored recreational and sports events, and other non-traditional intervention settings may be key to improving father-school partnerships.

Key Questions Regarding Improved Father-School/Family-School Partnerships

Question1: How do we access fathers for school partnerships?

Meaningful improvements in family-school partnerships, inclusive of fathers, are likely to require significant changes in the manner in which father engagement

is initiated and sustained within educational settings. This means that traditional methods of family involvement need to be scrutinized to determine whether they adequately address the strengths, needs, and perspectives of fathers. There are a number of current barriers that may inhibit father involvement, or that do not provide sustainable mechanisms for ongoing interaction (Doucet, 2011). Some of these barriers are fixed, whereas others are malleable. Both types of barriers will be discussed, with an emphasis on the malleable factors that may lead to engagement and intervention success.

Fixed barriers Fixed barriers relate to the structure of schools (e.g., who is employed to work with the child on the teaching/administrative staff; hours school is in session; location of school grounds), scheduling concerns, and competing demands within educational settings. The typical school day will conflict with any parent working at a concurrent time, prohibiting meaningful engagement for many parents during school hours. Indeed, teachers are also working during this time educating students in their classrooms, with modest planning or break time typically occupied by other tasks that need to be completed when not directly supervising children (e.g., lesson-planning). Once the school-day ends, most teachers are committed to committee or school meetings and then depart. Thus, there is little formal school time available to be dedicated to parent engagement. Due to the competing demands for attention and time within schools, it is not surprising that many fathers may not have the occasion to meet the child's teacher.

Malleable barriers   There are a number of malleable factors that can promote father engagement. For example, a teacher or parent can choose to increase communication about the child's progress through mechanisms such as email, texts, or daily report cards (Volpe & Fabiano, 2013). There is also the possibility of working with parents during off-school hours at family resource centers, available in some districts. Teachers and administrators can make an effort to address information to all parents in a household or, if parents reside in separate households, ensuring that all information is shared equally with the parents involved.

Educators can also make an effort to specifically emphasize the expectation of parental involvement – and this includes both maternal and paternal contributions to the child's continued academic and social development. A recent study illustrated that this message would be well-received by both mothers and fathers (Fabiano, Schatz, & Jerome, 2016). In this study, a best-worst scaling approach was used in a survey to determine parental preferences for early intervention programming. In all, 426 parents of young children answered a set of best-worst scaling questions regarding preferred components of early intervention programs. Best-worst scaling is a specific survey methodology that asks a parent to choose out of a set of items (e.g., "No child care provided"; "Meal provided"; "The program improves my child's academic achievement somewhat"; "The program improves my child's behavior very much"; "The program provides transportation at low cost") which is the "best" and which is the "worst." For instance, using the items referenced parenthetically above, a parent might rate the statement, "The program improves my

child's behavior very much" as the best statement, and then rank "No child care provided" as the worst statement. Multiple groups of varied program parameters are presented to the parent, and for each group, the parent rates which item is the "best" and which item is the "worst." Across many participants and items, the program attributes most often selected as best/worst can then be identified. Overall results indicated that the most preferred aspects of interventions were those that emphasized parent and child outcomes (e.g., increased academic readiness, increased educational attainment). Parameters such as the provision of free child care and teaching through experiential activities were also highly preferred. Programs were least preferred if they were described as held during a weekend, lasting 120 minutes, attended alone by only one parent, led by a parent, attended without parent-child interactions, lasting 16 weeks, requiring paid or no childcare, or providing no food. Importantly, however, improvements in child outcomes were the most preferred attribute of proposed early intervention programming.

This highlights the importance of targeting and addressing positive child outcomes in interactions with parents – both mothers and fathers – as this is the primary focus of parents when choosing to engage in an intervention according to their initial report. It is worth noting that although some specific program attributes were rated as important as well (e.g., childcare), parents, including fathers, did not weigh these as heavily as a program that helped the child improve in important functional domains. Thus, recruitment strategies must clearly explain how the initiative will improve child and/or parent outcomes, as this appears to be a very important aspect of parents' decision-making regarding the merit of attending and engaging in the program.

Question 2: Once accessed, how do we engage fathers in school partnerships?

Another malleable factor when engaging fathers is the approach used to reach out to them. Traditional approaches such as flyers sent home in the child's backpack, school conferences, and mandatory meetings are unlikely to be routinely effective at engaging fathers in school partnerships, as this asks fathers to initiate a new behavior in a setting that is not typical for them, or even accessible for them (see above). For this reason, alternative strategies are needed, and this might include approaching fathers within a setting where they are already present. For example, fathers often have primary responsibility for children in recreational play times (Jones & Mosher, 2013; Russell & Russell, 1987), which might make these contexts important for intervention efforts with fathers (Chronis, Chacko, Fabiano, Wymbs, & Pelham, 2004; see also Wells, Widmer, & McCoy, 2004 for a discussion of the importance of interventions within recreational settings with peers).

The search for alternative strategies to engage fathers is especially important because many father engagement initiatives center around children who can use additional support for either academic or behavioral concerns. Similar to the findings in educational settings, fathers are also underrepresented in studies of treatment outcome for parent training groups, with only a handful including father-related outcomes (Cassano, Adrian, Veits, & Zeman, 2006; Fabiano, 2007; Fabiano & Caserta, 2018; Phares, 1996a; 1996b; Tiano & McNeil, 2005). Some studies have shown fathers and their children benefit from behavioral parent training (BPT) on

measures of parenting and child behavioral outcomes when they attend BPT with the child's mother (Danforth, Harvey, Ulaszek, & McKee, 2006; Schuhmann et al., 1998; Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Hammond, 2004) or alone (Fabiano et al., 2009; Fabiano et al., 2012). Yet, in some studies fathers improve on only a portion of the outcome measures on which mothers improved (Danforth et al., 2006), and intervention effects are weaker (Fletcher, Freeman, & Matthey, 2011) or lack maintenance of initial gains (Barkley, Edwards, Laneri, Fletcher, & Metevia, 2001; Fabiano et al., 2012). There are also studies that have suggested father involvement in BPT programs with mothers did not result in incremental improvements relative to mothers who attended alone (Firestone, Kelly, & Fike, 1980; Martin, 1977). Yet, many clinical recommendations suggest the inclusion of all family members within a multi-modal intervention approach, given the need to address co-parenting and consistent discipline (Budd & O'Brien, 1982; Chronis et al., 2004; Coplin & Houts, 1991; Fabiano, 2007; Levine, 1993; Miller & Prinz, 1990; Phares, 1992; Phares, 1996a; Phares, 1996b; Phares & Compas, 1992; Tiano & McNeil, 2005). It is surprising that in the over 50 years of intervention research for families of children with challenging behaviors, the methods for working successfully with fathers, a key individual in the child's life in many cases, are still unclear.

This omission in the literature is especially critical because fathers contribute to many aspects of their children's development as noted above, including school readiness, vocabulary, self-regulation, and academic achievement. Father involvement in BPT is essential if clinicians have any hope of addressing co-parenting and interparental consistency in discipline approaches and effective home-school communication and partnership for students. For instance, Arnold et al. (1997) found that if child-rearing views were dissimilar, mothers reported that father involvement resulted in less effective discipline practices. Wymbs (2011) reported that parenting a disruptive child using coercive strategies was a key contributor to interparental discord, and parents of youth with ADHD experience increased parenting strain and negative couple-related outcomes (Johnston & Mash, 1989; Schacht, Cummings, & Davies, 2009; Wymbs, Pelham Jr, Molina, & Gnagy, 2008). Thus, parents of children with ADHD must be aligned in their discipline strategies (see meta-analytic results of Kaminski, Valle, Filene, & Boyle, 2008). These findings can be logically extended to school-home communication patterns as well, but there is little empirical work to support this presumption. Indeed, little attention has been given to the role of adult consistency, and father participation in BPT treatment outcome studies and family-school partnerships are often viewed as optional (e.g., Anastopoulos, Shelton, DuPaul, & Guevremont, 1993; MTA Cooperative Group, 1999). Thus, an area in need of further study and development is the role fathers can and should play within school-home partnerships, and how their participation impacts and supports others within the partnership (e.g., child/teen, other parent, teacher, school mental health professional).

Question 3: Once engaged, how do we maintain father engagement in family-school partnerships?

It is not enough to target and engage fathers in interventions. Once enrolled, efforts must focus on sustaining the participation and inclusion of fathers. This is an

important point as there do seem to be differential rates of dropout among fathers in clinical interventions. For example, fewer fathers may complete assessments at the end of a study compared to mothers (Tiano & McNeil, 2005). Further, a recent meta-analysis illustrated that the range of father dropout (0–100%) was significantly larger than that for mothers (0–28%) in studies that reported participant attrition (Fletcher et al., 2011). In contrast, when retention was prospectively addressed in the design and content of a parenting intervention (e.g., by including shared sports activities within which the father and child participated), Fabiano et al. (2009) reported reduced father and child dropout, increased attendance by the father and child, and more frequent on-time arrival for the session relative to a program that utilized standard approaches (e.g., classroom-based discussion and instruction on effective parenting approaches).

Retention is especially important in school partnerships given that children are enrolled in schools over multiple grades and fathers may be interacting with multiple individuals across a child's school-age years. Thus, retention efforts need to span developmental levels and particular teachers. In a recent review, developing rapport and interacting positively with fathers prior to initiating the demands of a program or intervention was a characteristic of service delivery that increased later retention (Pfitzner, Humphreys, & Hegarty, 2017). Berryhill (2017) illustrated that co-parenting support enhanced positive father-school involvement, highlighting the importance of strong inter-parental cooperation in promoting sustained father involvement in settings important for the child. Ingoldsby (2010a; 2010b; 2010c) reviewed strategies to retain parents in interventions aimed at improving child mental health, and one strategy that was effective in supporting retention was the explicit acknowledgement of barriers that might inhibit participation, presumably because this allowed the clinician and parent to have a discussion toward problem-solving.

A Way Forward: The Next Generation of Research Studies on Father Engagement in School Partnerships

To adequately craft an ongoing research agenda that is inclusive of father engagement and participation within school settings, it is helpful to review some recent studies that have explicitly aimed to improve father participation and father/child outcomes. For the purposes of this review, we will highlight a program of research initially focused on working with fathers of children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), but which has been recently expanded to additional groups where father engagement and intervention was identified as a need. For children with ADHD, BPT is an evidence-based intervention (Evans et al., 2017; Evans, Owens, & Bunford, 2013; Pelham Jr & Fabiano, 2008; Pelham Jr, Wheeler, & Chronis, 1998), and therefore families with a child with ADHD were identified as a group that would benefit from increased father participation in such treatment. Following the review of these studies, a research agenda for the next generation of father-focused research to facilitate family-school partnerships will be presented.

An Example of an Approach to Increase Father Engagement

The Coaching Our Acting-Out Children: Heightening Essential Skills (COACHES) program was developed as a specific program for improving father engagement and outcomes within BPT programs. COACHES was developed due to an observation during a summer treatment program for children with ADHD that the weekly BPT programs for children with ADHD were largely comprised of mothers, but not fathers. Indeed, on the evening when BPT was held, a father would often arrive a bit early to watch his child playing baseball or soccer on the field, and then have the child dismissed to him to take home. The mother would then arrive in a separate vehicle to attend the parent-training class. Often during the BPT class, the mother would describe a home situation that included the father, where his perspective might have helped with problem-solving, but was missing. Conversations with fathers, who had attended some initial BPT sessions, or had not attended at all, suggested that the format of the BPT class (largely discussion-based) was not one that they found engaging.

Based on these interactions with fathers, and observations of their behavior, it was hypothesized that fathers might be better engaged by an intervention that came to them, rather than one that asked them to come to it. This was done by creating a little-league sports setting that mimicked the child activities in which many fathers were already engaged, and combining it with BPT. Soccer was identified as a sport that was relatively easy for parents and children to understand and play, and which spread the children across the field, allowing each father to move out on the field to coach his individual child. The specific structure of the program included the parents and children attending separate activities for the first hour of the program, and then coming back together for the second hour. Activities during the first hour included: (1) children practicing soccer skill drills, including drills to learn the rules of the game and appropriate positions as well as how to dribble, shoot, and pass (Pelham, Greiner, & Gnagy, 1998); and (2) fathers meeting with other fathers in a group BPT to learn effective parent management strategies (Cunningham, Bremner, & Boyle, 1995). During the second hour, the fathers joined the children for a soccer game, structured similarly to a little league game in the community. The soccer game included a referee and scorekeeper, with children assigned to teams. Children and parents were also provided team jerseys, and given weekly newsletters that recounted the game, similar to many community little league organizations. However, during the game the fathers were charged with practicing the parenting strategies they had learned during the first hour. These strategies included (a) labeled praise (e.g., "I love how you're moving around the field"); (b) planned ignoring (e.g., no attention given to a whining child who did not get the ball); (c) effective instructions and commands (e.g., "Stand on the goal line for the next instruction."); (d) transitional warnings (e.g., "In 10 minutes, it will be time to pack up and get in the car"); (e) "when-then" contingency statements (e.g., "When you finish putting your book bag away, then we can warm up with the ball"); and (f) implementing time out. Fathers were assigned a task to complete each quarter (e.g., issue five

labeled praise statements to your child), and they then huddled together to report on progress at the end of each quarter while their children took a water break. Following each session, the group facilitator assigned the parents homework to continue to try and apply the parenting strategies in the home setting as well as share the content of the session with others involved in the child's care (e.g., other parent, babysitter, teacher, coach).

The COACHES program is thus considerably different from traditional intervention and engagement methods aimed at fathers (Fabiano & Caserta, 2018). First, it does not approach the father as deficient in a skill or ability but rather within a role where fathers may be comfortable with their child (i.e., in play activities). Indeed, framing treatment within a fun, parent-child interaction may serve to reduce the stigma that might be involved in initiating mental health or school-based services. Second, including a competency-building component (e.g., athletics, academics) is known to be effective and desired by parents, particularly fathers (Fabiano et al., 2016). Third, meta-analytic work illustrates that actively engaging in parent-child interactions during BPT treatment yields better outcomes (Kaminski et al., 2008). Fourth, there is evidence that in-session practice of parenting skills is beneficial for fathers (Adesso & Lipson, 1981; Schuhmann et al., 1998). Finally, the soccer game is enjoyable for the children to play and the parents to watch – programming that is rewarding is more likely to be sustained over time.

The COACHES program has been systematically evaluated (Fabiano et al., 2009; Fabiano et al., 2012). Two studies were conducted with elementary school children diagnosed with ADHD and their fathers. The sample was primarily white, and the families came from a range of socio-economic strata. Fabiano et al. (2012) illustrated that the COACHES program resulted in improved outcomes, relative to a waitlist control, by increasing fathers' use of praise and reducing fathers' use of negative talk in laboratory observations. Fathers also rated child behavior problems as less intense at post-treatment in the COACHES group relative to the waitlist. In a different study, Fabiano et al. (2009) reported results from a comparison of business as usual BPT and the COACHES program. Results indicated that fathers who attended the COACHES program attended more sessions, were more likely to complete homework assignments, they and their children were less likely to drop out, fathers were more satisfied with the treatment process, and at post-treatment they rated their children as more improved relative to a traditional parent training approach. Thus, the COACHES program was efficacious as well as more acceptable/engaging to the fathers. Another study illustrated that fathers improved in observed parenting behaviors at post-treatment, but unfortunately, gains were not maintained at follow-up (Fabiano et al., 2012) suggesting that maintenance procedures, such as continued practice or booster sessions, are needed.

The COACHES program has also been adapted for use in alternative school-based settings, such as Head Start preschool centers. Two recent studies explored the effectiveness of the COACHES model in these preschool settings. Caserta et al. (2018) evaluated the COACHES program as a preventive intervention in Head Start preschool settings to increase father involvement and promote the use of effective parenting strategies. In the study, 67 fathers, whose children were all eligible for

Head Start due to low socio-economic status, were randomly assigned to the COACHES program or a waitlist, and at the end of the initial six weeks of the program all fathers participated in a parent-child interaction to evaluate parenting behavior. Results indicated that fathers who received the COACHES program were less negative in their interactions with their children, in spite of inconsistent attendance at the program, overall. However, fathers did not evidence improved rates of praise or modify their rates of using commands. The mixed findings may be due to working with a younger sample in a preventative approach as children were potentially at-risk for ADHD but not identified. Further, the inconsistent attendance may have been due to the nature of typical after-school activities at this age level, which are often viewed as optional. Further research on the best manner of using the COACHES program as a family engagement and preventative intervention are warranted.

In another study implemented in a preschool setting, Chacko et al. (2018) illustrated that the COACHES model could be adapted to promote improved father parenting practices and facilitate the development of early literacy skills in children within a Head Start setting. In this study, 126 fathers and children were randomly assigned to a COACHES program or waitlist, with a major modification being the substitution of shared book-reading activities rather than soccer as the joint father-child activity, as the preschools in this study were interested in promoting early literacy skills. The study participants were low-income, Spanish-speaking fathers in a large, urban city. In this study, relative to the waitlist group, fathers in the COACHES program improved on observations of parenting including increases in positive parenting and reductions in negative parenting. Interestingly, although a distal outcome of the intervention, children in the COACHES program also improved on measures of auditory comprehension and expressive communication, aspects of early literacy skills, illustrating the positive impact of the father-child program on academic outcomes.

The development and implementation of the COACHES program has also led to a number of informal lessons about engaging fathers. Of proximal relevance to the present chapter, the COACHES program has been adapted recently for use as a school-based intervention to better engage fathers of children with challenging school behaviors within BPT programming. First, in recruiting fathers for this school-based COACHES program, the use of child-outcome-focused language was much more effective than using father-outcome-focused language. For instance, rather than saying, "You will learn how to give effective commands," fathers were more likely to engage in the program if recruitment efforts used statements such as "Your child will develop his or her ability to follow your directions." Second, fathers were often drawn into programming through their partners (spouses, girlfriends, grandparents). Thus, recruitment efforts aimed directly at fathers (e.g., advertising a program on a sports talk radio station) were less effective than advertising the program more broadly (e.g., advertising on the popular music stations listened to by the children and their mothers). Indeed, when asked directly to participate in COACHES (such as at a school father-child breakfast event), fathers would often evade committing until they had discussed it with the child's mother and she had also encouraged

attendance. School events where both parents were physically present (e.g., school open-house evenings) proved to be one of the best recruitment arenas, as parents received the information directly and could discuss immediately with their partner and the recruiter (See also Fagan & Cherson, 2017). Indeed, during the recruitment for the school-based COACHES programs, it was observed that the less time that elapsed between the recruitment event and the start of the program, the more likely that the family would attend the program. Last, our research with COACHES revealed that conducting intake interviews in family homes was more effective than requiring families to come to a university setting, especially for low-income families who experienced transportation barriers.

Once COACHES started running in schools, there were a number of logistical lessons learned as well. Although initially set to run for eight weeks, this schedule was problematic to maintain within the school year due to frequent school breaks. To ensure a consistent set of sessions, without the interruption of a break (which might cause attrition or drift in attendance), the COACHES program was cut down to six sessions. Additionally, COACHES attempted to increase the sustainability of the program by hiring school staff to run both the soccer and parent-training components. This decision not only aided sustainability, but also produced a sense of comfort and recognition among the fathers with the program implementers, which facilitated dialogue and attendance. While school staff produced a number of benefits within the program, they also had a tendency to drift from the manualized intervention. To address this drift, regular checks for intervention fidelity were developed and used to ensure that COACHES was delivered as intended. In addition, the parent training program was modified to a video-taped format that parents could view in a classroom or the school library, to ensure that the program components and skill-building discussions occurred consistently across parent group facilitators and participating schools.

In conclusion, the COACHES program has demonstrated evidence of improving parenting at the elementary and preschool levels, and it also has demonstrated evidence of improving distal outcomes such as child behavior and academic readiness. The COACHES program can be conceptualized as a model for increasing father engagement, retention, and intervention, and next steps involve how to utilize this approach for improving father-school partnerships. An outline of an agenda for this approach is provided, with attention toward the types of studies and advances that will be required in order to make gains in this area.

A Research Agenda for Improving Fathers' Inclusion in Home-School Partnerships

Effective research is needed to answer the three main aims of (1) How do we access fathers for school partnerships?; (2) Once accessed, how do we engage fathers in school partnerships?; and (3) Once, engaged, how do we maintain fathers' engagement in school partnerships? At times, the research questions must focus solely on

fathers, at times they might focus on the father-child relationship, and at other times on the relationship between the father and other adults, such as a co-parent or educator. Together, these areas all require study.

A key question that has vexed the child psychology and educational fields for decades is "where are the fathers?" In school-based research, this question is even more urgent as fathers continue to be under-represented in school-based partnership studies in spite of emphasis from the federal level (U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000). Researchers need to explore how to best access fathers through the school setting, and in doing so, observe what it is that fathers do to contribute to academic functioning directly and indirectly. It is likely that academic support is occurring outside of the school building, and it may also be indirect (e.g., a co-parent warning the child that homework should be completed before the father arrives home, a father purchasing materials the child needs to complete required assignments) or direct (e.g., a father explaining an academic concept to a child, a father driving the child to school ensuring the child arrives to school on time). Given increased diversity within family units, parental responsibilities, and expectations for children's behavior within and outside of school (e.g., participation in structured, extracurricular activities), contemporary research must be conducted to continually evaluate the roles and responsibilities of fathers.

In addition to continuing to study of fathers' roles as they relate to school-based partnerships, the field needs to innovate and extend the role of fathers in such partnerships. There is a clear message from fathers that they want to be involved in promoting their children's academic, behavioral, and social outcomes (Fabiano et al., 2016). Yet, this stands in contrast to the observation of limited presence within school buildings and contact with teachers. The next generation of intervention-focused research should focus on the best ways to invite and engage fathers within school partnerships. This may need to go beyond the traditional in-person meetings to evaluate how social media, asynchronous communications such as emails or message board posts, or other as-yet undeveloped communication strategies may assist with and promote engagement efforts. Our informal focus group feedback with teachers and mothers has generated a consistent message that effective father engagement methods need to clearly convey the importance of the role in which fathers are being asked to engage. Attention to messaging and marketing (e.g., see shift in BPT program messaging from what fathers will learn to how children will benefit described above) also merits further study.

The sustainability of father involvement in family-school partnerships is an additional area in need of further study. Within clinical settings, fathers are more likely to drop out of treatment, relative to mothers (Fletcher et al., 2011). Additional research on strategies that sustain father engagement in school-based interventions (e.g., development of effective progress monitoring feedback, inclusion of father-child activities during treatment) should be emphasized as the research agenda on father-focused intervention progresses. Research suggests that when fathers engaged in parent-child interactions there was increased retention within intervention programming, suggesting that the "hands-on" practice may be an important component

for promoting the retention of fathers (e.g., Fabiano et al., 2009; Schuhmann et al., 1998); this aligns with research illustrating parents prefer interventions that also include their child as a participant (Miller & Prinz, 2003) and that parenting interventions that include parent-child interactions yield stronger effects (Kaminski et al., 2008). How these increased hands-on practice and parent-child interaction components can be integrated into family-school partnerships is an area in need of further study. It is likely that sustainable strategies for engaging fathers will need to go beyond a single father-child breakfast or dance; effective approaches will need to interweave the expectations that fathers are engaged and involved in educational activities with the child in an ongoing manner.

A final note on the research agenda for family-school partnership focuses on the need to be sensitive to the child's developmental level and expectations for fathers at each level of child development. Whereas effective strategies for father engagement may include shared book-reading or sports activities at the preschool and elementary grade levels, there is currently little research that has focused on family-school partnerships and father engagement at the middle and high school levels. This is unfortunate given that fathers can potentially play a key role in promoting high academic expectations within the family and monitor their child's academic progress and achievement, even if they do not step foot in the school (e.g., McWayne, Melzi, Schick, Kennedy, & Mundt, 2013 presents an example of the measurement of this broader approach to positive school involvement). As the field matures, additional study of fathering of adolescents and emerging adults, and the role fathers may play in positive family-school partnerships during these later periods is an area in need of immediate further study.

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Indigenous Family Engagement: Authentic Partnerships for Transformative Learning

Charlene L. Montaño Nolan, Megan Bang, and Nikki McDaid-Morgan

Families are the heart of Indigenous nations and communities. Families include all of our relations—reflecting multiple generations, extended family, other community members, and the lands and waters of homes. Indigenous familial relationships have a wide geography and reflect Indigenous knowledge systems. These relations are part of a complex web of interdependence between all things and are the primary contexts in which Indigenous children learn who they are, Indigenous ways of knowing, and what is expected of them as they become adults, and eventually become good elders. In this way, the strength and well-being of Indigenous families are fundamental to the strength and well-being of Indigenous nations. Thus, Indigenous self-determination and possible futures are deeply linked to the ways in which we collectively imagine and enact the terms by which we live and learn.

It is for this reason that settler colonial nations have routinely created and enacted policies across generations intended to dismantle, disrupt, and assimilate Indigenous peoples through forced changes in familial structures and educative processes (e.g., Hubbs-Tait, Tait, Hare, & Huey, 2005; Muir & Bohr, 2014). Settler colonial nations are those in which immigrant settlers displace Indigenous peoples from their lands and waters and create societies that operate to perpetuate the superiority and powered relations of settlers (e.g., Veracini, 2011; Wolfe, 2006). Tuck and Yang (2012) wrote:

> Settler colonialism is different from other forms of colonialism in that settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain… The settler positions himself as both superior and normal; the settler is natural, whereas the Indigenous inhabitant and the chattel slave are unnatural, even supernatural (pp. 5–6).

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For example, in settler colonial nations such as Australia, Cananda, New Zealand, and the United States, genocide and forcible relocation to reservations attempted to sever Indigenous relationships with lands and waters and enabled settlers to utilize these lands and waters for their own purposes. Additionally, assimilatory projects such as land allotments, which dramatically shifted socioeconomic structures of Indigenous peoples into individualistic consumers, and boarding schools, which brutalized Indigenous children into American citizenship, ultimately served to expunge Indigeneity from the newly formed settler state. Settler colonial logics work then to justify displacement (e.g., manifest destiny) and erase Indigenous presence (e.g., "kill the Indian, save the man;" Pratt, 1880). Through this process of justification and erasure, settler colonialism ultimately seeks to "extinguish itself" or cease being a settler state (Veracini, 2011, p. 3). In other words, there are no longer "settlers" but rather "settled" individuals whose claims to lands, waters, and labor of minoritized peoples become expected (Harris, 1993; Veracini, 2011).

Although the well-known insidious strategies like boarding/residential schools have subsided, policies intended to intervene in and reshape familial relationships continue to be widespread. Today, many aspects of familial relations are shaped by gendered, classed, and raced dynamics reflective of settler colonial paradigms and determine things like how students are enrolled in school, who may be allowed on school premises, and what social services families might utilize.

For example, disproportionate representation of Indigenous children in child welfare systems today mirror the forced removal of children from homes in the early twentieth century and impact multigenerational relations crucial to Indigenous familial well-being. First Nations families in Canada are 4.2 times more likely than non-First Nations families to be investigated for child mistreatment or neglect (Sinha, Trocmé, Fallon, & Maclaurin, 2013) and in the United States, American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) children make up 1% of the population, but 2% of children placed out of homes (Sinha et al., 2013). Reasons for this overrepresentation of Indigenous families and children in welfare systems are multifaceted. Carter (2010) suggests that perceptions about risk are disproportionately associated with AI/AN families despite similar behavioral patterns to White families. For example, Carter found no statistically significant differences between AI/AN families and White families in regard to caregiver issues related to mental health, alcohol, and drug abuse, "yet those variables among AI/AN caregivers became predictors for AI/AN children to be removed from their homes" (p. 661). Further, parental histories of being in foster care systems are considered a risk factor that may contribute to decisions about removing children from homes (Sinha et al., 2013). Cycles of removal and relocation deeply affect Indigenous futurity and possibilities for educating children in cultural and familial practices over multiple generations. This may impact how Indigenous families perceive the authenticity and transformative impact of interventions and family programming on familial and community well-being.

Further, the pedagogical and curricular aims of schools continue to perpetuate settler colonial agendas that erase Indigenous presence and activism (e.g., Calderon, 2014a; Grande, 2004; Shear, Knowles, Soden, & Castro, 2015; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). For example, in a groundbreaking study of US history standards

across all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Shear et al. (2015) found that Indigenous peoples largely (re)presented pre-colonization with no significant impact on the development of Euro-centric America. As we discuss further in the findings of this chapter, narratives of conquest of Indigenous peoples and dispossession of lands and waters are largely ignored, thus perpetuating the invisibility of Indigenous peoples today. It is within this ongoing socio-political history of erasure, conquest, and dispossession that we critically review literature on Indigenous family engagement. In other words, as family engagement becomes scaled in state and federal policy, we argue that we must ground the *relations* and *practices* of such efforts within frameworks that aim to cultivate cultural and intellectual vibrancy and contribute to Indigenous collective well-being.

In order to do this, we conducted Boolean searches and followed citation trails for promising scholarship on Indigenous parent involvement, family engagement, and school-community partnerships with a focus on North America. Additionally, we reviewed supporting documents and policy briefs to better understand historical and political implications. For this review, we draw upon promising scholarship that highlights the brilliance, determination, and strengths of Indigenous families. While we focus on North American context, we draw from Indigenous scholars in other nation-states that can push us towards new forms of equitable engagement. As Indigenous and mixed-race mothers of children in US schools, former classroom educators in pre-K-12 settings, and scholars of education, we [authors] recognize that our histories and experiences shape our analysis of the literature and our hopes and dreams for our family and community well-being and the kinds of roles we might play in family leadership and educational transformation.

A note about terms. We recognize the terms "parent involvement," "family engagement," and "school-community partnerships" reflect the particular history of research and practice in the field and thus chart different theories of change; however, for this paper we use the umbrella term "family engagement" to note the myriad ways in which formal school systems and Indigenous families and communities are brought together in research and practice. Additionally, although we used a variety of search terms such as "Native American," "American Indian," "First Nations," and "Aboriginal," we use the term "Indigenous" throughout this chapter to refer broadly to people with deep political, historical, relational, and spiritual connections to lands and waters. When we quote or describe an article/chapter/thesis we use their descriptors.

Part I: Situating Indigenous Family Engagement

Indigenous Family Engagement within the Field

Since the 1960s, family engagement has been explicitly articulated as broad sweeping reform efforts that can improve education. Family engagement literature suggests that increasing engagement increases the educational attainment of students (e.g., Epstein, 1987; Epstein & Sheldon, 2002; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Much of

this research, however, focuses on particular practices that are normative to White, middle-class families. These include volunteerism, fundraising, and practicing "school" at home by reading or helping with homework. Power, race, language, and gender are silent but present. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the rhetoric and policy impacts of family engagement began to address the particular "challenges" of engaging racially and ethnically distinct populations. For example, handbooks on parent involvement were published with chapters pertaining to different racial groups, including "Native" parents (e.g., Berger, 2000; Butterfield & Pepper, 1991; Sheley, 2011).

For example, in 1991, the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (INART), a division of the Department of Education in Washington, DC, published a landmark report on the state of US parent involvement in education and appropriate strategies for ensuring American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) parental participation in schools. Like many reports of the time, it included a set of barriers to participation including unwelcoming school climates, differences between home and school cultures, and parental behaviors that may hinder participation such as alcohol abuse, dysfunction, and violence. Notably, however, unlike many parent involvement handbooks of the time, the INART report critically examined the role schools played in harming Indigenous communities through boarding schools and removal of children from families, thus contributing both to the skepticism of AI/AN parents towards educational systems and to the systemic disparities in mental and physical health and economic opportunities available to families. The task force suggested culturally appropriate training for educators and administrators to work with AI/AN families to understand the cultural difference in child-rearing and familial organization that may impact Native participation in schooling settings. Additionally, the report called for the inclusion of AI/AN parents at the decision-making level within schools to ensure quality education for their children. It is important to note, though, that this report remained grounded in a commitment to academic success of individual students. As we discuss in more detail later, this report may have opened opportunities for Indigenous parents to participate in educational institutions in new ways; however, it was never the expectation that the structure or function of education would be systemically transformed. While this report is certainly built from parent involvement research that devalued cultural difference, it was a critical step toward reframing negative perceptions of AI/AN parents' participation in education.

Within the broader field of parent involvement and family engagement, critical race scholars and others were also calling attention to the assimilative, deficitizing, and consequential nature of parent involvement paradigms (e.g., Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Doucet, 2011; Howard & Navarro, 2016; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995; Solorzano, 1998). For example, Baquedano-López, Alexander, and Hernandez (2013) detail the deleterious ways that parents of color are forced to either assimilate to normative schooling *and childrearing* practices or be labeled as deficient parents. The consequences of these choices on parents of color not only impact educational opportunities for children and youth, but often impact familial and community ability to organize themselves in culturally appropriate and sustaining ways. While critical race scholars have paid careful attention to the classed,

gendered, and racialized rhetoric and practices that figure centrally in parent involvement and family engagement, often, they have not considered the ways that settler colonialism and the dispossession of human beings from their homelands also figures centrally into education and family engagement (e.g., Brayboy, 2005). It is the goal of this chapter to build upon and extend the work of these scholars to understand how, simultaneously, decolonizing family engagement paradigms (e.g., Baquedano-López et al., 2013) and contributing to Indigenous resurgence requires explicit attention to remaking relations with lands, waters, and more-than-humans (e.g., animals, plants, spirits, lands, waters, etc.). That is, building off Corntassel and Scow (2017) we argue that everyday and intimate practices of familial life are foundational to Indigenous well-being as these are the moments we renew and strengthen our relationships with one another and remember our histories and commitments to our peoples, lands, and waters and thus must be made central in family engagement research and practice.

The Rise of Family Engagement Policy

Family engagement is becoming increasingly scaled and mandated through legislation in North America. For example, within the United States, the Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA] requires Title 1 schools (those serving low-income students), including Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools, to have a *written* family engagement policy and to enact it (NCLB, 1116; Henderson, 2016). This includes funding for family engagement outreach and programs of at least 1% of Title 1 funds received by the district. Schools are required to seek family input on how those funds will be used to support family engagement and evaluate the efficacy of those programs and practices. These policies arise amidst a preponderance of "gap gazing" (Gutiérrez, 2008) research that focuses on the disparities and barriers facing students and families of color, including Indigenous families. This is not a new paradigm as standardization and the homogenization of American education rose concurrently with nation-state development and industrialization. Hobot (2017) wrote:

> "Within this context [of development] arose a new focus on the standardization and broad dissemination of assimilative teachings that were to be used to stabilize and build up the concepts of a national identity, while simultaneously preparing youth for their eventual transition into the industrialized workforce." (p. 3)

Thus, couched in this ever-increasing demand for high-stakes accountability and measures to combat the "achievement gap" is a push for normalizing White and middle-class epistemologies as the standard upon which to measure Indigenous students and families (Gutiérrez, 2008; Villegas, 2009). Federal policy and school adoption of family engagement have been shaped by settler notions of family, success, and education; however, because decisions about family engagement and funding are left to individual schools, we think there is potential to shape everyday implementation towards Indigenous futurity. Doing so, however, requires being critical about the underlying ideologies and transformative impact of such family

engagement. In the next section, we interrogate the routine family engagement practices that continue to subvert authentic Indigenous leadership and engagement.

Part II: Routine Closures on Authentic and Transformative Family Engagement

There is a wealth of research that responds to deficit literature (i.e., literature that claims Indigenous families are uncaring or unengaged in their children's education) by providing counternarratives and critiques of oppressive practices. Below we highlight a few examples of how this literature pushes us to expand current conceptions of education and engagement. Throughout this section we call specific attention to the ways that settler colonial narratives of erasure and dispossession of land foreclose authentic and transformative engagement.

Overwhelmingly, the literature demonstrates that non-Indigenous educators and administrators often lack an understanding of the history of schooling with respect to Indigenous communities or the ways in which schools continue to be shaped by and reflect settler colonial agendas (e.g., Kaomea, 2012; Lipka, 1986). Further, much of the literature argues that educators are rarely adequately prepared to engage Indigenous learners in culturally responsive ways (e.g., Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). In one of the very few large-scale quantitative studies with Indigenous families, 234 families representing 55 tribes were surveyed about their satisfaction with and perceived efficacy of public, BIE, and tribal schools in the United States (Robinson-Zañartu & Majel-Dixon, 1996). Resoundingly, families expressed their frustration with public and BIE schools, citing disrespect of Indigenous families and a deep concern over the lack of presence of Indigenous cultures in their children's formal educational experiences (Robinson-Zañartu & Majel-Dixon, 1996). Herzog, Smith, and McGinnis (2016) replicated Robinson-Zañartu and Majel-Dixon's (1996) study ten years later and, disappointingly, responses had not changed. In particular, families decried the lack of cultural representation.

Settler colonial invisibility and erasure of Indigenous peoples have been broadly explored with respect to Indigenous knowledge systems (e.g., Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Battiste, 2002; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001), Indigenous science (e.g., Cajete, 2000), literacy (e.g., Archibald, 2008; Freire, 1970), and mathematics (e.g., Ishimaru, Barajas-López, & Bang, 2015; Lipka, 1994; Lipka et al., 2005), amongst other specific foci (e.g., Calderon, 2014b; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). Thus, broadening what counts as engagement and education is a necessary step towards resurgent and decolonizing family engagement. Here we provide two counternarratives to demonstrate the intellectual vibrancy of Indigenous families and communities and the pedagogical practices that support transformative family engagement.

Hare (2012) studied the family literacy practices in five Anishinaabe Head Start centers in Canada and compared them to typical school literacy practices. She noted

that oral history, being on the land, and engaging in ceremony all contributed to the developing literacy practices of Indigenous children that shape how they see and make sense of the world. In particular, Hare argued that reading and renewing relationships with land are important literacy practices of Indigenous communities that are most often overlooked when schools assess the capabilities of Indigenous students and families. She wrote: "They are 'reading their world' and, in doing so, learning their histories, ideologies and identities" (p. 407). In another example, Lipka (1994) demonstrated the complexity of Yupik mathematics and the potentiality for integrating this in school-based settings (Lipka et al., 2005). For example, he contended that Yupik women use polar coordinate geometry and pattern work in the making of grass coil baskets.

Many schools are turning to community partners to aid in the cultural education of students by establishing cultural nights or bringing in speakers for school-wide assemblies or classroom activities. Sometimes families are brought in for focus groups or listening sessions where they are asked to share their experiences and opinions with administrators or educators (Friedel, 1999). While these might be genuine efforts to include families in schools, cultural knowledge and practices are still positioned as extracurricular or peripheral to daily teaching and learning and have not had significant impacts on increasing familial belonging. Nor do they reflect a foundational shift in paradigms which are in service of Indigenous thriving. Indeed Bequette (2009) and Friedel (1999) cautioned against asking elders, artisans, and other knowledge holders to volunteer their time and expertise, particularly if it is done so as a one-time participation without the intent of sustained or long-lasting partnership as this form of ad hoc, flat, representational inclusion can be deleterious to developing true collaboration. Further, these one-off inclusions tokenize Indigenous families and ways of knowing when non-Indigenous educators "position Indigenous knowledge holders (e.g., elders, storytellers) as 'special guests' rather than foundational."

This research challenges Western epistemic supremacy—or Western notions of what counts as knowledge—by expanding our understanding of disciplinary knowledge to include multiple ways of knowing the human and natural worlds and responds to "multiple, intersecting systems of oppression" through intersectional forms of justice (Souto-Manning & Rabadi-Raol, 2018, p. 203). In particular, Hare's research asks us to decenter traditional school-based forms of engagement and even human-centered forms of engagement. If more-than-humans are contributing to Indigenous children's learning and development, we should consider how we might rethink "family" engagement to recognize and include these contributions. To do this, we might draw examples from community-based or participatory design research projects that seek to center and build from expansive forms of relations (e.g., Barajas-López & Bang, 2018; Marin & Bang, 2018). For example, Barajas-López and Bang (2018) described how a young participant, Miguel, engaged with clay during an Indigenous youth artscience summer program and invoked his relationality to "elder clay". They wrote:

"Miguel describes clay as a living elder that keeps stories about lands and waters and persists through the many transformations that the earth has undergone over millions of years. Elder clay also shares important knowledge/teachings about the world to those who come in relation with it. From an Indigenous perspective, knowledge about the world derives from relationships with place and therefore lands and waters represent both a source of knowledge and are viewed as sacred and give and sustain life. Miguel recognizes clay as animate and agentic, influencing land and water, and that by positioning oneself in deferent ways to understand and perceive clay's agency 'you can get told a story'." (Barajas-López & Bang, 2018, p.12).

Additionally, this work challenges us to reconsider how we frame family engagement that best supports academic achievement. As we discuss later in this chapter, Indigenous family engagement and academic success are not mutually exclusive, rather future research should unpack the pedagogical practices that best support epistemic navigation in a range of disciplinary foci. It is encouraging that the majority of scholarship that critiques or expands traditional forms of engagement are now quite old, being written nearly half-a-decade to two decades ago suggesting a paradigm shift in the conceptualization of the problem and possible theories of change. In the next section, we review more recent literature that enacts new forms of engagement, building from Indigenous methodologies and knowledge systems.

Part III: Beginning with Indigenous Family and Community Ways of Knowing in Education

In our review of the literature we noted that there was a marked shift in scholarship which began *with and from* Indigenous families' ways of knowing and being as opposed to scholarship *on* Indigenous families. Through different methodological approaches and sensibilities—more specifically Indigenous and decolonizing methodologies (Kovach, 2010; Smith, 2013)—Indigenous scholars and allies make familial and community stories, experiences, and cultural practices central to the empirical work. A discussion of Indigenous and decolonizing methodologies is beyond the scope of this chapter; however, an essential dimension of Indigenous methodologies is that, although researchers may employ a wide range of methods in their inquiry (e.g., ethnographic, phenomenology, participatory), they privilege relationality or reciprocity and responsibility between researchers and research participants in ways that contribute to Indigenous well-being. Further, they often engage Indigenous families in the research itself and recognize them as dreamers and changemakers in their own communities. In other words, this scholarship sought to flip the script of family engagement. For example, Jeremy Garcia (Hopi) began his analysis of the potentiality of school-community partnerships with his own experiences as a father and community member. He wrote:

"In [Hopi naming ceremonies] my daughters were shielded from Dawa (sun) for 20 days upon which they were properly introduced after my family -- primarily members of the Hoaspoa (roadrunner) clan -- came to wash their hair with their Tutsmingwu (white ear of

corn representing her mother) and offered a Hopi name. This is one of many initial phases that reaffirms a sense of commitment and a formal acknowledgement of our collective roles and responsibilities as a clan and as an extended family to our children. Though we may perceive this ceremony as one in which we formally introduce our children to the world with many blessings, in many respects it speaks to a larger expectation – that requires each of us to live into the roles of supporting and nurturing our children throughout their life-time." (Garcia, 2014, p. 61).

Garcia's work calls to question the notion that family-school partnerships be predicated on nuclear, biological, and, therefore, settler notions of family. Instead, he wondered what new possibilities might be afforded through an Indigenous conception of familial and community roles and responsibilities. The everyday actions, interactions, and practices at home and in community, especially among kin, renew relationships within families and communities and, therefore, with broader society, lands, and waters—these are acts of resurgence in the face of ongoing settler colonialism (Corntassel & Scow, 2017). Thus, through a commitment to Indigenous conceptions of family and community that are rooted in intergenerational, extended kinship, more-than-human, and land and water relationships, we may engage in daily acts of renewal and Indigenous resurgence (Corntassel & Scow, 2017).

Building on the counternarratives of care and engagement outlined in part two of this chapter and centering Indigenous notions of family engagement, we highlight here three facets of the emerging literature supporting promising shifts in Indigenous family engagement: (a) reasserting Indigenous knowledge systems within formal education; (b) reclaiming Indigenous relationships with our peoples, lands, and waters; and (c) reimagining relationships with non-Indigenous educators and researchers. We follow this with a brief discussion of promising research methodologies and orientations to family and community leadership that may contribute to systemic transformation.

Asserting Indigenous Knowledges in Formal Education

Throughout the literature, education can be considered a means by which Indigenous families reclaim these connections rather than a means to a singular end: student academic outcomes. That is not to say that Indigenous families are not concerned about the educational success of their children, but that educational attainment is only considered successful when Indigenous children and communities are healthy and thriving (Akee & Yazzie-Mintz, 2011).

Academic outcomes based on Western knowledge systems do not need to be antithetical to Indigenous futurity. Indeed, navigation of international diplomacy and resisting problematic policy means that our peoples will need forms of expertise in knowledge systems outside of our own. Within the family engagement literature we reviewed, there was a simultaneous denouncement of the rise of standardization and accountability to Whiteness while also the commitment to academically rigorous learning and achievement. It is clear from our review that educational attain-

ment should be considered successful when Indigenous children and communities are healthy and thriving (Akee & Yazzie-Mintz, 2011). As we saw in the above findings, this includes meaningful learning opportunities that also contribute to Indigenous community well-being and continuance of knowledge and language.

There is now robust research to demonstrate that young people who are deeply connected to their peoples, lands, and waters are also more likely to be resilient in formal education (LaFromboise, Hoyt, Oliver, & Whitbeck, 2006; McMahon, Kenyon, & Carter, 2013) and more likely to pursue and persist in higher education (Akee & Yazzie-Mintz, 2011; Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). In an examination of the disparity between US White and Indigenous attainment of higher education, Akee and Yazzie-Mintz (2011) surveyed the experiences of 62 college graduates, representing 44 tribal nations. Specifically, they asked graduates for the familial and cultural experiences that most hindered or contributed to the completion of their degree. These authors found that all respondents had some exposure to Indigenous history and culture in their schooling and most engaged routinely in Indigenous practices and ceremony. For example, the authors found that 30 percent of respondents learned their native language in school and 75 percent spent time with elders. Akee and Yazzie-Mintz contend that these experiences contributed to the success of Indigenous scholars. They write:

> "Our results... indicate that individuals who were more exposed to indigenous cultural activities were less likely to take a break between high school and college. Additionally, we found that the more exposure a student had to Native cultural activities as a child, the more likely they were to attend a large Research I university" (Akee & Yazzie-Mintz, 2011, p. 136).

Creating opportunities for young people to engage regularly with Indigenous cultural practices and in their language supports academic achievement, rather than hinders it. When young people have regular opportunities to recognize their own histories, practices, and languages within school-based education, they are more likely to develop discipline-specific identities that contribute to their resilience and creativity in schools.

Reclaiming Indigenous Relationships as Foundational to Family Engagement

While mainstream family engagement literature often focuses on individual families advocating for the educational attainment of their own children, there is a resounding refusal of this paradigm within the literature we reviewed. Indigenous families and communities are predicated on relationality and interconnectedness across generations and include extended kin relations, other human community members, more-than-humans, and lands and waters. Many scholars and educational practitioners are working intently to revitalize traditional practices, focusing on the everydayness of Indigenous resurgence (Corntassel & Scow, 2017).

Early Childhood There is an intense focus on early childhood in the literature, perhaps because it represents an opportunity to innovate in spaces more loosely legislated than K-12 schools and to focus on the intimate relations between caregivers and young children. Recognizing the need to address high rates of poverty and mental and physical health issues, many early childhood models reviewed integrate other social services to support families (American Indian College Fund, 2018; Kaomea, 2012; Lawrenchuk, 1998; McWilliams, Maldonado-Mancebo, Szczepaniak, & Jones, 2011). These often include training for families on effective and culturally appropriate child-rearing strategies. As Muir and Bohr (2014) put it, "Colonialism, residential schools, racism, and poverty have marked family relationships in a multitude of destructive ways that are only beginning to be understood" (p. 68). Thus, there is a need for early childhood services that address the need for multigenerational healing from the disruptions to familial practices wrought by settler colonialism. At the same time, many researchers caution against early childhood programs that purport singular visions of quality, parenthood, or child development (e.g., Pérez & Saavedra, 2017). As we co-construct visions of early childhood that simultaneously seek to renew intimate forms of relations between families and cultivate intellectual and cultural identity development for young Indigenous children, we must find ways to engage Indigenous families directly in this process.

A few studies focus on incorporating families in decision-making processes such as curricular/pedagogical choices or hiring processes (e.g., Grace & Trudgett, 2012; Lawrenchuk, 1998; Lawrenchuk, Harvey, & Berkowitz, 2000; McWilliams et al., 2011). A key finding across these studies suggests that including families in decision-making processes can build leadership capacities and support their identity development as Indigenous parents. Additionally, honoring them as leaders in their young children's development positively transformed non-Indigenous educators' perceptions of Indigenous families (Kaomea, 2012) and cultivated trust (McWilliams et al., 2011). As we discuss more below, however, non-Indigenous educators and social workers often require training on Indigenous histories, knowledge systems, and cultural practices in order to best partner with Indigenous families (e.g., Grace & Trudgett, 2012; Lipka, 1986).

There are now a wide array of early childhood programs that arose *with and from* Indigenous families at the forefront of collective envisioning, designing, and implementing the centers (e.g., American Indian College Fund, 2018; Bang, Faber, Gurneau, Marin, & Soto, 2016; Romero-Little, 2010). Collectively developing early learning environments that can cultivate a multiplicity of languages, ways of knowing, and the intimate practices of families will require collaboration between Indigenous families and early childhood centers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to collectively design and implement pedagogy and practices that support young children's development as whole and healthy Indigenous people.

Youth and Intergenerational Renewal Focusing on the leadership development of youth, Shirley (2017) argues that youth are capable and eager to become changemakers and nation builders. In her study, Shirley (2017) raises the issues of onto-

epistemic navigation necessary to work through current local and global problems while maintaining Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing. This requires teaching students their histories from Indigenous perspectives and helping them navigate the emotions that come up when they learn this. Teachers have to engage both the heart and the mind to help Indigenous youth heal as they learn about the past through helping them make change in the present and future. The process of learning and healing should be empowering and should affirm Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies. Shirley calls for an Indignous Socail Justice Pedagogy (ISJP), which is meant to help youth engage in critical inquiry and promote individual and collective changemaking practices. It privileges Indigenous epistemologies and promotes nation-building in Indigenous communities. Teachers who are intentional about this engage community and bring about positive change in community.

Elders and Knowledge Holders Beyond engaging biological parents, many scholars are arguing for the engagement of community members and elders in educational spaces (e.g., Lipka, 1986; Murphy & Pushor, 2004; Zeegers, 2011). For example, Zeegers (2011) discusses an artist-in-residence program that was created to re-establish the history of Aboriginal peoples in the community as a core component of primary education for *all* students and to collaborate with local Aboriginal artists. Dance, oral storytelling, art, and written texts were used to build students' critical literacy skills. The program asked students' to reflect on how land dispossession and removal is normalized in many forms of media. By engaging Aboriginal artists as primary teachers of Aboriginal knowledge and practices, issues of expertise, power, and culturally revitalizing practices were carefully attended to. It is often the practice that Indigenous knowledge holders are "posters on the wall," meaning they are positioned outside of mainstream schooling (Madden et al., 2013; Zeegers, 2011).

This work challenges us to consider how our formal systems of education are partnering *with* Indigenous families to sustain their cultural practices and identities as well as to innovate and grow as Indigenous nations. In other words, how are we "re-creating the conditions within which this learning occurred, not merely the content of the practice itself" (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001, p. 58–59).

Reimagining Relationships with Non-Indigenous Educators and Systems

As Indigenous families and community relations are transformed, so too must relationships with non-Indigenous educators, administrators, and allies be transformed. Although our review focused on relationships between non-Indigenous educators and Indigenous families, we argue that the ways we engage with Indigenous communities as researchers who study families and schools can reinforce or disrupt powered, racialized, and settler-colonial paradigms in the theories we begin with,

the methods we employ, the depictions of Indigenous families and communities we narrate, and how we implicate changes in practice. Thus, as we narrate key findings from the literature, we also highlight recommendations for non-Indigenous researchers collaborating with Indigenous communities.

We focus here on relational shifts that may cultivate authentic and transformative partnerships, instead of procedural shifts in practice (e.g., transportation, choosing locations and meeting times to accommodate families, and increased funding for programs). While procedural changes may be necessary for beginning relationships, they do not ultimately require or support shifts in moment-to-moment interactions between schools and families or changes in pedagogical approaches. For example, Friedel (1999) found that even when transformative structures were embedded within schools, without attending to shifts in relationships or commitment to decolonizing practices these structures can fall flat on their promise. Further, when educators' views are deficitizing, Indigenous families are more likely to refuse engagement (Lipka, 1986), instead opting for protective and proactive strategies at home such as the everydayness of Indigenous resurgence (Corntassel & Scow, 2017).

Focusing on reimagining how these partnerships may be cultivated, two findings emerged from the literature that may support non-Indigenous educators and allies in creating authentic partnerships. The first regards reframing deficit views of Indigenous families and communities. This may include showing respect towards Indigenous peoples and cultures (Berger, 2000), admiring the resilience of Indigenous peoples (Kaomea, 2012), recognizing Indigenous children as intelligent whose ways of knowing and being should be honored (Robinson-Zañartu & Majel-Dixon, 1996), and listening to families and communities and their learning goals for their children (Hare, 2012; McWilliams et al., 2011; Robinson-Zañartu & Majel-Dixon, 1996). For Colman-Dimon (2000), understanding Indigenous values and priorities for their children came through listening to elders and community members in unstructured interviews, which she argued was a culturally appropriate method given the tribal community she was working with. She wrote:

> It is vital that education be improved through a process of attentive listening rather than an imposition of inappropriate pedagogy, curriculum and lack of meaningful personal relationships with the community. (p 43).

Thus, she suggested that teachers come to community ready to listen as members share about their cultures, ways of childrearing, and how to get involved in the community. As we see in this case, it is critical for non-Indigenous educators and researchers to be reflective and reflexive in tailoring practice and research to particular Indigenous communities' ways of knowing and being, rather than impose a pan-Indigenous view or essentializing characteristics when working with Indigenous communities. Further, this work flips the script by suggesting that educators learn ways to participate in community, rather than families learning to participate in schooling practices. This is not to suggest that non-Indigenous educators should not invite families and communities into the classrooms; however, as we discussed earlier in this chapter "[r]ather than seeing Indigenous knowledge and its various forms

as an anthropological curiosity or even entertainment," it is important that "places of learning should come to see Indigenous knowledge as a legitimate source of knowledge" (Hare, 2012, p. 408).

Additionally, while listening and attending to the values of Indigenous families might be an important step in forming authentic relationships, these efforts should be paired with opportunities for self-reflection that challenge non-Indigenous educators and researchers to "contradict negative profiling of young children" and families (Long et al., 2014, p. 157). For example, in their research Grace and Trudgett (2012) found that some of their teacher-participants continued to hold deficit views of Indigenous families, suggesting that parents needed workshops to learn about adequate nutrition and/or did not know the importance of their children attending the early childhood program. That is, pre-service and in-service teachers may require additional support from district administration, Indigenous knowledge holders, and/or researchers to make sense of Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices in ways that go beyond extractive experiences or essentializing characteristics, which can reinforce deficit views rather than challenge them (Grace & Trudgett, 2012).

A related second finding is that situating schools and Western curricula and pedagogy within a settler-colonial paradigm for non-Indigenous educators and researchers may be necessary for intervening in "settled" practices and routines (e.g., Butterfield & Pepper, 1991; Colman-Dimon, 2000; Lipka, 1986). Delineating the ways in which schools have and continue to perpetuate settler logics of justification and erasure may be necessary for non-Indigenous educators and researchers to engage families in ways that support self-determination and Indigenous futurity. For example, in a survey of 120 primary schools in Australia, Zeegers (2011) found only four schools publicly acknowledged their presence on Indigenous lands or in some way reflected the historical legacy of forced removal of Aboriginal peoples from their lands and children from their families (Zeegers, 2011). This finding suggests that ignorance of socio-historic contexts may be a persistent barrier for Indigenous families to authentically participate in school activities or engage with non-Indigenous educators.

Explicitly linking educator practice to systemic forms of justice or injustice may also prepare educators working with Indigenous families to transform inequitable systems within and outside schools. In other words, persistent disparities in mental and physical health, formal educational attainment, and economic opportunity can and should be transformed through our research and practice. However, who decides what the "problem" is, who designs solutions, and who gets to enact them should not remain solely within the hands of non-Indigenous policy makers, educators, or researchers.

Part IV Promising New Directions for Research

In seeking new forms of partnership between Indigenous families and schools, we also interrogate the "settled" forms of research-practice partnerships that often frame how family engagement gets legislated and enacted. As we briefly discussed

earlier, research has the possibility to refuse settler colonial agendas in how we engage with Indigenous communities and schools. To elucidate how we might, as a field, move towards solidarity relations with families, communities, and institutions, we highlight a few methods that hold promise for new forms of relational activity that predicate Indigenous ways of knowing and support Indigenous community well-being and thriving. These include (a) beginning with and measuring the impact of family engagement from Indigenous conceptual frameworks; (b) employing a range of methods that surface Indigenous perspectives; and (c) building collective capacity for social dreaming and changemaking.

Conclusions

Elders, families, and communities are an integral part of educating young people in Indigenous communities. Incorporating elders, families, and community back into the educational system for all children leads to a more holistic, community-orientated system. Rather than the education system being a weapon of settler colonialism as it has and continues to be in many settler nations, engaging families and community in meaningful ways is a movement towards re-matriating education. This requires collaborative design of and decision-making regarding educational systems. Creating educational systems and curricula that reflect Indigenous ways of knowing, that allow for onto-epistemic heterogeneity, and foreground social and environmental justice is a political act that can support Indigenous youth as they develop strong Indigenous identities alongside meeting their academic goals. This is more than coming up with the idealized model—it is about shifting perspectives.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted in September of 2007, states that Indigenous families and communities have the right to "retain shared responsibility for the upbringing, training, education, and well-being of their children, consistent with the rights of the child," "establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning," and participate in "all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination" (UN General Assembly, 2007, pp. 3–7). The Declaration also requires that "[s]tates shall, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for Indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language," and that "Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information" (p. 7). The United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—all settler colonial nations with active Indigenous communities working towards justice and well-being—have now all signed onto the Declaration after much organizing and activism by Indigenous people and allies. As we collectively design and implement Indigenous family engagement programs and build relationships between schools and families, we argue that we must also collectively work towards enacting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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Home-School Partnerships and Mixed-Status Immigrant Families in the United States

Hirokazu Yoshikawa

> *When Arpaio started redadas* [raids], *you know, a lot of families got separated, broken apart, and some of the students had to move with them, some of the students had to stop coming to the school so [they] can get a second job, get money, save money, and be prepared in case they got, you know, stopped by Arpaio and they had to move. So to the point is that our classroom became empty.* [Arizona public school teacher in Valdez, 2017]

> *In 17 years, I've never seen this before. The stress is so high, they're biting their fingers.* [Preschool teacher interviewed in Cervantes, Ullrich, & Matthews, 2018]

Despite general success in the integration of immigrants into United States society (Waters & Pineau, 2015), as measured by progress in education and livelihoods, one large group of over 11 million immigrants in the United States (Gonzales & Raphael, 2017) – those with undocumented status – are excluded from the majority of opportunities for human development and everyday life. Recent policy developments have heightened this exclusion to a degree not seen since the most recent large wave of undocumented migration to the United States began roughly 30 years ago. This chapter focuses on how these policy developments have created barriers in home-school relationships for mixed-status families (those families with at least one undocumented member), potential solutions to these barriers, and a research agenda moving forward.

The undocumented in the United States face several kinds of policy, social, and institutional exclusion. This group, despite its very high poverty rates, is not eligible for federal health insurance, whether under Medicaid or other provisions of the Affordable Care Act, with the exception of emergency Medicaid (specifically, child birth services). The undocumented do not have access to formal employment opportunities. They, therefore, generally have much lower access to labor law protections in practice, and experience high rates of wages below legal minimum wage thresh-

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olds (Hall, Greenman, & Farkas, 2010; Yoshikawa, 2011). In the majority of the 50 states, the undocumented cannot obtain driver's licenses. They are ineligible for the major safety-net policies of the United States. For example, although they can pay taxes by obtaining Taxpayer Identification Numbers, they are ineligible for federal tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit. They are also ineligible for housing subsidies or Food Stamps (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). In nine states, undocumented students are not eligible for in-state tuition to public universities or colleges (Nienhusser, 2015). In some states in which they are eligible, in-state tuition assistance is not provided. In others, implementation is uneven such that service providers or guidance counselors communicate to undocumented youth that they are ineligible to attend college, when in fact they may be eligible. Undocumented youth, therefore, experience blocks to normative transitions to adulthood such as driving, applying for college, and formal employment (Yoshikawa, Suarez-Orozco, & Gonzales, 2017).

The election of Donald Trump and its aftermath have produced a climate of fear among the undocumented that is unprecedented in recent US history. Executive orders first banned all legal immigrants from several largely Muslim countries. Then the administration greatly expanded the conditions under which local law enforcement can initiate federal detention, removal, and deportation proceedings. Previously under the Obama Administration only those suspected of serious crime such as violent offenses or felonies were subject to federal checks regarding citizenship status. As of this writing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and local law enforcement have extended these conditions to those with misdemeanors such as traffic tickets, those applying for formal employment, or those simply happening to be in public spaces. The risk for removal and deportation thus expanded geographically from those areas with recent traditions of harsh immigration enforcement (e.g., Arizona) to all areas of the nation, including self-declared "sanctuary" cities and states that had formerly refused to comply with requests to involve local law enforcement in ICE deportation raids.

This chapter focuses on mixed-status families and home-school relationships at this particular point in American history. I first outline the ways in which current policies may be specifically affecting home-school relationships. Then I address the potential solutions to these policy-driven barriers, and conclude with a research agenda moving forward for tracking the effects of both existing policies and potential solutions for home-school partnerships among this population.

Policies Regarding Undocumented Immigration in the United States and their Effects on Education and Home-School Relations

Prior to the late nineteenth century, the category of "illegal immigrant" did not exist in the United States. The beginnings of public education in the United States took an assimilation approach to immigrants, assuming that families would assimilate to the norms being taught in schools (Graham, 1995).

In 1875, a restrictive federal immigration law (the Page Act) was signed – identifying for the first time certain groups (Asian immigrants in particular) as "undesirable." This law came on the heels of efforts to bring large numbers of Asian workers into the United States to build the transcontinental railroad. As has been documented extensively, Asian workers' roles in this massive construction effort were often obliterated in visual and other representations (Eng, 2001). At the same time, the new visibility of this workforce in communities nationwide stirred up xenophobic attitudes and ultimately legislation like the Page Act and the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. In 1924, major federal immigration legislation (the Johnson-Reed Act) further expanded many of these restrictions through a set of country-specific quotas. Asian, Latin American, and Eastern and Southern European countries' quotas for legally sanctioned immigration were severely restricted compared to those of Western European countries. Although these restrictions controlled the flow of immigrants from "undesirable" countries, once in the United States children of immigrants accessed the emerging public education systems of the country (free public primary education was first implemented in Massachusetts and then spread across the country in the first half of the twentieth century; Graham, 1995).

Country-specific and racially determined quotas on immigration persisted until the landmark Hart-Celler Act of 1965, which replaced the country-specific quotas of the Johnson-Reed Act with broader, hemispheric quotas. Mexico, however, continued to have special provisions in the law to restrict immigration across the southern border of the United States (Ngai, 2004), as the continued "special case" that represented both the single largest country-level source of low-wage labor in the United States, but also a threat as the potential largest source of immigration without papers.

The Hart-Celler Act changed the face of American students and American schools, both in terms of numbers and regions of origin. The United States admitted an average 250,000 immigrants a year in the 1950s (largely from Western European countries), 330,000 in the 1960s, 450,000 in the 1970s, and 735,000 in the 1980s (Martin, 2013). After the Hart-Celler Act, the sending region of the majority of immigrants to the United States shifted from Europe to Latin America and Asia.

Undocumented migration also rose during these decades, with increasingly widespread concerns about the flow of the undocumented. For example, in 1972, the Texas legislature proposed barring students without US citizenship from public schools. The case ultimately went to the US Supreme Court, which concluded in *Plyler* vs. *Doe* that all school-age children in the country, regardless of citizenship status, were eligible to attend public school. The argument that the costs to the society of denying education to this group outweighed the costs to school systems was made in the decision. An important subgroup of families with undocumented children as well as unaccompanied undocumented children thus was incorporated into the American education system in this important ruling.

Although subsequently a major federal reform provided the last pathway to citizenship for the undocumented in the United States (the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, which resulted in over 70% of the undocumented receiving legal permanent resident status), the policy shifts since the 1980s have been largely in the restrictive direction. This affected undocumented parents and also

resulted in efforts to avoid compliance with Plyler vs. Doe, potentially affecting undocumented students.

The largest policy change post-Hart-Celler expanding grounds for deportation occurred in 1996. The Illegal Immigration Reform and Individual Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) greatly increased the categories of crimes that were grounds for deportation. In addition, and even more significantly, the authority of states and localities to enforce federal immigration policies was strengthened substantially. Subsequently, the Secure Communities program established mechanisms for state and local law enforcement to access federal immigration databases and begin removal proceedings for all who were in custody in local jails. Although some states and localities refused to implement Secure Communities and declared themselves "sanctuary" cities or states (e.g., the states of Illinois, Massachusetts, and New York; the cities of Los Angeles and New York City), many did. These changes resulted in increased numbers of parents of school children being deported.

By the early 2000s a debate in Washington and in the states arose concerning a solution to the widely perceived broken immigration system. Proposals for harsher enforcement and deportation were pitted against those for a pathway to citizenship. One example of a proposal for a pathway to citizenship was the one put forward by President George W. Bush in 2006, which would have allowed a pathway but only for those who could prove residency in the United States for a minimum number of years (at least 8 years), lack a criminal record, pay a fine, and wait "in line" behind permanent legal residents and other temporary status holders waiting for citizenship. Bush worked closely with leaders in both parties of Congress to attempt to pass bills reflecting these principles (most notably the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007). Such bills ultimately were not passed by Congress.

With the climate on undocumented migration moving strongly in the restrictive direction, states began to challenge compliance with *Plyler* vs. *Doe*. In 2011, the Alabama state legislature passed a bill requiring parents to report the legal status of their children in Alabama public schools. In the several months immediately following passage of this bill, a disproportionately high number of immigrant Latino students withdrew from public schools in Alabama (American Immigration Council, 2016). The bill was blocked by a federal appellate court as a violation of *Plyler* vs. *Doe*. A similar statewide case had occurred with similar outcome in 1994, in California (Proposition 187; American Immigration Council, 2016; Robertson & Preston, 2012). The erosion of schools as a safe setting for mixed-status families had begun.

A separate set of bills focused on inclusion of undocumented youth was proposed beginning in 2001 by a variety of Congressional leaders (e.g., Representative Luis Gutierrez; Senators Dick Durbin and Orrin Hatch). The central bill that ensued, known as the DREAM Act, would have provided protected status for youth brought to the country before a certain age in order to ensure access to higher education, employment, and other forms of integration into society. These bills were the result of sustained community activism by youth – "DREAMers." These also failed repeatedly to be approved by Congress. In response to the failure of both comprehensive immigration reform and DREAM Act bills to pass Congressional votes,

massive protests organized by the immigration activist community were held in 2006 and 2007 – these protests incurred responses from those opposed to any form of "amnesty" and instead in favor of expanded removal and deportation.

DREAMer activism in its first phases was limited to actions by youth themselves, not their larger families. This is because undocumented parents feared not only their own well-being should they become public activists but also the tearing apart of their families due to the risk of being deported while maintaining US residence for citizen children. However, beginning in 2014 with a group of undocumented parents traveling by bus (the UndocuBus) to protest immigration enforcement policies and call for comprehensive immigration reform, an increasing number of parents became themselves activists. This was accompanied by organizing in communities and schools (Rivera-Silber, 2013).

Physical, verbal, and economic discrimination against immigrants perceived to be undocumented – particularly those perceived to be of Mexican origin – rose during the 2000s. Violence against those who look "Mexican" increased, particularly in areas of the United States that had until recently had very low proportions of low-income immigrants (Flippen & Parrado, 2015). Marcelo Lucero, an Ecuadorean immigrant, was stabbed to death by a group of high school students in suburban Long Island, New York who set out that morning to "kill a Mexican." They received prison sentences of 6–7 years. Verbal discrimination in these years also became commonplace. Discrimination in schools against immigrant-origin students rose as well, threatening home-school relations and making schools a less safe place for these children and youth.

Enforcement actions (detention and subsequent removal proceedings and deportation) by the federal government became widespread in the mid to late 2000s as well. Large workplace raids were widely publicized. The Postville Iowa raid on the Agriprocessors slaughterhouse was the largest on record, with 400 arrests (Chaudry et al., 2010). The group of immigrant workers was handcuffed and also shackled in torso-to-leg chains in groups of ten as they were brought to a local fairground prior to being taken to prison. After media outcry, the Obama Administration subsequently placed a moratorium on such large workplace raids but went on to increase the numbers deported from the United States, up to 400,000 annually each year between 2008 and 2012, with gradually decreasing numbers thereafter (e.g., in FY 2015, 235,413 deportations occurred, of which 165,935 were removals within 100 miles of the southern border and 69,478 were interior removals). These reductions were the result of policy implementation actions taken during the Obama Administration's last years to restrict the scope of crimes that might trigger additional detention and deportation proceedings to felonies and violent offenses.

During this time, school efforts to reach out to immigrant parents found lower levels of involvement than in years past (Carlock, 2016). Immigrant parents began to withdraw to their homes. Studies have shown increases in behavior problems among students in states after passage of harsh enforcement policies (e.g., Arizona's Senate Bill 1070; Santos & Menjívar, 2013).

With increases in detention and subsequent deportation, the concept of sensitive locations – that is, settings in which interviewing and detention of those suspected

to be undocumented cannot occur – emerged with a ruling by the Obama Administration in 2011. Schools, early care and education programs, churches, weddings, funerals, hospitals, and sites of public demonstrations were defined as sensitive locations where ICE and Customs and Border Protection agents were discouraged from surveilling, interviewing, and detaining immigrants (Morton, 2011). This meant that home-school relations were protected to some extent and schools continued to be trusted settings, even for mixed-status families. Undocumented parents generally felt free to pick up and drop off their children from school, attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events without fear of detention. Informally such rules extended to the immediate areas around schools, such that US immigration enforcement agents or local law enforcement did not detain immigrants in the immediate vicinity of schools (or public preschools such as Head Start or public prekindergarten programs).

The Trump Administration in early 2017 implemented executive orders to more aggressively deport individuals who were exempted under the final Obama Administration regulations. These included undocumented immigrants with long-standing community or family ties to the United States and those with only minor offenses such as misdemeanors. A first time crossing of the border or overstaying a visa by themselves became sufficient grounds for initiating removal proceedings, rendering virtually all 11 million undocumented immigrants at immediate risk of deportation (Medina, 2017).

Studies suggest that these most recent policy changes have resulted in disconnection from American society and increased exclusion of the undocumented from public institutions and community life. Several effects in the area of home-school relations are implicated, including student attendance, parent contact with schools, and impacts on student and family mental health and subsequent learning.

Areas around schools, associated with sensitive locations as defined by the Obama Administration, were until recently rarely targeted as settings for picking up immigrants suspected of undocumented status for deportation. However, several recent incidents publicized in the media, in which undocumented parents picking up or dropping off their children at school were detained, have made schools an additional focus of fear and anxiety for many families. Targeting areas around schools technically does not violate the notion of sensitive locations, which refers to the premises of schools rather than surrounding roads or public spaces. However, these incidents can severely affect undocumented relatives such as parents or other adults in mixed-status families, who may routinely drop off or pick up their students at school. Thus, the impact on home-school partnerships may be substantial.

Some recent research shows a potential chilling effect of detention of immigrants near schools on subsequent school attendance. Valdez (2017) conducted semistructured interviews with teachers in two public schools in Arizona concerning their experience of attendance in their classrooms following publicized raids of immigrant parents including near schools (conducted by Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Maricopa County). As the quote at the beginning of this chapter indicated, some teachers reported that their classrooms were "empty" following these raids. In the school district of Las Cruces, New Mexico, in the days following February 15, 2017,

when Immigration and Customs Enforcement conducted raids on trailer parks with high proportions of low-income immigrants, a 60 percent increase in school absences was reported (Blitzer, 2017).

Parent contact with schools may also be affected. Immigrant parents, compared to their nonimmigrant peers, show lower levels of parent involvement with schools in general (Sibley & Dearing, 2014). In the context of undocumented status, the more general barriers of language, socioeconomic status, and nonstandard work hours may be exacerbated as fear and anxiety concerning public spaces come into play. The lack of access of the undocumented to driver's licenses in many states and localities, for example, can affect not only attendance of children, but also attendance of parents at school-based events. As of yet, however, few studies have been published on these effects on home-school relationships.

Finally, parent and student mental health appears to have worsened, although much of the evidence is anecdotal. School personnel nationwide report fear of a parent being deported is chief among immigrant-origin public-school students (National Education Association, 2017). One study across six states found that parents reported widespread fear of enrolling their children in early care and education, particularly the means-tested programs that require more paperwork than public schools (Cervantes et al., 2018). Many students, unable to share their fears with others, confide in school personnel. However, it is unclear whether parents are comfortable confiding in school staff, given the traditional barriers to home-school communication among first-generation immigrant parents (Carlock, 2016; McWayne, Melzi, Schick, Kennedy, & Mundt, 2013; Sibley & Dearing, 2014).

School Responses and Potential Systems-Level Solutions

How can school systems and other systems in the United States counter the powerful recent trends toward greater exclusion of the undocumented from society and subsequent disruption in home-school relations affecting mixed-status families? School districts, teachers, and administration are already taking action across the United States. In addition to these efforts, policy, communications, and local coalition-building and policy efforts may be relevant at larger systems levels to facilitate full participation and engagement of families with undocumented members in all organizational contexts in our communities, not just schools.

District-Level Responses

Districts have become aware of the heightened fear and anxiety not only among parents, but among students in their schools regarding whether they and their loved ones are safe from deportation. A large number of districts have declared themselves to be off limits to federal officials without a warrant, subpoena, or court order

(e.g., more than 100 school districts in the state of California; Jones, 2017). These are often formally incorporated into "sanctuary" state or locality declarations, such as those of the states of California, New York, Massachusetts, Illinois, and others. However, such measures cannot protect immigrant parents from being detained near schools by federal agents, as they are on their way to pick up or drop off their children.

School-Level Responses

Valdez (2017) in her interview study of teachers and administrators in Arizona schools found evidence of both instrumental and emotional support provided by these school staff. For example, in response to the immediate decline in economic well-being that accompanies deportation of a parent, school staff have intervened with material resources (Valdez, 2017):

> *We provide families with food....The principal goes to Subway every Friday and picks up food...In the afternoon, they let me go early. And on my way home I stop, "Here is a box of food." Or we watch kids on the first day of school and we offer a free backpack or school materials.* [Assistant Principal in Valdez, 2017]

> [A student whose parents were deported] said, *"I don't know what to do because I don't want to go with my aunt." So I have an empty room in my house and I said, "Well I have a bedroom that if you want you can use it.... If you want it, let me know"...and a couple of days later she took me up on the offer.* [Teacher in Valdez, 2017]

Schools can provide direct guidance to parents, as a trusted source of information, regarding responses to surveillance, interviewing, and detention by ICE or Customs and Border Enforcement personnel. These include trainings that clarify the sensitive location policy, provide information about rights of parents (e.g., to deny entry to homes without a warrant), and assure parents that the premises of schools are safe. As one school staff member in the six-state study said, "We're a sanctuary school… we explained what that meant. Because a lot of the parents were a little fearful about what that meant and we made sure we enforce that policy and that we explain it correctly to our parents" (Cervantes et al., 2018, p. 20). However, the study authors report that such proactive measures were in the minority among the 100 staff at 33 schools and preschools contacted.

Schools can also serve as hubs for a variety of other services – including legal – for the eventuality of detention or the possibility of deportation. For example, schools can connect with community-based organizations at the local or state level that provide specialized parent and family supports for immigrant families. These include "know your rights" information in multiple languages; legal services; information on eligibility for public benefits (e.g., those that US-citizen children of the undocumented are eligible for and how to enroll children in them regardless of one's own status as a parent); and emergency or crisis-level assistance to mitigate psychological, material, and economic losses if a parent or family member is deported (Yoshikawa et al., 2014).

Broader Systems-Level Solutions

What broader solutions are possible with what seems like an inexorable and continued movement toward exclusion of the undocumented in the United States, with harmful consequences for children and youth in American schools?

First, at the most fundamental level, policy change can bring about inclusion and, recent evidence shows, educational progress. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, was a 2012 executive order of the Obama Administration, aiming for greater integration of DREAMer youth. This executive order has resulted in nearly half of the undocumented youth in the United States receiving temporary reprieve from deportation and access to health care, formal employment, and markers of integration such as access to driver's licenses. Research studies show immediate integration effects – new jobs, increases in wages, and higher educational expectations and aspirations for the future (Gonzales, Terriquez, & Ruszczyk, 2014; Suarez-Orozco, Teranishi, & Suarez-Orozco, 2015; Yoshikawa et al., 2017). The integration in workplaces, higher education institutions, and community settings that DACA wrought was powerful and immediate, even though the reprieve was temporary. As of this writing, the Trump Administration's termination of DACA, set for March 2018, has been stayed in two federal court rulings.

Second, communications frames can have influence on policy and on public discourse. Communications interventions may make a difference in addressing the "us vs. them" rhetoric that underlie the silence and lack of action in many schools to counter the current immigration climate. For example, Haynes and colleagues found that an "opportunity to become citizens" frame was more effective than an amnesty frame in shifting support toward incorporation of the undocumented and a pathway to citizenship (Haynes, Merolla, & Ramakrishnan, 2016). This suggests that pushing toward "we" is more effective than starting with a "them" frame (O'Neil, Kendall-Taylor, & Bales, 2014). Such efforts could be directed to teachers, school leadership, and district leadership to build a climate that values immigrants explicitly, rather than avoiding the issue. Building a common identity as Americans in messaging, rather than simply framing issues facing immigrants as limited to one segment of US society, is an implication of this finding from communications science.

Finally, at the community or city levels, current efforts in building "welcoming" coalitions across schools, service systems, and local policies could be expanded. Some cities and localities have instituted both city-level identity and programs and policies as explicitly welcoming of newcomer Americans. These go far beyond "sanctuary" policies to more generally create policies and practices that facilitate the integration and incorporation of immigrants into the social fabric of schools and communities. For example, New York City has for over 15 years had a Mayor's Office for Immigrant Affairs, tasked with working across city agencies (education, health, community and youth development, housing, police, etc.) to foster the inclusion of immigrant populations. They work to ensure that the educational, legal, health, and other social service supports for New York City residents are inclusive of the vast range of immigrant groups in the City, including the undocumented.

Some New York City efforts to create inclusion and a common identity as New Yorkers across legal statuses include municipal NYC identification or IDNYC. This identity card addresses a key barrier to inclusion of the undocumented – their inability to get driver's licenses in many states. Without a driver's license or other US-issued photo ID, it can be difficult to pick up one's child at a public school; open a bank account; or apply for services or benefits, even for one's citizen relatives or child. In fact, until action by immigration advocates in New York City in the 2000s, parents could not pick up their child from school without showing a driver's license. This was successfully challenged to allow consular identification of countries of origin (e.g., Mexico, Ecuador, other Latin American countries) to serve as sufficient identification in the public school system. More recently, the NYC Identification (IDNYC) card was created as a more inclusive counterpart to a consular identification card.

New York City worked with the public school system, financial institutions, arts institutions, and other systems to ensure that the IDNYC card could facilitate access and inclusion regardless of citizenship status. To ensure that the card did not become associated with the undocumented in the way that consular identification might, the City added benefits such as free admission to multiple local museums, zoos, and other cultural organizations. The card was an immediate success, with enrollment greatly exceeding the City's expectations. In the first 16 months, over 800,000 city residents obtained an IDNYC card. Recipients of the card cited the free museum and zoo benefits as a primary reason for getting the card, indicating the success of this approach to inclusion. Fifty-two percent of cardholders surveyed in a process evaluation, and 67% of immigrant cardholders indicated that they used it as their primary source of identification (Daley, Lunn, Hamilton, Bergman, & Tapper, 2016).

At the national level, Welcoming America is a network of communities, cities, and counties that have explicitly built the welcoming of immigrants into the implementation of their policies, local media campaigns, and organizational work. Schools, businesses, and nonprofits meet regularly to address issues of inclusion of immigrants in a coordinated way. Over 70 cities and counties have joined this movement, including a mix of cities across different policy contexts and immigration concentrations – for example, Akron, Memphis, New York City, and Raleigh.

The cross-sector coalitions encouraged by Welcoming America also share leadership in the community between new immigrants and long-time residents across education and other sectors. Only by creating such cross-sector coalitions can the general climate of fear in immigration enforcement be countered. That is, the climate of fear extends far beyond schools to all public spaces and organizations; thus, a coalition of these organizations may effectively counter the comprehensiveness of current harsh immigration policy. Efforts to counter the current immigration climate must couple the positive school practices described above with more general cross-sector organizing to ensure that communities continue to welcome immigrants into, rather than repel immigrants from, community and public life.

Conclusion and Research Agenda Moving Forward

Recent policy changes directed toward undocumented immigrants represent perhaps the single largest threat to home-school partnerships among immigrant families in the United States. Although there are signs of responses and solutions from school systems as well as federal and local policy, almost none of these patterns – either negative impacts of the current policy climate on home-school partnerships or potential solutions – have been studied systematically. A research agenda moving forward could incorporate several conceptual and methodological issues.

First, the links between policy implementation and home-school relationships could be explored. There are both causal and descriptive dimensions to this question. The causal impact of policies like Secure Communities or DACA has only begun to be investigated, with virtually no studies examining family, student, or child outcomes. One exception is a study by Hainmueller et al. (2017) leveraging the strict eligibility dates of DACA to estimate the causal impact of DACA on child mental health outcomes. DACA eligibility among mothers significantly decreased adjustment and anxiety disorders among their children in a statewide Medicaid database. Such studies and methods could be applied to analyze the reductions in school engagement and attendance that appear to have accompanied the election (i.e., using the election as a discontinuous cutoff in a regression-discontinuity design as in the Hainmueller study). Smaller-scale events like locally publicized ICE raids may have causal effects on student attendance and home-school engagement outcomes, which could also be studied in smaller-scale data sets using methods that have been applied to the impact of local homicides on student achievement (Sharkey, Schwartz, Ellen, & Lacoe, 2013).

Second, causal research could be supplemented with further descriptive and qualitative work on the potential impacts of the exclusion of the undocumented on home-school relations. Valdez's study (2017) is one of the first to ask teachers and school administrators about the effects of local events like immigration raids on families and school involvement. This qualitative study is extremely valuable in raising hypotheses about not only negative impacts but also potential solutions on the part of school staff and district policy. As the harsh immigration policy climate that was characteristic of Arizona spreads across the country, many more studies are needed of the variety of populations and contexts in which home-school partnerships may be affected. Among undocumented populations, for example, Asian-origin families are understudied, as well as contexts outside traditional high-immigrant-concentration states and cities. Qualitative and mixed-methods work will be important in bringing the experiences of these groups into the literature on home-school partnerships.

Third, in conducting research on undocumented populations, ethical concerns are particularly urgent to consider. Protections and clear communication of study design and purpose are vital in this work (Whipps & Yoshikawa, 2016). The principles of family-community partnerships in research are particularly relevant in this case (Fantuzzo, McWayne, & Childs, 2006; Ginsburg-Block, Manz, & McWayne, 2010).

Finally, measurement of the particular contexts relevant to undocumented status and family and school processes is still nascent. For example, stress associated with legal status, fear of deportation, and legal risk are only just beginning to be conceptualized and measured in relevant studies (see, e.g., Brabeck & Xu, 2010; Yoshikawa, Godfrey, & Rivera, 2008). Mixed-method approaches to measurement development that take into account, specifically, the conceptualizations and perspectives of families affected by these issues will be particularly important for advancing this area of measurement (McWayne et al., 2013).

With these efforts to expand research on undocumented status and home-school relations, a national research-to-practice agenda on home-school partnerships will become much more relevant to the current immigration-policy context. Immigrant families across the United States may benefit as a result.

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Family-School Partnership Research with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Working Community

Sandra Barrueco

Family-school partnerships are comprised of an array of interactions and activities that support the development of young children. Attending to the relational aspects of family-school partnerships and on the need for bidirectional dialogue between schools and homes is critical for effective collaborations to be established. Central to this approach is conceptualizing family-school partnerships with the ultimate goal of creating strong, coherent experiences and support systems for young children. Studies of family-school partnership interventions developed for use with families from diverse backgrounds suggest a range of approaches to promoting family-school connections (e.g., Van Voorhis, Maier, Epstein, & Lloyd, 2013). It is not surprising that research has shown variation in family-school partnership related to key family characteristics such as income, ethnicity, parent education, and linguistic background (e.g., Cheadle & Amato, 2011). These factors help shape parents' comfort in talking with teachers (who more often than not are from different backgrounds) and parents' daily interactions with children.

In order to better understand and serve multiple communities, it is necessary to understand the nuances of each community. This chapter focuses on migrant and seasonal farm working (MSFW) families and their young children, a community engaged in agricultural work throughout the United States. In MSFW families, mothers, fathers, and other family members are involved in cultivating crops that yield America's fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat products. In addition to the contributions to our daily nutrition, MSFW families impact our daily aesthetic lives through flower, grass, and tree harvests. Juxtaposed with such contributions to

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society are the adversities that many MSFW families face, struggles that can influence family-school partnerships.

As highlighted by McWayne, Doucet, and Mistry in the opening chapter and echoed in other chapters in this volume, it is critical to attend to the specific characteristics of a community and to *listen to and learn about their experiences of, approaches to, and perspectives on family-school partnerships*, rather than to rely on preconceived notions. Beyond simply listening, we must acknowledge that communities are the experts on their families, and that it is critical to actively engage with them in our research. The lives of MSFW children and families necessitate a call for "flipping the script" concerning their contributions to their children's education, through positive engagement and tailored approaches to family-school partnerships. As discussed further in this chapter, MSFW families labor for long hours in agriculture, reside in rural locations, have minimal possessions given their mobility and unstable housing, have varied educational and linguistic experiences, and bring many strengths to the table along with the food they provide for the nation.

Unfortunately, existing research about family-school partnerships with the MSFW community is extremely limited. Thus, this chapter draws upon two bodies of the literature: (1) research conducted specifically with the MSFW community, and (2) studies of Latino dual language learners (DLLs), as the majority (approximately 88%) of MSFW families with young children are of Latino heritage and predominately Spanish-speaking (Administration for Children and Families [ACF], 2015a). Together, these bodies of research provide an avenue by which to understand and further examine opportunities for family-school partnership among MSFW families with young children.

The Family in the "MSHS Family-School Partnership" Equation

The types of approaches that MSFW families with young children use in family-school partnerships have been minimally studied. Yet, qualitative research has helped identify, through listening to the voices of MSFW families, that they are extremely dedicated to the development and education of their children, believing that *trabajando duro* (working hard) will lead to success (e.g., Parra-Cardona, Bulock, Imig, Villarruel, & Gold, 2006). Their children's well-being can be considered the central focus of many MSFW families and at the core of what sustains them through long hours and difficult work in the fields (see Fig. 1, as well as Barrueco & O'Brien, 2011 for a contextual model and summary of MSFW child and family development). Indeed, the sacrifice that MSFW parents make for their children is exemplified in their meals. Due to the limited quantities and types of food available, MSFW parents restrict their food so that their children can eat (Quandt, Arcury, Early, Tapia, & Davis, 2004). Such food insecurity and nutritional concerns are striking considering that MSFW families cultivate the nation's food.

Fig. 1 Developmental contexts of children within agricultural worker families participating in MSHS

Eighty to ninety percent of MSFW families participating in the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) program report high levels of dedication to their immediate and extended families (ACF, 1999a, 1999b, 2004). However, about 50% of migrant families in Michigan move two to three times a year (Kossek, Meece, Barratt, & Prince, 2005), and about 50% of MSHS-eligible families across the country report being separated from family (ACF, 2015a, 2015b). Unfortunately, there are scant studies on the effects of migration on MSFW children and families, though investigations with other populations suggest an effect on psychological, social, and educational outcomes (e.g., Humke & Schaefer, 1995). MSHS teachers have reported adjustment periods lasting 1–2 months as migrant children settle into their new communities and schools (ACF, 2004). Not surprisingly, most MSHS programs report mobility as a primary barrier for fully providing services to the MSFW community (ACF, 1999a). For example, both parent involvement activities at the centers and mandated home visits are impacted by the mobility of MSFW families (ACF, 1999a).

Another factor has arisen in recent years that can impact family-school partnerships: the surge in immigration raids (see also Yoshikawa, this volume). Rather than being potentially separated from their children, parents may keep their children with

them or with trusted family members while working in the fields. In other cases, only one parent may work at a time so that a parent can always be with the children. Consequently, lower program participation and attendance levels may result (ACF, 2011). About half of the children in MSHS-eligible families are cared for by a family member, and families prefer their own child care arrangements than MSHS (ACF, 2015a, 2015b). Studies have also found increased stress levels among migrant children and families related to the raids (Capps, Casteñeda, Chaudry, & Santos, 2007). These events should be considered when attempting to develop trust in the context of family-school partnerships. Indeed, trust is a key characteristic reported by MSHS-eligible families when deciding on child care (ACF, 2015a, 2015b).

Safety concerns also extend into the homes of MSFW children and families. Not only may they live in substandard housing (e.g., Slesinger, 1992), migrants are concerned about the difficulty of securing any housing for their families and its cost (Hovey & Magaña, 2002). Due to these issues, MSFW families may share housing and live in crowded conditions (ACF, 2015b). One-quarter of MSHS families living on their employers' farms feel unsafe in their residence (Appelgren & Spratt, 2012). Safety concerns could lead MSFW families to be reticent about home visits (which most MSHS centers employ) and should not be viewed as disinterest in fostering family-school partnerships (ACF, 1999a, 1999b).

As the research conducted to date with MSFW families of young children is limited, it is fruitful to consider the broader array of empirical studies conducted with Latino families and dual language learners. The findings highlight a range of family-school partnership practices undertaken by Latino families to guide young children to positive developmental, preacademic, social, and emotional outcomes, as well as to ground them in the present and past experiences of their family and community. Studies with diverse samples of Latino DLLs and Latino immigrant families of Mexican heritage have identified a constellation of approaches undertaken by families, such as targeting children's overall developmental well-being and school readiness skills, providing emotional support and physical resources, and engaging in activities at home and in the community (e.g., Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; López, 2001; McWayne & Melzi, 2014; Riojas-Cortez & Flores, 2009).

The School in the "MSHS Family-School Partnership" Equation

The studies conducted with both MSFW and other Latino families of young children underscore the necessity of conceptualizing family-school partnership-building as encompassing a broad spectrum of approaches across *both* the home and early care settings. Partnership-building represents a dynamic relationship *between* families and schools, rather than a unidirectional relationship from one entity to the other. As such, it is critical to consider the features of early care settings that can contribute to, as well as potentially detract from, positive family-school partnerships with MSFW families of young children.

One key feature for developing strong family-school partnerships with MSFW families is to recall the centrality of the child to families (Barrueco & O'Brien, 2011). When describing the most essential features of MSFW families, staff identified parent involvement in the children's education as most important, followed by parent training and education (ACF, 2011). This is striking considering the voluminous services provided, from dental care to transportation. These findings are similar to the number one goal identified by MSHS parents: to be provided with information about their children's development (ACF, 2004).

Requisite for communicating such information to MSFW parents is shared language. Bilingual teachers may be particularly influential in supporting engagement and academic achievement among Spanish-speaking families whose children are beginning to experience learning difficulties (Tang, Dearing, & Weiss, 2012). Within the MSFW community, home language use in the curriculum relates to positive relationships and linguistic processes, as evidenced through observational and interview results (Gillard, Moore, & Lemieux, 2007). MSHS staff across the nation are interested in learning more about bilingual language development and the incorporation of multiple languages in their practices (Stechuk & Burns, 2005).

Interventions that enrich the home language and literacy environments via family literacy and narrative models increase the linguistic, preacademic, and socioemotional abilities of young Spanish-speaking children (Harper, Platt, & Pelletier, 2011; Melzi, Shick, & Scarola, this volume). Two studies with the MSFW community support family involvement in early interventions. Boyce, Innocenti, Roggman, Jump Norman, and Ortiz (2010) created a storytelling and shared reading intervention entitled Storytelling for the Home Enrichment of Language and Literacy Skills (SHELLS). During home visits, parents and preschoolers created books together which were used to enhance familial practices related to shared reading and elaborative language. The intervention was found to strengthen the use of language in the home environment and children's narrative language in a sample of MSHS mothers and preschoolers (Boyce et al., 2010). Another study with the MSHS community examined a multisystemic intervention entitled the East Coast Collaborative for Enhancing Language and Literacy (ECCELL) that was implemented across states for families as they migrate (Barrueco, 2012). A series of linked activities directly targeted young children's abilities (through an enhanced curriculum in the MSHS centers), parents' knowledge and skills (through home visits and presentations), and parent-child practices (through shared ESL classes and shared literacy materials). Positive effects were evidenced across MSHS children's linguistic, emergent literacy, and socioemotional functioning (Barrueco, 2012).

Staff members themselves can play a role in developing partnerships with MSFW families. For example, about one-fourth to one-third of participation levels in home visiting programs are due to the influence of provider and program features, such as the age and prior experience of home visitors (Daro, McCurdy, Falconnier, & Stojanovic, 2003). Further, pairing participants with providers by racial/ethnic and parenting status characteristics are linked to higher levels of participation, with the participant-provider match particularly influential for Spanish-speaking Latinas (McCurdy, Gannon, & Daro, 2003; Mundt, Gregory, Melzi, & McWayne, 2015).

Perhaps in consideration of this, more than half of MSHS programs recruit staff from among the pool of current and former parents (ACF, 1999a).

Finally, administrative staff can also influence family-school partnerships. Initiatives by both school districts and principals have been evidenced to enhance involvement by families and communities (Epstein, Galindo, & Sheldon, 2011). Further, preschool administrators with broader beliefs about family-school partnership view the parents in their programs more positively and report higher involvement rates (Hilado, Kallemeyn, & Phillips, 2013). Ultimately, early childhood programs with organizational structures identified as "relational bureaucratic" are more likely to have high-quality family partnership approaches than those with a "conventional bureaucratic" system (Douglass, 2011). Examples of "relational bureaucratic" organizational structures are those that have staff members who are representative of the community, have participatory power structures that are responsive to individual needs, and engage in processes where individuals share knowledge and engage in reciprocal relationships. This contrasts to "conventional bureaucratic" structures which are more hierarchical, rigid, and impersonal.

Advancing Research on MSFW Family-School Partnerships

A grounded understanding of MSFW family-school partnership based on empirical research is needed to support collaborations with this unique community. As described above, examining processes on both sides of the equation (i.e., family and school) is essential given the bidirectional nature of the relationship. In order to provide a guiding framework for advancing future research, a conceptual model of family-school partnership in MSFW families with young children was developed (see Fig. 2). As depicted in the conceptual model, there are myriad compounding and fluctuating influences on family-school partnership in MSFW families. These extend beyond a simple perspective of families and schools to consider the specific characteristics of families and schools that contribute to family-school partnerships, as highlighted in prior models of parent involvement that are pertinent for MSFW children and families (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005). Such factors include the child's own characteristics, parental and familial attributes, household and community features, as well as programmatic policies, outreach initiatives, and staffing. Further, *these factors are never static; they interact with one another and evolve over time* as children develop, family circumstances change, and participation shifts from early care settings to schools.

Future research is needed in each of the five dimensions of the model. For the sake of brevity, three are elucidated in this chapter: (1) MSFW children's characteristics, (2) MSFW parental characteristics, and (3) MSFW familial and household characteristics. These three dimensions highlight familial processes in hopes of providing a more nuanced understanding of important factors in the lives of MSFW children and families, and to lay a foundation for future family-school
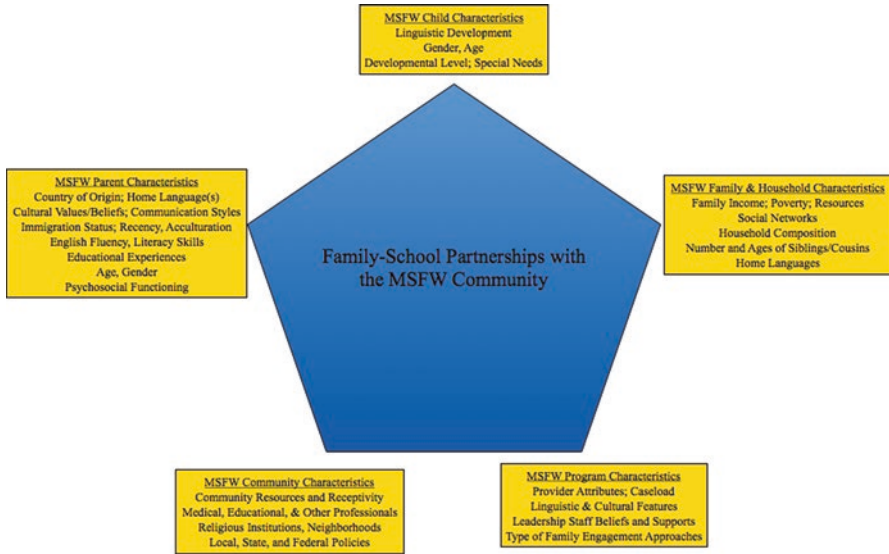
Fig. 2 Conceptual framework of family-school partnerships with the MSFW community

partnership research. While the dimensions are described independently in order to bring focused attention to each one, they are intricately linked and influence each other. For example, children's language skills relate to functions within the home, school, and policy contexts, which can be enhanced by deepening partnerships across these spheres (see Fig. 2). As in the prior section, findings from both the MSFW literature are highlighted and the broader literature pertaining to Latino DLLs is incorporated, as applicable.

MSFW Children's Characteristics

Future research exploring family-school partnerships with the MSFW community is needed to examine the role of child characteristics such as language, gender, age, and developmental level. Such an approach will yield better understandings of how family-school partnerships may adapt to children's attributes. A key feature of MSFW children's development is their linguistic development across multiple languages. Approximately 85% of MSFW children enrolled in Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) live in homes that are predominately Spanish-speaking, 10% live in English-dominant homes, and 5% live in homes where an indigenous language such as Triqui or Mixtec is spoken (ACF, 2015c). A longitudinal study of migrant children in the United States from preschool to second grade identified the importance of strong development in the first language (Spanish) to later English language development (Jackson, Schatschneider, & Leacox, 2014).

However, migrant children's Spanish skills atrophied over time, which is concerning given the positive effects of bilingualism (e.g., CECER-DLL, 2014; Woumans, 2017). The influence of families and schools on MSFW's language development should be studied in future investigations.

MSFW children's age is an additional consideration when examining family-school partnerships because engagement may change as children develop and as they move across care settings. For example, parenting practices among Latino immigrant families may shift as their children become older and enter early care systems and school such that a less structured approach may be evidenced with younger children while stricter approaches are implemented with older children (e.g., Halgunseth, Ispa, & Rudy, 2006). Unfortunately, there is no known research about whether such changes do or do not occur among MSFW families as their children transition from infancy, toddlerhood, preschool-age, to elementary school-age. This is vital for programs such as Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) which serves MSFW children between birth and school entry. Indeed, about half of MSHS children are infants and toddlers and half are preschoolers (ACF, 2015c).

MSFW and other linguistically diverse families may also adapt their engagement to the developmental levels of their children. For example, Latino immigrant parental expectations for their children have been shown to become more attuned with their children's abilities over time (Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese, & Garnier, 2001). Mexican-American parent involvement in school activities is positively related to children's early report card grades, and families become more involved if their children begin to experience difficulties (Moon, Kang, & An, 2009; Tang et al., 2012). Families become involved even more quickly if their child's teacher is bilingual, resulting in impressive academic gains for the children (Tang et al., 2012). Concern about their children's development can be a driving factor for parents to engage even more strongly with schools, and the partnership is solidified if teachers are able to listen and discuss these concerns in the home language. This, in turn, likely improves actions that are undertaken by both teachers and parents within and across the school and home setting to enhance the development of children with potential academic difficulties. Thus, a combination of child development and teacher characteristics can play a role in family-school partnership and child outcomes. Researching such processes specifically within the MSFW community could deepen present understanding of MSFW family-school partnership-building efforts.

Finally, having a child with special needs can alter the nature of family-school partnership practices. It is estimated that 6% of MSFW children participating in MSHS have documented disabilities, such as a language disorder or cognitive delay (ACF, 2015c). Unfortunately, the role of special needs in MSFW family-school partnerships has not yet been investigated. Within linguistically diverse families, parents of children with learning disabilities are dedicated to engaging in academic activities with their children, communicating with school staff, and accessing community resources for their children (e.g., Hughes, Valle-Riestra, & Arguelles, 2008). However, sociocultural, linguistic, and systemic barriers are in

place that should be addressed in MSFW family-school partnerships. These include language differences between staff and parents that impact effective communication, educational systems' potential deficit view of families, and the prolonged time that early intervention referral and diagnosis can take, thereby preventing the implementation of early intervention services before migrant children and families move (e.g., Lasky & Karge, 2011).

MSFW Parental Characteristics

The characteristics of MSFW parents themselves are critical to consider when examining family-school partnership practices. The conceptual model lists a variety of parental characteristics, with key characteristics elaborated upon in this text (see Fig. 2).

On average, MSHS-eligible families across the country have a seventh grade education (ACF, 2015a). Even at low education levels, greater educational attainment is associated with parent involvement in settings *outside of the home*. For example, immigrant Mexican mothers with 3–6 years of schooling participate more in school-based activities (such as volunteering and attendance at association meetings) than mothers with 1–2 years of formal education (Schaller, Rocha, & Barshinger, 2007). Importantly, mothers did not differ in their descriptions of maternal practices *within the home* and they reported similarly high educational aspirations for their children.

Educational levels can influence parents' literacy skills, which in turn impact literacy practices in the home and with their children. About 85% of MSFWs may be limited in their reading fluency in any language, based on educational level (U.S. Department of Labor, 2000). Migrant home literacy activities have been evidenced to relate to children's emergent literacy development, even more so than literacy activities at Head Start centers (Ezell, Gonzales, & Randolph, 2000). Within families of Mexican heritage, mothers with more advanced English proficiency report higher levels of parent-child literacy activities, which in turn influences preschoolers' literacy development (Baker, 2014).

Another key characteristic to examine in future MSFW family-school partnership research is immigration. Approximately 91% of MSHS-eligible families immigrated to the United States, with the vast majority from Mexico (89%) (ACF, 2015a, 2015b). The number of years living in the United States, English proficiency, and acculturation level are each positively associated with school-based involvement during the early elementary grades (Moon et al., 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009). However, more years living in the United States can also have negative effects on psychological functioning, health outcomes, and other measures of well-being, a phenomenon known as the immigrant paradox (Hernández & Charney, 1998). An amalgamation of acculturative, economic, and systemic stressors tax immigrants' emotional and interpersonal processes. For example, greater physical and mental health difficulties are experienced with higher acculturation among MSFW families

(e.g., Alderete, Vega, Kolody, & Aguilar-Gaxiola, 2000; Finch, Frank, & Vega, 2004). Maternal depression has been linked with parenting style and stress and, ultimately, MSHS children's own social-emotional abilities (de Leon Siantz, Coronado, & Dovydaitis, 2010). Thus, while some facets of acculturation (such as higher English proficiency) may improve parents' and teachers' abilities to communicate, acculturative stress appears to be an important consideration influencing family-school partnerships and child outcomes.

MSFW Familial and Household Characteristics

Children and parents are not islands unto themselves; they are rooted in a broader network of familial and household characteristics. As in the previous section, key elements are described here, with a more exhaustive listing of familial and household factors listed in the conceptual model (see Fig. 2).

For one, MSHS families often have limited economic resources, earning only about $12,500–$15,000 a year (ACF, 2004; Federal Register, 2005). Socioeconomic status has been found to influence early cognitive development through the provision of language and literacy materials and enhanced interactions between immigrant parents and young children (as documented through self-report and observation) (Mistry, Biesanz, Chien, Howes, & Benner, 2008). However, this same study found that parental education is more important than family income and welfare receipt when considering socioeconomic status. Another investigation with Mexican-American families also found that parental education predicted academic achievement more strongly than income level (Moon et al., 2009). Future studies should further examine the effects of both parental education and income on family-school partnerships with MSFW families.

An MSFW family measures its wealth in broader ways than simply financially. Relationships with their friends and family are highly valued, and parents view their children as "crown jewels" (e.g., Gillard et al., 2007). All family members in the home can impact the experiences of young DLL children, including older siblings and cousins who engage in early learning practices and provide language models across languages (e.g., Hafford, 2009). Indeed, research is suggestive of an effect of family and social networks in family-school partnerships. For example, the *strongest* predictor of school involvement in a national study of Latino families with kindergarteners was the number of other parents with whom participant parents had spoken (or that parents knew well enough to speak to) within their child's class (Durand, 2011). The effects of social networks were stronger than maternal education, income, acculturation, language barriers, and school outreach approaches. Among MSHS families, maternal social support has been shown to relate to children's peer acceptance and to fewer classroom behavioral problems for children (de Leon Siantz & Smith, 1994).

Research Methodology with the MSFW Community

As described above, research concerning MSFW child, parent, and family processes is critically needed to advance our present understanding of MSFW family-school partnerships. The conceptual model highlights key aspects that would profit from further scientific investigation. Moreover, *investigators should consider how to conduct research validly with the MSFW community along with what to research.* This section highlights approaches for advancing family-school partnership research in collaboration with MSFW children and families, with a focus on two essential features: (1) establishing trust and (2) developing valid research methodologies using mixed-method approaches.

Establishing Trust with the MSFW Community

Akin to its importance for establishing a partnership between MSFW families and schools, *trust is critical in MSFW research collaborations*. Without trust, the most exquisite research designs and exciting research questions are meaningless; not only will they likely be invalid for the community, the study may be unsuccessful due to concerns about participation (Fisher et al., 2002). Developing trust with the MSFW community entails understanding their experiences (in the past and in the present) as well as the deep and valid concerns they may have about sharing their lives and their children with others outside of their community. It also entails time spent by the researcher with the community to build trust and mutual understanding, time that cannot be rushed or skipped over. For example, the MSFW community needs to become acquainted with the researcher, both as a professional and as a person. The community would like to learn *why* the researcher is interested in the MSFW community, along with *what* kinds of questions she or he will ask. An underlying worry is that the researcher could bring harm, whether intentionally or not, to individual members of the MSFW community and to the broader community itself. Establishing relationships with informants or gatekeepers to the community can facilitate this process, but directly establishing trust with the community cannot be short-changed.

Currently, I am co-directing a nationally representative study in collaboration with MSHS children, families, and programs. Funded by the federal government, it is the first study of its kind and will provide valuable information about MSHS child development, familial processes, and programmatic needs. Ten years has gone into planning a study that is responsive to the community and that can be implemented well given the complexity of studying a mobile and vulnerable population. An important component has been establishing trust with the MSHS community through face-to-face meetings, phone calls, newsletters, and videos. The study also

builds on relationships that the principal investigators have had with the MSHS community through many years of personal interactions with MSHS children, families, and staff. As an example of the sensitivities necessary to conduct valid research with this unique population, a National Institute of Health Certificate of Confidentiality was secured providing legal safeguards against sharing identifiable information about MSHS children and families in the event of a court order, deepening the trust of the community with the study.

After 10 years of planning, the national MSHS Study has finally begun. Yet, the development of a trusting collaboration has not stopped here. Trust is both a noun and a verb; it is a state of being and active in nature. Each day, the study team is traveling the country meeting new MSFW children, families, and staff. They each must develop a strong connection through appropriate verbal and nonverbal communications. This requires careful attention to eye contact, vocal tone and volume, formality, conversational topics and speed, power dynamics, self-disclosure, and more. A MSHS Culture Card (Barrueco, 2017) was created providing recommended approaches for engaging with MSFW children, families, and staff (see examples in Table 1). Further, training was provided to assist the study team in developing trusting working relationships with the MSFW community through explicit discussion and live feedback in the field.

Table 1 Examples from Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Study Culture Card (Barrueco, 2017)

Cultural competence	Developing an open worldview and interest in other cultures
	Developing knowledge about a culture
	Developing skills in engaging and communicating effectively with a community
	Developing experiences with a cultural community
Key characteristics	*Respeto*/Respect
	Confianza/Trust
	Paciencia/Patience
	Personalismo/Personal connection
	Familismo/Connecting about MSHS families
	Simpatía/Harmony in relationships
	Cariño/Warmth in interactions
Collaborating with MSHS staff	Enter the MSHS centers humbly, with gratitude, and with excitement
	Be professional and warm in your interactions
	Make genuine connections with other
	Understand pressures of staff
	Use the staff's formal titles (Miss, Mrs. Mr., Señorita, Señora, Señor), unless directed otherwise
	Chat with the staff at each center and respect their roles (center director, assistant center director, educational and health specialists, teachers)
	Speak in the preferred language(s) of the staff and be open to code-switching between English and Spanish

Table 1 (continued)

Working in MSHS centers	MSHS centers can be in very remote areas Paper maps are needed as GPS and cell phones do not work in some locations Bring entertainment for drive as radio stations may be limited and cell phones may not have good reception Bring food, snacks, and water that do not require refrigeration Keep gas tanks filled Wear layers. It will be very hot in some locations and some centers will have active air conditioning.

Collaborating with MSHS Families	Use the parents' formal titles (Miss, Mrs. Mr., Señorita, Señora, Señor), unless directed otherwise
	Use the formal version of you in Spanish (Usted), unless directed otherwise
	Be professional and develop trust
	Charlando: Ask about the parent's day and how their family is
	Mention your own family and experiences, as needed
	Attend to power dynamics that relate to:
	Interviewer vs interviewee
	Study staff vs parents
	More acculturated/English proficient vs. acculturated/English proficient
	Higher SES vs lower SES
	Recall that the parents are the experts of their children and their communities and we are grateful for their participation in the study
	Verbal
	   Stay in preferred language of respondent
	   Match speed of parent (e.g., slow and deliberate)
	   Match tone and volume (e.g., soft and gentle)
	   Respect pauses in conversation and interaction
	Nonverbal
	   Build eye contact slowly
	   Be relaxed yet engaged
	   Be fully present with person, place, and time

Connecting with MSHS children	Developing trust with MSHS children with the trust of MSHS teachers
	Use a slow, thoughtful interaction style
	Have a calm demeanor
	Incorporate many nonverbal gestures such as smiles, glances, pointing, and staying close to their level using small chairs and sitting on the floor (as appropriate)
	   Build eye contact slowly
	Modulate voice; speak softly and slowly
	Avoid overuse of verbal language
	Watch out for typical "adult" language mode
	Dual language learners (DLLs)
	   Many MSHS children are in the process of developing two or more languages
	   MSHS children will vary in the relative degree of bilingual development (i.e., how much English vs Spanish they speak)
	   MSHS children will also vary in the extent of development within each of those languages
	   Receptive (understanding) skills develop before expressive (speaking)
	   Some DLL children are quiet at the beginning stages of learning a second language while others are not
	Child assessors should speak English and Spanish in the classroom when getting to know the children
	During the assessment, stay in the language of the measure

Developing Valid Research Methodologies Using Mixed-Method Approaches

Another essential component of family-school partnership research with the MSFW community is to utilize methodologies that are culturally and linguistically appropriate (Fantuzzo, McWayne, & Childs, 2006; Nagayama Hall, Yip, & Zárate, 2016). This extends beyond simply using Spanish measures. It entails *ensuring that the measures selected are scientifically and culturally sound* for the MSFW community. It also means creating research procedures that function well with, and for, the MSFW community, rather than simply utilizing approaches that are used in other studies. As elucidated below, mixed-method approaches that incorporate both qualitative and quantitative techniques are essential for developing such methodologies.

For example, the surveys for the national study were translated using a professional translation firm with expertise in the Mexican dialect. This firm was selected after a review of sample translations from various firms. Even so, my experience conducting research with the MSFW and early childhood fields was invaluable for identifying wording that at times was inaccurate, rarely used, or at a higher difficulty level than requested. Thus, it is critical that members of the research team, including the leadership team, have advanced language proficiency and experience with a community. In addition, child assessments were selected for their capacity to provide an accurate measure of linguistic abilities across multiple languages, as most of the children are dual language learners. A further consideration for child assessments was their standardization with Mexican heritage children and the incorporation of Mexican dialectal terms as the vast majority of MSFW families are from Mexico.

Piloting the national study highlighted additional areas that necessitated adjustments in the parent survey. For example, qualitative feedback indicated that parents struggled to understand the separate race and ethnicity questions that are often used in the U.S. Census and that are reflective of an American construction of race and ethnicity. Describing oneself by skin color and by ethnicity was not consistent with MSFW's perspective of their cultural heritage. With federal approval, an alternative set of questions available from the U.S. Census Bureau was adopted. This set was comprised of more general questions about race/ethnicity and home country and better suited for the MSFW community. For example, MSHS parents are now asked to describe their race/ethnicity and their Latino origin, rather than to consider their race in isolation of their Latino heritage.

The format of Likert-scale questions also can be incomprehensible to members of MSFW community, and perhaps to many other communities. Such questions are often worded indirectly, have lengthy instructions, are presented in the first person, and use a metric less familiar to the community (e.g., "Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: I take my child to the park. Do you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly disagree?"). When responding,

MSFW parents can wonder whether the interviewer is describing their own parenting and wonder what they are agreeing to. Instead of the traditional Likert-scale approach, a more valid format for the MSFW community is directly asking parents about behaviors, beliefs, and experiences (e.g., "How frequently do you take your child to the park? Would you say never, a little, sometimes, or frequently?"). Future research and measurement development about MSFW family-school partnerships are encouraged to explore these methodological issues in collaboration with the community.

Another procedural approach I developed for research with the MSFW community is the use of pictorial cards to facilitate responses during parent interviews. The pictorial cards present a bar graph depicting quantities, much like the bars on a cell phone to indicate the strength of a signal. Visual cues work well with a community that often calculates quantities in their everyday work. Further, the pictorial cards provide the community, which can be soft-spoken and private, an alternative method of responding. Other studies may use "show cards" with responses written (such as "never, a little, sometimes, frequently"); however, these are not appropriate for a community with lower literacy levels.

When asking about the languages spoken at home, it is recommended to specifically inquire about indigenous languages. An open-ended question about home language in a study about family-school partnerships may yield "Spanish," when the parents actually speak primarily Zapotec, with some Spanish. When a follow-up question is asked about indigenous languages, parents will readily identify which one they speak. The underlying reason for the initial exclusion is presently unknown and could be investigated in future studies. It may be related to concerns about privacy, worry about prejudice against an indigenous heritage, or simply trying to be helpful by providing an easier answer for interviewers who may be less acquainted with the community and indigenous languages.

Even the ordering of measures should be considered when interviewing MSFW families in future family-school partnership research studies. The national study piloted the parent interview in two formats: (1) beginning with questions about the family and then asking specific questions about their children's development, and (2) vice versa. The flow of the interview functioned better and parents were more engaged when the questions about child development were presented first, likely due to the centrality of children in the lives of the MSFW community (Gillard et al., 2007).

Finally, the adaptation or creation of measures may be needed for studies of MSFW family-school partnerships. Such was the case for the national MSHS Study to better capture cultural and linguistic processes. First, my collaborators and I developed the *Child Languages & Development Teacher Report* to identify MSHS children's language skills and language dominance (Barrueco, Bumgarner, Caswell, & López, 2016). In addition, the *MSHS Cultural Items and Language Use Checklist* (Barrueco et al., 2017) was adapted from measures used with other cultural groups and early childhood studies to capture the presence of MSFW cultural music, displays, toys, foods, books, and languages in classrooms.

Conclusions

Parental involvement in schools, as well as young children's early academic achievement, is enhanced when efforts are made to bidirectionally engage and collaborate with families (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012). Research with the migrant and seasonal farm working (MSFW) community and with Latino dual language learners (DLLs) underscores that both families and programs shape early developmental trajectories of young MSFW children. As research with the MSFW community is limited, this chapter highlights the importance of using both quantitative and qualitative methods and the need to consider three key elements in research on MSFW family-school partnerships.

First, there is a bidirectional relationship between MSFW families and the programs serving them. Future investigations should not only examine how families and schools each independently influence MSFW children's development, studies should examine how the nature and quality of family-school partnerships support child outcomes. Schools that aim to meet parental needs on a consistent and ongoing basis, rather than prescribing to a narrow perspective of school involvement, generate higher levels of family-school partnership and accelerate academic growth for children between kindergarten and third grade (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992, 2012; Han, 2008; López, Scribner, & Mahitivanichcha, 2001).

Second, MSFW family-school partnerships are likely influenced by a conglomerate of child, parent, familial, household, community, and programmatic factors, as depicted in the conceptual model (see Fig. 2). Scientific inquiry is needed within each of the dimensions to examine how best to support family-school partnership endeavors. In terms of practice, the implementation of successful initiatives for MSFW families with young children may entail: (1) addressing linguistic, cultural, societal, and pragmatic barriers and (2) adopting comprehensive, culturally and linguistically attuned approaches that encompass child, parental, familial, community, and program influences on family-school partnerships. This includes developing the language abilities of both parents and staff, engaging in oral communication and social networking across a variety of settings and through multiple individuals (including community leaders and other parents), and moving beyond traditional conceptualizations about parent involvement (e.g., Barrueco, Smith, & Stephens, 2016).

Finally, research about MSFW family-school partnerships will only be capable of validly reflecting the lived experiences of MSFW families when careful attention is paid to creating effective methodologies with the MSFW community. For such developments to occur, researchers must dedicate themselves to creating trusting and collaborative relationships over an extended period of time. *Directly being with and listening to the community is* the foundation of effective measurement development and of advancements in MSFW family-school partnership research.

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The Role of Humility in Working with Families Across International Contexts

Jennifer Keys Adair

Family involvement work is often in danger of assuming that the parent does not know much (Doucet, 2011). The researcher, practitioner, teacher, administrator, public health advocate, psychologist, graduate assistant, policy-maker, counselor, and in-home visitor too often position themselves as the expert, the one who knows best how the parents' lives should be lived and what families' current situations need to have or be in order for them to be supportive of the child. Using examples from Namibia, Germany, India, and across the United States, and Australia, I hope to illustrate the importance of approaching families with humility and a desire to learn and understand, rather than a desire to fix and change.

In 1996, I was 20 years old and in northern Namibia living with a gracious and patient community of Himba-Herero families. Our professor, along with his wife and two young children, had lived with them for 2 years working on his dissertation. He brought eight of us to join in their lives for 2 months. I spent a lot of time with a girl of my age who had a young baby. Her mother, aunts, and other family members were often with us or around us. One particular day, we were together at another family's homestead. Children between the ages of six and fifteen were gathered together singing. They were home visiting from the English language school that an international NGO had begun in the town, located 2 hours away. They sang some of the songs they had learned in English. Then, their parents asked them to sing songs in Herero, which they did.

The singing was still one of the most wonderful sounds I have ever heard. But in the middle of my awe, some parents brought the interpreter over to me and were not happy. They told the interpreter to tell me that I looked so happy, but it wasn't such a happy thing. They explained that what they really needed was their well repaired so they could get water without walking so far. I wrote in my notes how their words

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were translated for me, "Why do they teach English to our children? Why can't they help us fix the well?" The parents' critique of my happy response was that I did not know what the parents and families actually NEEDED. I misunderstood the situation and was responding to a misunderstanding, not the actual logic, desires, concerns, and ideas of the people with whom I was living. Families where we lived had to walk for hours to get water. They explained how far the working wells were from families and why their children leaving to attend the school was difficult on the community. At the time, there was nothing I could really do. Or, maybe there was, but I didn't understand enough then.

This experience has framed my work with immigrant families. Like the NGO and the English school in northern Namibia, my own approaches and many of the interventions I have seen implemented are done without knowing what parents need or seeking the perspectives from the parent-subjects or parent-participants. Well-intentioned programs, interventions, research, and teacher training are often disconnected from the ideas and needs of families.

Global Deficit Discourses About Families

There are many destructive discourses about particular parents, families, and communities who need the intervention, expertise, or resources of others to be successful (Morabito, Vandenbroeck, & Roose, 2013). These ways of speaking about families are global, historical, and harmful (Vandenbroeck, Roets, & Snoeck, 2009). Parents who experience global marginalization in the larger society face continuous skepticism about their ability to parent a child who will be successful in that society. In *Children Crossing Borders* (CCB), a recent comparative study of immigrant parents in France, Italy, Germany, England, and the United States (Tobin, 2016), global migration situated immigrant parents within both deficit thinking about parents and deficit thinking about immigrants. Researchers in the CCB study conducted interviews with immigrant parents and preschool educators in multiple cities within each participating country with a number of immigrant communities. Across communities and nations, parents worried that their ways of being with their children would be criticized by early childhood educators. Immigrant parents also worried that teachers' attempts to welcome or get to know their children would result in children losing core cultural values and understandings (2016). There was a pattern among educators across cities and nations that the immigrant parents in their schools and communities did not have what they needed to be successful in their new countries. There were significant disconnects between parents and educators and a relative reluctance or inability to talk together about the needs, desires, and concerns of parents or with one another as parent and educator (Bove, 2011; see also Tobin, 2016).

Global deficit thinking about parents and families is perhaps best sustained by two factors that work against the possibility of humility. The first is that too often family involvement, education, and engagement interventions (especially when exported across nations and cultures) do not ask parents, families, or communities

what they need. Parents' needs are assumed without being sought out in consultation. The second is that parent involvement, education, and engagement interventions do not consider systemic, global-political forces that sustain the inequity and marginalized positions that push parents and families toward services and support in the first place. The emphasis and attention are on fixing families instead of fixing systems (Lareau, 2000).

Assuming Instead of Asking

When programs or people make assumptions about families' lives without asking, significant misunderstandings can happen. These assumptions impact how children are treated as well as how stereotypes or other harmful discourses continue to distance people from one another. A strong example comes from Kurban's work (2016; see also Kurban & Tobin, 2009) with Turkish immigrant children in French and German preschools. In one German preschool, she filmed a group of Turkish girls who prayed before they ate, talked about cooking Halal meals in the outdoor kitchen area, and fought in Turkish over heirlooms from Turkey in the dramatic play area. When the girls' parents saw the films of their daughters, they were shocked. The families were all quite secular and did not pray at home. The teachers assumed that the girls from Turkey were quite religious yet they were not. The teachers also assumed that because of this religiousness, the parents were not committed to integration. The logic of this assumption then made it sensible to let the group of Turkish girls play by themselves away from the teacher's supervision and support instead of integrating them with the other children in the class. The parents were upset that the school was not helping their children integrate and only saw the girls through a "hyper-performed" Turkish identity instead of a shared identity (see also Kurban, 2016, p. 108).

Sometimes false assumptions about families can extend to curriculum for programs and materials that are based on values and ideas not shared or even understood by parents. Recent studies have suggested that exported curriculum from the United States or Western Europe is difficult to translate or, worse, disconnects children from their cultural ways of learning and being. For example, Ng'asike (2014) demonstrated that programs and curriculum exported for use with nomadic pastoralist communities in Kenya have pushed some children away from the pastoralist-grounded teaching and learning that sustains community life. To illustrate, a teacher in one of the centers read a story to the children about mango trees because it was the only material offered for reading that week. She felt pressure to read the story even though she and her students did not know about mango trees. She wished she could teach the children about the *Egol* or palm tree that was part of many Turkana stories and critical for local environmental health. She wanted the children to recognize the tree, talk to their parents about the tree, and think about projects to help preserve the tree. This is just one of many examples of programs insisting on disconnected curriculum (created by outsiders) instead of content that draws upon the expertise, knowledge, and values of families and communities.

Ignoring Systemic Consequences

Many programs and people do not pay attention to nor address the systemic, cultural, and historical reasons some parents are consistently struggling within and across nations. Kaomea (2012) critiqued the global pattern of propagating the struggles and limitations of marginalized parents without addressing the ongoing systemic maintenance of discrimination and disparity. She argued that this dismissal or disconnect from historical systems coupled with an insistence on solely blaming families and communities distorts the context through which indigenous parents are operating globally. Kaomea (2012) explained:

> In Hawai'i, as in other Indigenous nations across the globe, colonial domination took our once healthy, thriving, and self-sufficient Indigenous society and horribly distorted it. . . Statistics tell us that many Native Hawaiian families are poor, unhealthy, unstable, and uneducated, and that our children are consequently at risk physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally. . .What these statistics neglect to explain is that, sandwiched between these contrasting social portraits is a history of invasion and colonialism: a story of theft, exploitation, and oppression that, when coupled with the forced imposition of devastating colonial educational policies, has enduring implications for contemporary Native Hawaiian home-school relations.

Kaomea's critique extends to the ongoing tendency in parent education models to fix parents and communities instead of listening to and learning from them. Interventions are meant to change the parent. They do not try to fix the larger system or the inequities that create stress and a need for survival strategies. Nor do they address the historical underpinnings of why some families and communities are struggling while others are thriving within national systems. Too often, the researcher, practitioner, teacher, administrator, public health advocate, psychologist, graduate assistant, policy-maker, counselor, or in-home visitor believes that it is the parent who must understand them or see the world from their point of view, which is most often the view of colonizer or at the very least, the more powerful.

Humility

Pursuing interventions, research or learning experiences without humility, particularly with parents and families from different backgrounds than one's own, can and often does cause harm. A lack of humility is hard to recognize sometimes. Just as I began this chapter with a story about my early professional life as an anthropologist, I found myself in a similar situation 10 years later. During 2005–2008, I lived with my young family in Bangalore, India, where I ended up teaching preschool (see Adair & Bhaskaran, 2010). Early on in this process, a locally known foundation discovered my background in teacher education in the United States and asked if I could do training for their teachers who worked at prison, shelter, slum, and orphanage schools. I declined multiple times, at a loss for what I would train them on.

They sent teachers, orphanage caretakers, and other staff members to put pressure on me, certain that at some point I would relent. I thought I was being humble by gently declining their attempt to make me an expert.

After months, the director told me that I was being rude and ungrateful. She pointed out that I had many resources from my schooling in the United States. Frustrated, she asked "Why are you unwilling to share this with us?" I agreed to a two-day training. I still felt drastically underqualified, so I asked if I could observe one of the crèches (early childhood centers) to see a different schooling environment than the orphanage to prepare for the training.

I was driven to a crèche located on a large construction site on the edge of Bangalore. The crèche had about 40 children aged 2–8. The preschool room was a simple cement building with two small rooms, a tiny kitchen, and an entry room for shoes. When I walked in, the class was sitting in perfectly positioned rows about 2 feet apart from each other in all directions. There were about 15 children They seemed really happy—all copying the alphabet onto their chalkboards. Some children had their hair done—others did not. Most were busy writing; a few were looking around. The two- and three-year-olds were in the second room. They sat perfectly as well, trying to write the letter A or B with coaching from their teachers.

At this point, I started panicking about the training I was supposed to do with teachers who worked in crèches and a range of other contexts. What was I going to teach them? I felt really uncomfortable—not about being there—but about what they would think when I tried to help them be successful in worlds I did not yet understand. Then I remembered Freire's ideal epistemological version of schooling as being one that begins with the knowledge, desires, and deep concern of communities. Educational endeavors for those who are removed from power and/or oppressed systematically should begin with what people already know and what they believe they need to address their own oppression. Freire (2001), speaking to those who work in education, wrote:

> To act in front of the students as if the truth belongs only to the teacher is not only preposterous but also false. . . It presupposed an openness that allows for the revision of conclusions; it recognizes not only the possibility of making a new choice or a new evaluation but also the *right* to do so. (p. 39)

Repositioning myself as a learner first and then someone who could offer support and guidance while consistently remembering that I am learning, not teaching, was significant for me not just as a teacher but also as a researcher with parents and families. In the moment, this perspective helped me think about how I could set up the training so that I could learn from the teachers and better understand how they wanted to teach and which of my resources could help them toward their goal.

A few days later the teachers and I (still extremely nervous and unsure) were on the upper floor terrace of the children's home, meeting together on mats. I started by asking, "What do you want children to be able to do when they leave your classroom?" At first, they said skills. When I asked which skills, they said, "to make good decisions." The whole "training" then became how to create learning experiences that might help children learn to make good decisions. The teachers told me that if

the children could think about everyday life when they were at school and make some decisions about their learning, they could gain some life skills while learning about writing and math in the real world. We made amazing lists of how children see and do science outside of school. This list included responding to weather changes, carrying water on their heads to avoid spilling, cooking over fires, measuring spaces for concrete, and arranging tarps to keep out rain. With this list, I introduced them to the idea of project learning since it seemed close to what they wanted.

Together, we created projects they could use to teach and reinforce academic concepts through using their funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). During this work, one teacher brought up that perhaps children could ask their parents about their work and then share what they learn with their teachers. Project learning became a mechanism for the teachers to have something to talk to parents about. They felt they could involve parents as people who could offer more sources for projects if the teachers could learn from the parents about what they do all day and if they asked the children who were watching their parents to share what they see at home.

What I did not understand then, and continue to work on now, is that humility is about engaging in ways that are recognizable, appreciated, and welcomed by those from whom and with whom we want to learn. Withholding expertise or disengaging is just as arrogant as taking full control of educational situations and assuming one's ideas are exactly what people need. It is not being timid or reluctant, nor is it about being confident or in charge. Being humble means listening carefully enough to the community we are studying to hear what they want even if it is not what we expect, desire, or think is best. *Humility is about being sure of one thing: that the insider's view of the world is the most important part of data collection in any research situation.*

When those connected to early childhood development and care are able to listen with humility, they can be more willing to hear parents' voices and concerns and act upon them. In the particular case of immigrant parents globally, Vandenbroeck et al. (2009) detail a small-scale study of three immigrant mothers in Belgium who participated in interviews with the child care workers caring for their children. These interviews took places at various points along their child's first year in the early child care center. Instead of giving advice, the educators asked parents about how they cared for children at home so they could try and mirror their approaches at the center. The parents came to appreciate the various ways in which the educators heard their concerns and adapted practices to help them and their children. Neamat, from Lebanon, appreciated that the center taught her child to eat fruit which was new to all of them as a family. And she was happy that the workers lulled her child to sleep in their arms when they learned this was how she did it at home. Marie from Congo was grateful when workers spoke French with her son to help him understand something or comfort him. Fatmata from Sierra Leone carried her son on her back and worried that sharing this information with the educators would be judged or even prosecuted. She also worried about when her child was eating. The educators listened to the concerns she had about her son's eating and sleeping. Through the interviews with the educators, Fatmata could see the school responding and adapting to her concerns:

> Fatmata was pleased with how the day care centre adopted her eating hours, since she was quite worried about her son's eating habits. To her satisfaction, she also experienced that the staff took her son on their back to put him asleep, similar to her approach. This was unexpected for her and changed her perspective, as she was convinced that Belgians judged that taking a child on your back is bad practice. She told the interviewer that a friend told her that the police could pick you up if you did so. (2009, p. 207)

What it took for Fatmata, Neamat, and Marie to feel comfortable with those caring for their children seems relatively small. Yet for many parents in vulnerable positions in connection to global migration and other difficult life circumstances, having core concerns heard and addressed can be welcoming mechanisms or even a sign that their new society is willing to be pluralistic.

Reorienting Toward Humility

Even though global discourses position parents and families as children's first teachers, their ideas, logic, and modes of survival are sometimes ignored. I believe this is because we (researchers) and it (research) are not humble enough to see the child from their parents' perspectives in any kind of authentic, generous, or admiring way. As a white woman researcher, my primary mechanisms for working through this tendency have been to use critical theories and video-cued ethnography (VCE).

Paulo Freire, whose work helped me in the crèche classroom that day in India, was a liberationist educator from Brazil who wrote a number of key texts criticizing factory education models that center on the idea that schooling offers what students, families, and communities lack. From this view, Freire argued, students, families, and communities know nothing and so need the counsel, wisdom, and knowledge of institutions. But Freire (1978, 2001) critiqued the assumption that families and communities have little to no knowledge (2001). He argued that if institutions are responsible for creating the inequitable circumstances of peoples' lives, they cannot possibly know (or be motivated to offer) what people need to overcome those circumstances that keep them from the meaningful life they want. Only people know what they need and what will help them work through and against systems to transform them into more equitable and meaningful schooling spaces, not the institutions, systems, and organizations that continue to oppress (and arranged the inequity in the first place).

Too often, families and communities become unknowing subjects positioned as lacking what is needed for success. The assumption is, of course, that if the person or family or community changed enough or adopted new ways of thinking and behaving, they would be successful. Charles Mills, a black liberationist philosopher, argues that this push to make people change in order to secure the rights and privileges that others enjoy is really just a mechanism to maintain a line between oppressed and privileged (Freire, 1978), between successful and failing (McDermott & Varenne, 1995), or between, as Mills wrote, "personhood and subpersonhood" (Mills, 1997, p. 16). When intervention programs begin with the idea that parents,

families or even children lack something, they are only justifying the idea that people need to become more like someone else (usually someone from the more dominant or powerful group who has rights and privileges) to exist and live with those same rights and privileges. Mills (1997) argued that any system built on certain people needing to change to be heard, treated with respect, or be successful in society will never work because the requirements of what needs to be improved keep changing. Shifting requirements make it impossible for communities without historical reserves of power to ever achieve the required changes and be seen as "successful." Instead, they are always already lacking the knowledge and skills required to be successful (see also Adair, Colegrove, & McManus, 2017a; Leonardo, 2013). If communities without power do change, those in power simply shift the requirements of success.

Although those who do home visits or seek funding for vocabulary interventions would mostly likely not see themselves as oppressive, they might admit to feeling helpful by finding deficits in parents and communities and trying to bring them knowledge that would address those deficits. This emphasis on bringing people what they lack instead of listening to knowledge and learning to apply resources to peoples' stated desires, goals, and ideas for their own betterment is a continued tension in the world of assessment, programming, and intervention.

In addition to critical theories that position marginalized families and communities as inherently knowledgeable about what would and could make their lives more equitable and successful in inequitable systems, video-cued ethnography provides a methodological prompt to listen and take seriously the ideas of the people with whom we work.

Video-Cued Ethnography

Video-cued ethnography is a method developed by Joseph Tobin as he worked to design a way to understand the cultural nature of school practices. When his oldest child was young, their family lived in Japan. Tobin was surprised by many of the practices he observed in preschools there, particularly that teachers did not try and stop children from fighting with one another. With ethnographic curiosity, he filmed scenes of this fighting along with many other typical scenes in the preschool and asked the teachers at the school to explain to him what the practices meant and why they make sense for young children in their school. He did not understand the insiders' logic and so the films were meant to prompt the Japanese teachers to explain their world to him (see Tobin, 1999).

In the VCE method, power is distributed through a carefully crafted research design where the participants are positioned as experts of their practices (Tobin, Arzubiaga & Mantovani, 2007). VCE typically works by choosing and then filming in a site that will prompt discussion about the research topic. Then the film is edited with the help of the participants in the film along with their families and communities. Next the film is taken to sites all over the state, country or internationally and

shown to groups of concern in the study. Participants watch and respond to the film and engage with researchers in a discussion about the particular issues of education brought out in the film. Transcripts of focus groups are then compared across participant groups and geographies to locate patterns as well as cultural variation.

Unlike conventional methods where the researcher designs the study and later on involves the participants, the VCE method starts with negotiating the research design with the participants from the very beginning with the content of the video and continuing until the very end when the film is published for a larger audience. The VCE method has helped me to better understand immigrant family and community experiences across nations. VCE provides an accessible way to include and welcome voices of marginalized groups such as immigrant parents (Tobin, Arzubiaga & Mantovanni, 2007) and immigrant teachers (Adair, 2014) and young children (Kurban & Tobin, 2009) by carefully listening to what they say and inviting them in the analytic process of their utterances. This process has proved to be humbling in many ways as I have worked with immigrant parents in different parts of the world.

Recently, however, because of findings from VCE studies, I have seen how the idea of humility is not just about treatment, approach, and interactions. Humility also includes the ways in which we as professionals and a greater public speak about parents, create policy that impacts parents, and cite research that references or objectifies parents.

The last example of why humility is important (and the lack of humility damaging) for us as professionals in our work with parents begins with parents in the United States (Texas) and extends to Central Australia, where I learned that deficit-oriented ways of referring to particular families and communities, made popular through the "word gap" argument, had made its way into a small Aboriginal community via developmental psychology researchers presenting to Aboriginal educators.

Global Deficit Discourses: The "Word Gap" Example

As part of the *Agency and Young Children Study* (Adair, 2014), a group of researchers and I spent 1 year in a first-grade classroom serving mostly children of Mexican immigrants. In this classroom, children could be agentic in their learning—they used their initiative to follow their interests, choose topics, collaborated with whom they wanted, and decided where in the room they wanted to be. We filmed a typical day in this classroom capturing children being agentic throughout a normal day. Then we showed the film to schools and districts throughout Texas. We asked superintendents, principals, district officials, preK-third grade teachers, parents, and first-grade students what they thought of the classroom we filmed and, especially, to point out what types of influence and decision-making were good for children in the early years of schooling. Out of 41 teachers and administrators in our study, 37 said that the practices including making decisions, showing initiative, helping each

other, reading together, choosing partners, discussing and sharing personal stories, and creating projects were positive for young children (see Adair, Colegrove, & McManus, 2017a for detailed method and findings). The teachers and administrators we interviewed pointed out many examples of children being agentic in the filmed classroom.

The teachers and administrators we interviewed (with three exceptions) also said that the practices would not work for the students at their school. The reason used most often across cities, district and schools for why the practices worked for the children in the film but would not work for those at their schools was vocabulary. They told us that the children at their schools did not have enough vocabulary and so were not ready for the practices in the film. It did not matter if the school was ranked highly by the state or whether they were struggling in terms of standardized test scores. Children's lack of vocabulary was the reason that the sophisticated practices in the film were not going to work in their schools. And the lack of vocabulary was blamed on what parents lacked or, in other words, Latinx immigrant parents' deficits. Teachers would explain the problem in ways such as, "They haven't had the vocabulary with mom and dad. Maybe they're migrant workers and they don't have the time to sit down" (Adair, Colegrove, & McManus, 2017a, p. 319). The lack of vocabulary was linked often to parents' lack of education or lack of time or lack of knowledge.

At the same time, the teachers and administrators made the opposite assumptions about the children in the film. When they spoke about the children in the film, they said that they could handle or were ready for agentic practices because of their vocabulary. They assumed that the children in the film had much more vocabulary than the children at their own schools. And they said they had helpful families who could give support. After watching the film and telling us that the practices would not work at their school even though they seemed to work for the children in the film, one administrator explained:

> That makes me think, just looking at the class even closer, that some of their vocabulary was a little bit higher. So that told me that some of the kids there have had some more support at home. Maybe some more education.

Children of Latinx immigrants at their own schools and districts were seen as not being ready for project learning and other sophisticated learning experiences because of vocabulary. And this lack of vocabulary was blamed on deficits of their immigrant parents.

When children in the film were shown successfully engaging in sophisticated learning experiences in the film, the teachers assumed that the children had higher vocabulary and therefore more educated, caring, and better equipped parents. Our study demonstrated that these assumptions were simply untrue; the demographics of the schools where we conducted focus groups were the same in the filmed school in terms of immigrant groups and economic struggle. Still, the teachers and administrators made assumptions that seemed to echo a Hart and Risley (1995) study of racially and economically segregated groups of participants that found a "30 million word gap" when comparing the vocabularies of poor Black children to those of

upper-class White children. The study itself connected families and vocabulary in ways that justify thinking that vocabulary could be the answer for achievement, IQ, and other kinds of gaps and that vocabulary needs to be fixed by fixing the parent (see Avineri et al., 2015; Baugh, 2016; González, 2016; Johnson & Zentella, 2017 for strong critiques in regard to thinking about families and communities and Michaels, 2013, for a methodological critique of the Hart and Risley study).

The study and prolific ideas about language and vocabulary that many have used building on the Hart and Risley (1995) study justified the idea that children of color will most likely not have the right vocabulary and White children will. We found this assumption operating in every school and district we visited. A perceived or actual lack of vocabulary almost always accompanied a deficit view of parents and a need to fix them. While our study was concerned with how to offer more children sophisticated learning experiences that are culturally sustaining and supportive, we became distressed about the ways in which the word gap argument invited and supported deficit-oriented thinking about parents and families of color, in our case Latinx immigrants.

In the middle of writing about this finding, I was working with a co-researcher—Louise Phillips—on another study of children's agency, this time looking at young children's civic capabilities in preschool contexts (see Adair, Phillips, Richie & Sachdeva, 2017b). Phillips was working with the Buranba child care center located in an Aboriginal Australian community formed a century ago through the government's horrific forced relocation of 35 tribes as well as the detrimental removal of children from their families. Buranba is the only current child care center to be governed by an Aboriginal council rather than the Australian government. She invited me to visit the center twice over the course of 6 months. On my second visit (during a walk to visit the elementary school that sat across from the early childhood center with Phillips), Karryn, an Aboriginal educator and researcher, and Bena, a community elder and advisory board member overseeing the center, both told us about a training the educators had attended the week before. The training had troubled them all. It had been offered by the Australian government because they were trying to introduce a specific parent education curriculum (from the United States) to Australian early childhood centers. The goal, according to the presenters, was to position parents as the child's first teacher. The presenters showed a graph of how children of wealthy parents hear thousands of more words than those born to poor parents. Hurt and angry, they confronted the presenters and told them that the slide offended them because it implied that they were not good parents if they were poor and could not give their children what educated parents could offer. Because I was writing about the word gap argument, I could not believe that it was being used all the way over in Australia. Bena had found the same disheartening result of the word gap argument—deficit views of parents—that we had been finding in our work.

A few minutes later in the staff room back at the early childhood center, I asked Kerryn who was speaking with one of the center teachers about the presentation that had angered their educational community. She explained that the presenters acted like it was a new idea to Aboriginal people that parents are children's first teachers. This demonstrated no knowledge or respect for Aboriginal knowledges and history.

They had always taken great care of children and others' children in tragedy. In addition to insinuating that Aboriginal parents were not seeing themselves as children's first teachers, the researchers presented data that showed poor parents were not as good as rich parents. When I asked what was most problematic about the researchers' presentation, Kerryn told me:

> White folk coming in to tell us that parents are the first teachers. We already have these stories and knowledge. . . They are saying 'you are your family's first teacher.' [We] don't need them to tell us that.

The problematic nature of positioning parents as needing fixing is perhaps the most compelling case for humility, particularly for any programs, group, or individual who is trying to serve or benefit families and communities. Any program that begins with the desire to fix rather than listen to the expertise of families is, at its core, insulting.

Concluding Thoughts

It is almost impossible to hide deficit thinking from programs, presentations, interventions, research studies, and approaches aimed at fixing families. Any program that begins with a deficit of respect, knowledge, and input from parents and communities is doomed to fail because inequities are not going to be eradicated? by fixing parents or communities. Inequities are rooted in discriminatory, historical, systemic policies, and practices that blame parents and communities for their unsuccessful responses to unjust systems. It is often important, critical even, to offer interventions to families and communities. Yet they should be done in consultation with how they see their needs, with at least the consideration of the parents' lives and perspectives.

Approaching parents as needing to be fixed in the way the oppressive agent would like is counter-productive to the families and communities who are working toward equitable treatment and opportunities. If we think that because we are a researcher, practitioner, teacher, administrator, public health advocate, psychologist, graduate assistant, policy-maker, counselor, in-home visitor we know what is best, then we are most likely disconnected from the people with whom we are working. This is because humility involves the ability to listen and take seriously the ideas and logic of others. When we think we know better and that it is others who must be fixed, we cannot hear them. Freire's (2001) advice is to recognize the limitations of positioning children, families, and communities as subjects to be fixed or taught rather than people from and with whom to learn. He instructs:

> To accept and respect what is different is one of those virtues without which listening cannot take place. If I am prejudiced against a child who is poor, or black or Indian, or rich, or against a woman who is a peasant or from the working class, it is obvious that I cannot listen to them and I cannot speak *with* them, only *to* or *at* them, from the top down. Even more than that, I forbid myself from understanding them. If I consider myself superior to what is different, no matter what it is, I am refusing to listen. (2001, p. 108)

The goal of humility is to consider and learn the other, so that whatever you are doing can help people work toward the life and equity that is meaningful to them. Learning to listen and understand is an important part of humility. Humility in our work cannot be accomplished by insisting that work fixes families and communities. Humility requires asking families about their needs and perspectives as well as connecting local issues to larger systemic factors. Humility requires that we use theories that respect families and communities and that we employ methodological approaches that take seriously the ideas of parents. Cultivating humility can offer researchers a way to stop fixing and start listening.

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Literacy Interventions that Promote Home-to-School Links for Ethnoculturally Diverse Families of Young Children

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From the moment children come into the world, they begin to participate in everyday activities that play a critical role in shaping their development. Families decide on the types of activities appropriate for children, the frequency of these activities, who should be involved in the activities, the roles assumed by each participant, as well as the language and the behaviors expected of participants (Tudge, 2008). These decisions, and in particular expectations about the child's role, are guided by a number of proximal and distal factors to the family, including its composition, material and economic resources, time distribution in the home, as well as various characteristics of the immediate and larger community, such as access to playgrounds and the safety of the neighborhood. Equally critical, however, are the values and beliefs of parents and the community, especially those related to children, such as how to expend material resources, specific ideas about optimal child behavior and development, the best way to parent, and the status of children in the family and community, among others (Rogoff, 2003). As children take part in these everyday activities, they develop the cognitive, language, and socio-emotional skills, as well as the social knowledge and competence requisite to become full-fledged members of their community. Through this process they also acquire a cultural toolkit (Swidler, 1986, 2001) that can be drawn upon selectively as they take action and make meaning in their everyday lives. This toolkit of cultural resources expands as children grow, develop, and are exposed to different ways of being, doing, thinking, acting, and learning.

The approach adopted in this chapter rests on this view of development. We believe that all human practice is cultural in nature. We do not espouse a deterministic, static, or essentialized view of culture; instead, we believe that individuals engage in multiple communities of practice, that culture is embedded in these

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practices, and that culture is dynamic, shifting over time in response to changing conditions (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Swidler, 2001). We argue that relying upon existing cultural resources can foster children's early educational success not only through the acquisition of new knowledge and skills but also by forging positive and productive home-school connections.

Home-School Connections

Research, theory, and practice related to home-school connections are often grounded in Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory, which posits that children's experiences with parents and teachers at home and at school (i.e., microsystem-level effects), as well as the interactions between these two contexts (i.e., mesosystem-level effects), are critical in informing children's development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Although the construct has been operationalized and used in a variety of ways, at its core, home-school connections imply bidirectional interactions between teachers and families, whereby parents and teachers work together to support children's development and learning (Cox, 2005; Kim & Sheridan, 2015). These connections can occur at the individual level (i.e., parent-teacher conferences) or at the institutional level (i.e., school-wide events for families; Epstein, 1995). In fact, the more interactions there are between schools and the children's families and communities, the more opportunities there are for children to receive consistent messages about education and schooling (Epstein, 1995). Positive and effective home-school connections have direct effects on supporting children's academic and nonacademic (e.g., social-emotional) outcomes (Cox, 2005; Epstein, 2001). At the same time, they scaffold school success indirectly, by leading to increased parent engagement (Halgunseth, 2009), often through supporting greater feelings of teacher and parent self-efficacy (Hoover-Dempsey, 2011).

In addition to encouraging multiple pathways for communication between families and teachers, interventions that seek to bolster home-school connections often focus on ensuring consistency (i.e., "common, parallel activities…across settings") or continuity (i.e., "coordinated and planned interactions to encourage stimulation or provide support") between home and school practices (Kim & Sheridan, 2015, p. 6). Consistency and continuity can be seen across language and interaction styles, as well as behavioral expectations and discipline styles (Barbarin, Downer, Odom, & Head, 2010). Indeed, there is a wealth of literature geared toward policymakers and practitioners alike suggesting that both consistency and continuity are vital for children's achievement (e.g., Barbarin et al., 2010; Crosnoe, 2015; Crosnoe et al., 2010; Kim & Sheridan, 2015). Particularly during the early childhood years, continuity is seen as a critical factor in predicting the extent to which parents feel like collaborating with their children's teachers, as well as the extent to which children acclimate to the school environment and, ultimately, to their overall educational success (Barbarin et al., 2010). As a result, there have been countless interventions

that have sought to support home-school communication by emphasizing, explicitly or implicitly, the importance of continuity.

Nevertheless, some degree of discontinuity is to be expected, given the innate differences between the home setting (where children are used to being a key focal point of their parents' attention) and the school setting (where children often vie for their teachers' attention). Moreover, a mismatch between home and school practices might actually be advantageous for children (see, e.g., Doucet, 2011; Schick, 2014). Not only might discontinuity serve as a protective factor, such that a given practice in one setting (i.e., the home or school) might serve to compensate for a lack of exposure to said practice in the other setting (Barbarin et al., 2010), it also can expose children to a breadth of learning styles and expectations (see Hemphill & Snow, 1996). However, few research studies have examined these discontinuities as potential sources of protection or investigated what forms of discontinuities might be beneficial, as well as for whom and under what circumstances (but see Schick, 2014). The focus of most research continues to be on home-school continuity and views discontinuity as a potential source for discord between families and teachers and a risk for child outcomes (Heath, 1983/1991). Notably, educational practices in the United States have historically been grounded on European-American[1] mainstream values, beliefs, and practices (Rogoff, Tukanis, & Bartlett, 2001), and about 80% of teachers in the United States are White (NCES, 2017a). Thus, children from ethnoculturally diverse backgrounds are more likely to experience discontinuities between practices and skills supported in the home and those expected by the school. As a result, the bulk of intervention efforts attempt to align the practices and parental behaviors of ethnoculturally diverse families to those expected by the school (and, by extension, to those culturally rooted in White middle-class practices), oftentimes overlooking or disregarding existing practices in the home.

Yet, as of the 2015 school year, slightly more than half of all children enrolled in US public schools were from ethnoculturally diverse families, and that percentage is expected to continue to rise over time (NCES, 2017b). Efforts to understand the disparity in educational outcomes between majority White and ethnoculturally diverse children, especially during the early childhood years, have identified numerous contributing factors, including families' educational expectations and practices, as well as the alignment between home values and activities and those espoused by the school system. As such, recent policies and intervention efforts have focused on supporting children's school success by strengthening the connection between the home and school (for a comprehensive review, see Sheridan & Kim, 2015). Although Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory posits the influential role of the larger cultural context—the macrosystem—in both the micro- and the mesosystems, discontinuities between school and home practices for ethnoculturally diverse families, and in particular for those from lower income communities, are often, and sometimes unintentionally, seen from a deficit perspective. In other words, there remains an implicit yet pervasive view that parents' practices and beliefs are less

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[1] In this chapter, we use the term mainstream European-American and White interchangeably to refer to the dominant ethnocultural group in the United States.

valuable than those of the larger dominant culture and, by extension, those of the school. This devaluing of home-based practices does not create a solid base on which to build strong and productive home–school relations.

Throughout this chapter, we argue that successful home-school connections must take a culturally grounded, bidirectional approach. That is, interventions should identify and target points of leverage, utilizing existing cultural practices as strengths to establish connections between home and school. In addition, interventions should not only focus on families but also must target schools by bringing culturally salient practices into the classroom settings. While the main ideas discussed in this chapter are applicable to children from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, we have chosen to focus on preschool-aged Latino children and their families living in the United States, as Latino children not only constitute a sizable portion of our nation's future but they also experience the greatest economic and educational disparities (Padilla, Cabrera, & West, 2017; Wildsmith, Alvira-Hammond, & Guzmán, 2016). We use the term *Latino* in its broadest and most inclusive sense to refer to individuals who have cultural roots in a Spanish-speaking country in the Americas or the Caribbean. Thus, in this chapter, Latino immigrants are defined as immigrants to the United States from a Spanish-speaking country in the Americas or the Caribbean, as well as their US-born children. As a cultural group, US Latinos represent diverse racial, ethnic, national, linguistic, and immigration backgrounds, as well as socioeconomic status. Despite this heterogeneity, however, US Latinos do share a core set of cultural, linguistic, and social values, as well as shared experiences of oppression and inequity that structure and define their everyday lives (Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2009; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2009). This chapter focuses on those shared experiences.

Home-School Connections for Latino Children

Latino children constitute about 20% of all US children and 25% of US children under the age of five, the overwhelming majority of whom were born in the United States. Although they live in families who represent 19 different Spanish-speaking countries, about 66% are born into families of Mexican descent (Murphey, Guzman, & Torres, 2014). About half of US Latino children live in an immigrant household where English is a second language, and around 20% of them live in "linguistically isolated homes"—that is, a household in which *all* members who are 14 years old or older have some difficulty with English (Wildsmith et al., 2016). Although Latino children come from families representing all socioeconomic strata, a large percentage of Latino children live in families who experience economic hardship. Statistics show that about 35% of US Latino children live near poverty, about 13% live in poverty, and about 12% live in deep poverty (i.e., family income is less than half the poverty line; Wildsmith et al., 2016). Moreover, about 38% of Latino children in the United States have mothers with less than a high school education. The combination of these general living conditions places Latino children among those US-born

children who currently face the greatest need, and are also most vulnerable to experience developmental and educational difficulties. For Latino children and their families, and in particular for those who are recent immigrants and who live in low-income communities, this vulnerability is exacerbated by the home-school discontinuities that arise from cultural differences in both expectations and best practices.

Despite the diversity that exists within and across Latino groups in the United States, Latinos share key cultural values and socialization goals that both shape and are reflected in the everyday practices of their households, especially for those that include children (Rogoff, 2003; Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2009; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2009). Some of these shared cultural experiences include, for example, the centrality afforded to the family, the hierarchical structure of the family, the participation of family members in organized Catholicism, as well as the kinship patterns among nonrelatives (*compadrazgo* y *comadrazgo*—godparenthood; Bridges et al., 2012; Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995; Suárez-Orozco & Páez, 2009; Valdés, 1996). These shared cultural experiences shape parenting practices that largely emphasize an increased awareness of the other by demonstrating *respeto* (i.e., respect) and affection, as well as behaving flexibly according to the social demands of situations (Fischer, Harvey, & Driscoll, 2009; Valdés, 1996). Latino children, therefore, are socialized to be *bien educados* (i.e., to know how to adjust their behavior depending on the context), to be *cariñosos* (i.e., emotionally warm)*,* and to respect and obey family members and individuals of higher status as marked, for instance, by age (i.e., elders) or profession (i.e., teachers). Latino families' caregiving practices, thus, prioritize supporting children's relational and emotional skills by encouraging them to think of themselves as part of a larger group, and to make decisions about their behaviors and actions in relation to others (Durand, 2011). This emphasis is very different from that of the larger US culture that encourages children's independence and prioritizes parents supporting children's pre-academic skills, such as numeracy, language, and early literacy (Fischer et al., 2009).

Unsurprisingly then, in large-scale comparative studies with other major US ethnic/cultural groups, Latino children, on average and across ages, demonstrate well-developed social-emotional abilities, including prosocial and self-regulation skills (Padilla et al., 2017). At a young age, Latino children readily recognize authority and behave accordingly, and are able to regulate their emotions and behaviors successfully according to the social demands of the immediate context (Fischer et al., 2009; Li-Grining, 2012). However, they show less developed cognitive, expressive language, word recognition, and preliteracy skills (Padilla et al., 2017); Fuller et al., 2009. Although the gap in these academic domains closes from school entry through second grade, national statistics show that Latino children, as compared to children from other ethnocultural groups, continue to lag behind in reading, math, and science throughout the school years (Reardon & Galindo, 2009; Schneider, Martinez, & Owens, 2006).

Policymakers and researchers have attempted to address this persistent academic gap through various efforts. However, the great majority of these efforts, or at least

those receiving the most attention, have problematized Latino families' practices, rather than acknowledged and addressed the cultural discontinuity between home and school. In other words, rather than examine and reconsider how schools are not meeting Latino children's needs, and suggest culturally relevant ways to prepare teachers to do so, the emphasis has been largely on identifying the factors that explain differences by focusing on the skills that Latino children lack. This work has identified economic factors, lower-educational attainment of primary caregivers, and lower incidence of mainstream parent-child activities as partly responsible for the academic gaps (Fuller et al., 2009; Padilla et al., 2017), with the great majority of studies focusing on language and literacy outcomes. Large-scale national studies, for example, show that Latino families are less likely than families from other ethnocultural groups to engage in home literacy activities with their young children (e.g., National Research Council, 1998; Padilla et al., 2017). Explanations for the lower incidence of home literacy routines have mostly pointed to neighborhood characteristics, financial resources, and language issues, most notably lack of English skills. For instance, Spanish-speaking Latino immigrant communities are often located in urban centers with high levels of poverty and limited resources. Thus, families from these communities are less likely to have access to bookstores and libraries (Reese & Goldenberg, 2008), and, by extension, to printed materials, in particular children's books in Spanish (Schick & Melzi, 2016).

However, the more limited engagement in home literacy activities that is characteristic of US Latino families is not solely a function of print access. As discussed previously, Latino families have different expectations and values surrounding their preschoolers' education, as compared to mainstream European-American families. Latino families, especially recent immigrants to the United States, believe that literacy is a skill that should be taught at school and that it is learned through formal instruction and rote practice (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Thus, emergent literacy behaviors, such as noticing letters and print, pretend reading, and scribbling, are not regarded as occasions for learning and are not consistently emphasized by Latino parents prior to children entering school (Goldenberg, Gallimore, & Reese, 2005).

For similar reasons, reading with young children, a quintessential adult-child practice in the dominant US culture starting at birth, is not deemed as particularly necessary in some Latino communities. Unsurprisingly then, Latino children between the ages of 0 and 5 are read to less often than are children from dominant US ethnocultural groups (Padilla et al., 2017). In line with the emphasis placed on children's socio-emotional development, when children are read to, the purpose is to teach life lessons and to encourage closeness between parent and child (e.g., Schieffelin & Eisenberg, 1984; Zentella, 1997), rather than to support children's language and literacy development. Moreover, as compared to mainstream US American mothers who tend to engage in back-and-forth exchanges with their children as they read, Latino mothers from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds prefer to approach reading as a sole narrator who tells an engaging story and encourages the child to listen actively rather than contribute to the creation of the story (Caspe, 2009; Melzi & Caspe, 2005; Melzi, Schick, & Kennedy, 2011).

Given these differences in literacy-related practices, numerous intervention efforts have focused on strengthening home-school connections by training low-income Latino immigrant parents to adopt more culturally dominant (i.e., White European-American) models of literacy. One prime example is dialogic reading, a renowned reading intervention program for caregivers and children that is grounded in the back-and-forth exchanges that naturally occur in middle-class European-American US homes and that has been found to be effective in helping to build children's early literacy skills (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Dialogic reading teaches caregivers to elicit information from their children and to encourage their participation when sharing storybooks, an approach that is not salient among Latino caregivers, as previously noted. Although dialogic reading is linked to a wealth of positive outcomes when used by middle-class, European-American caregiver-child dyads, results of meta-analyses on the effectiveness of dialogic reading on children's literacy outcomes have shown that it might not be as beneficial when implemented with low-income families (e.g., Manz, Hughes, Barnabas, Bracaliello, & Ginsburg-Block, 2010; Mol, Bus, de Jong, & Smeets, 2008). Moreover, results of a recent intervention study showed that training low-income caregivers to engage in dialogic reading does not lead to an increase in children's narrative skills or expressive language skills. Instead, results of the intervention suggested that the quality of the narratives shared by children whose mothers were in a dialogic reading training actually decreased over time (Reese, Leyva, Sparks, & Grölnick, 2010).

These findings are best understood in light of research that has shown that interventions that attempt to change parental practices do not produce the desired outcomes because they often fail to acknowledge that parental behaviors and practices are but one thread of the larger tapestry of practices that are imbued with local childrearing goals and that reflect deep-seated parenting values and beliefs. In addition, programs that disregard the applicability of the intervention to the cultural reality of the families served often fail to recruit and retain families (Kumpfer, Alvarado, Smith, & Bellamy, 2002). For example, in an initial attempt at a parent-child literacy intervention with Pan-Latino families, Janes and Kermani (2001) reported a dropout rate of 70%. Moreover, of the families who remained in the program, only 30% demonstrated knowledge of the strategies taught. Instead, most caregivers viewed picture book reading as *un castigo* (i.e., a punishment), and this was reflected in the ways in which they engaged with their children and the storybooks. For example, during book sharing interactions, the caregivers and children lacked physical contact and positive affect (e.g., smiling), caregivers used minimal intonation, and children rarely responded to or initiated topics. Perhaps most reflective of the lack of enjoyment was that caregivers often expressed relief when the task was complete. The book sharing, thus, lacked the dynamic, interactive styles that past research has posited are essential for transmitting literacy knowledge (e.g., Bus, 2001).

Notably, book- and reading-based intervention programs that are introduced by individuals who have earned, by virtue of their occupation, caregivers' respect and trust have been met with less resistance. For example, parents naturally change their reading practices in response to encouragement from their children's teachers and

pediatricians (Golova, Alario, Vivier, Rodríguez, & High, 1999; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Perhaps the most successful program of its kind, *Reach out and Read* (ROR) is an initiative throughout the United States which seeks to increase the frequency of parent-child book sharing by having pediatricians distribute developmentally appropriate books to children at their well check-ups and encouraging parents to read to their children. Research has shown that caregivers view *Reach out and Read* positively, and that it has supported successfully the early literacy skills of children from low-income families, including Latino children, most notably by increasing vocabulary, as well as print and phonemic awareness skills (Diener, Hobson-Rohrer, & Byington, 2012; Mendelsohn et al., 2001; Sharif, Rieber, Ozuah, & Reiber, 2002).

To date, however, most interventions seeking to support home-school connections for Latino children have attempted to do so by changing caregivers' behaviors and activities to match school expectations. While these efforts are well-intentioned, there is an underlying deficit perspective with regard to best practices. In other words, the implicit message being shared with teachers and caregivers is that low-income Latino families need help in supporting their children better because they do not know how to do so, and are therefore, putting their children at risk. This approach is problematic for two main reasons: First, as researchers and educators, we have an ethical obligation to ensure that children have the opportunity to maintain and develop their cultural roots. In fact, ethnoculturally diverse children who develop strong and secure ethnic identities have better developmental and educational outcomes (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). Second, implementing programs without local adaptations will likely fail to ensure parent participation and/or fail to produce the desired outcomes. Thus, rather than simply seeking to change family practices, it is imperative that educators learn about the expectations and practices prevalent in the children's homes, and that they make explicit efforts to strengthen home-school connections in meaningful and authentic ways by building on these practices, instead of replacing them (Fantuzzo, McWayne, & Childs, 2006).

Thus, educators of young Latino children should be familiarized with research that documents that, though their practices differ from those of White European-American middle-class families, Latino families do engage in home literacy activities (e.g., Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Reese & Goldenberg, 2008). For instance, while Latino families might have fewer books at home, it does not mean that preschool-aged children are not exposed to any print. In fact, Latino caregivers frequently expose their preschoolers to environmental print for functional purposes, pointing out letters and words on food labels at the supermarket, and on signs while riding on public transportation or walking down the street as a way to entertain children. They also encourage children to "write" their names or "read" to themselves or with their older siblings (Schick & Melzi, 2016; Wasik & Hindman, 2010).

Perhaps most notably, although books might not be commonly shared between Latino caregiver-child dyads, sharing oral stories is a frequent pastime in Latino homes (Billings, 2009). This practice is of significance, as research has shown that oral stories shared during the preschool years are predictive of children's school readiness development, including oral language and early literacy skills (Reese, 1995), cognitive skills (Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006), as well as social-emotional

skills (Curenton & Craig, 2011). Among the forms of oral narratives shared in Latino families are family reminiscing (i.e., conversations about past experiences), traditional stories marked by *dichos* (i.e., popular sayings), as well as personal stories that include *consejos* (i.e., advice). Latino caregivers use family and personal stories, *dichos*, and *consejos* to transmit cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes from one generation to the next (Cortez, 2008; Delgado-Gaitán, 1994; Espinoza-Herald, 2007; Sánchez, 2009; Sánchez, Plata, Grosso, & Leird, 2010; Valdés, 1996). The sharing of these oral stories serves to help caregivers and children bond, but, at the same time, is used by caregivers to help children learn to think critically and make independent decisions (Delgado-Gaitán, 1994; Ortiz & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2005), both of which are integral to children's development and school success. Not surprisingly interventions that have sought to encourage Latino caregivers' oral storytelling through family reminiscing have been met with success (e.g., Reese et al., 2010). Overall, then, we argue that to support Latino children's academic success, policymakers, researchers, and educators should take a strengths-based approach by identifying existing home practices and building on these home practices.

Culturally Grounded Efforts to Build Home-School Continuity for Latino Children

To date, most culturally grounded intervention programs have targeted family practices and parent behaviors that support children's learning and development. While the focus of these interventions is on the family, the underlying idea of these interventions is to enhance what the family is doing by building on existing practices and drawing connections to the cultural resources of the family. There are also classroom-based interventions that help teachers build connections with children's home by bringing family practices and cultural resources from the home into the classroom. Below we review some of the successful interventions in both realms for which there is empirical evidence.

Family-based programs Recently, a small body of work has emerged that aims to build on the cultural resources that immigrant families possess, capitalizing on the everyday ways caregivers engage with their children and the values, traditions, and lessons embedded within these interactions. More specifically, recent intervention programs have targeted families by supplementing caregivers' usual practices through: (1) adapting book sharing materials to align with immigrant families' cultural values and traditions to promote engagement with materials and receptiveness to new literacy techniques, or (2) by integrating techniques into regularly occurring everyday family conversations outside of book sharing to support children's language and literacy development.

As noted above, low income, ethnoculturally diverse families have fewer print materials at home and more limited access to bookstores and libraries in their

communities (González & Uhing, 2008). Furthermore, despite the increasing number of children's books available in languages other than English, these books are often poorly translated versions of English texts that fail to reflect the values, relationships and traditions of other cultures. In fact, Latino parents have commented that reading to children from commercially available storybooks is uncomfortable, as they feel pressured to ensure their interpretation of the storybook's theme and message is accurate. As a result, they lack confidence in their ability to transmit literacy to their children (Janes & Kermani, 2001). Recognizing these challenges, intervention programs, three of which we describe below, have sought to create literacy materials that are more aligned with low-income, immigrant caregivers' preferences.

In response to the ineffectiveness of a traditional caregiver-child book reading intervention (i.e., by the high dropout rate and the lack of enjoyment experienced by parents), Janes and Kermani (2001) redesigned their program to match the literacy forms used by the families they served and the larger Latino culture, including, *fotonovelas* (comic books), traditional poems, songs, jokes, riddles and oral stories. Through collaborative workshops, families created storybooks inspired by culturally laden narratives, resulting in a series of books that was family-centered and focused on imparting lessons *para educar a los niños* (to educate/raise children), a theme that is prevalent in Latino parenting. Results showed that parents who shared the self-created storybooks not only reported enjoying reading with their children, but in comparison with parents from the original intervention, adopted an *afición* (characterized by performance) reading style. The *afición* style was demonstrated by verbal engagement (e.g., changing intonation), nonverbal engagement (e.g., smiles and winks), pride in text (e.g., reference to authorship and physical handling of book), and shared positive affect (e.g., playful teasing). The positive results of the program suggest that when training efforts take a strength-based approach, Latino parents will share books in an effective, engaging manner. This work also highlights the importance of using culturally relevant materials, as those that are not tailored to Latino values and traditions were ineffective resources for parents.

Using a similar approach, Hammer and Sawyer (2016) developed a program they called *Madres Educando a Sus Niños,* in which they trained parents to use interactive reading strategies with a book series developed specifically for the program. The book series, developed in partnership with caregivers from the community centers on the Álvarez family, who encounter various cultural values, traditions or events (e.g., visit to homeland to visit family, learn important lessons about respecting others) that are reflective of the culturally salient messages mothers from the community wished to impart to their children. The themes were aligned with typical narratives shared in Latino homes, including family reminiscing (i.e., conversations about past experiences), and *consejos* (i.e., advice) used to transmit cultural beliefs, values and attitudes (Cortez, 2008; Delgado-Gaitán, 1994; Espinoza-Herald, 2007; Sánchez et al., 2010). Using this book series as a basis for discussion, coaches taught mothers a reading strategy for each book in the series (e.g., modeling, vocabulary) and provided culturally appropriate activities they could do with their children (e.g., tell stories about their childhood or family related to the theme of book).

Results showed that, overall, mothers reported enjoying the program, specifically noting that they valued sharing aspects of their culture with their children. When compared to a control group, children whose mothers received training showed greater gains in lexical complexity and sentence length, showing that, through book sharing, caregivers were able to foster their children's development of essential school readiness skills through book sharing. Moreover, findings suggested that through the use of books and activities that embed culturally salient themes and messages, caregivers are able to connect to and engage with literacy practices and materials.

Finally, as part of a larger literacy initiative intended to help schools, teachers and parents foster children's emergent literacy skills, Rowe and Fain (2013) provided caregivers with culturally relevant dual-language books in both text and audio formats via the *Family Backpack Project*. This initiate drew on immigrant families' unique practices for engaging children with stories and texts through the use of conversations about family, community and cultural activities. Family backpacks included culturally sensitive books and a reader response journal. Additionally, to support caregivers who might lack the literacy skills necessary to read to their child, audio recordings (in the home language) and CD players were provided. Families were encouraged to read the books in their home language and construct a journal response to what they read. The instructions for these responses were left open-ended so that caregivers could discuss, interpret and reflect on the texts in a manner that allowed them to engage naturally with their child and the text. Survey results showed that families read the books multiple times throughout the week and were appreciative of the dual language books and recordings, noting that they made the texts more accessible. Moreover, analyses of response journals showed that caregivers and children engaged in discourse about the pictures, events, lessons and characters within the books, with the majority of conversations centering on retelling the stories and making personal and family connections to books shared. Families responded in a number of ways, some parents wrote or drew the response, some children were the sole authors, and for other families, a combination of caregivers (e.g., parents, siblings, grandparents) and target children participated in the response journals. These results are promising, once again demonstrating the importance of providing families with culturally relevant materials and activities.

Yet, book-based interactions are not the only context through which caregivers transmit essential language and literacy skills. During everyday family routines, young Latino children are often exposed to extended discourse, another important predictor of reading and overall school success. Caregivers have the opportunity to model and scaffold rich language exchanges during activities such as family reminiscing and mealtime conversations. Recently, intervention programs have begun to capitalize on these everyday oral language practices of Latino families. Two such initiatives are described below.

Ceasar and Nelson (2014) integrated literacy practices into everyday family reminiscing activities by encouraging families to engage in further dialogue and reflection about past events and to practice emergent writing skills. The intervention, which they called *SALSA* (*Supporting Acquisition of Language and Literacy through*

Home-School Activities), used children's drawings as a mechanism for communication and interpretation. Families were given a bag to take home from their child's school that contained an interactive journal, as well as writing and coloring implements. Caregivers were encouraged to discuss family activities with their children and to draw pictures that represented the details of their conversations. When compared with a group that was given books about shapes and numbers, intervention group parents had more positive reactions about engaging with the program materials. Parents indicated that they enjoyed the program activities and that they particularly valued the extra time they spent speaking with their child. Furthermore, children in the intervention group showed significant gains in alphabetic principals, print concepts and general language skills, demonstrating the potential success of integrating school-based strategies with home practices in a culturally relevant manner.

Additionally, Leyva and Skorb (2017) capitalized on the importance of food in Latino homes through their intervention, *Food for Thought*. Food preparation activities are frequently viewed as a family activity, seen as opportunities to develop closeness and share important cultural values (Ochs & Shohet, 2006). Food-based interactions can serve not only to impart cultural teachings but also serve as a rich context for language and literacy development, as research demonstrates that families naturally use elaborative decontextualized talk and scaffold children's abilities more in contexts related to food than typical book-sharing activities (Snow & Beals, 2006). *Food for Thought* embedded language and literacy activities such as narratives, explanatory talk, writing, and phonics into activities such as grocery shopping, cooking, eating out, and planning a family celebration. During weekly meetings, parents were introduced to new strategies for fostering language and literacy (e.g., open ended questions, encouraging writing related to food activities, breaking words into sounds) that have been associated with positive academic outcomes for young children (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). In addition, they watched videos of other Latino parents implementing these strategies, and were given the opportunity to practice new strategies with their own children. Parents were also provided with take-home materials and homework to integrate literacy practices into their daily interactions (e.g., encourage children to dictate, draw and/or write a grocery list for the families' trip to the store). Results showed that parents successfully implemented these strategies and children whose parents attended more family meetings had larger gains in vocabulary skills. Parents also commented that the strategies were easy to implement and were reminiscent of *consejos*, making the program easy, doable, and enjoyable, as it was relevant to their own cultural practices. Promising parent and child outcomes in the early phases of this intervention suggest that mealtime interactions are a culturally relevant context to support Latino caregivers' development of strategies to foster children's emergent literacy skills.

These culturally grounded family-based intervention programs are a promising change from the typical implementation of one-size-fits-all programs that often lack authenticity and applicability for ethnoculturally diverse families. Integrating family's cultural beliefs into educational programming promotes children's positive academic outcomes (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 2005). In each of the

aforementioned book-reading programs, caregivers responded enthusiastically to the cultural relevance of the materials provided and enjoyed engaging with the books provided. Thus, findings suggest that choosing materials that represent families' values, beliefs, and traditions might serve as a way to bridge the disconnect that often occurs in book-based family literacy interventions, (see Reese & Gallimore, 2000; Reese & Goldenberg, 2008), which, in turn, supports children's academic success. Similarly, *SALSA* and *Food for Thought* highlight the importance of taking a strength-based approach by supporting family literacy practices that happen in the home. By embedding literacy into typical family routines, caregivers are able to support children's development though familiar cultural discourse practices.

Overall, results of these culturally grounded intervention efforts show that caregivers are more receptive, engaged, and supported when intervention programs demonstrate an appreciation for and inclusion of their culture and values. Moreover, children demonstrate positive gains in school readiness skills, not typically found in programs that take a more prescriptive approach. However, to strengthen home-school connections for children from ethnoculturally diverse families, efforts must go beyond focusing on parents' behaviors and practices and include adapting classroom practices. In other words, the knowledge, expertise, and traditions that children bring into the school must be incorporated into their everyday classroom learning experiences (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005).

Classroom-level interventions All children enter the classroom with a wealth of cultural resources intended to help them participate—and succeed—at school. Building on these sources of knowledge is critical for children's school success, but all too often educators are unaware of these resources, and sadly overlook opportunities to draw upon this foundational knowledge. Indeed, there is increasing empirical evidence showing that bringing children's home knowledge and experiences into the classroom is an effective way to encourage children's learning (Ríos-Aguilar, 2010; Rodríguez, 2013). Luis Moll and his colleagues (1992, 2005) were among the first to propose the use of this approach to inform classroom curricula through their *funds of knowledge* approach, which acknowledges that homes and communities have cultural and cognitive resources that can be used and exploited successfully for classroom instruction. For example, preschool teachers might have caregivers complete a form in which they note their home and their communities' practices, activities, and traditions, such as home language, parent knowledge and expertise, and preferred family outings and activities. Teachers can then use this knowledge to inform the activities they do in the classroom. By appreciating, understanding, and using the knowledge already available to students in both the home and the community, teachers can help establish meaningful and productive connections between this knowledge and the classroom curriculum (McWayne, Mistry, Brenneman, Zan, & Greenfield, 2018). In addition, incorporating funds of knowledge in an authentic way has the potential to disrupt the devaluing of home practices (González et al., 2005), as well as transform power dynamics between home and school communities (Ríos-Aguilar, Kiyama, Gravitt, & Moll, 2011; Rodríguez, 2013).

Although there is a growing acknowledgment of the importance of building curricula around ethnoculturally diverse children's funds of knowledge (see, e.g., Souto-Manning, 2013), few interventions to date have sought to implement and test this approach. Recently, however, a small body of work has emerged demonstrating success in supporting Latino children's academic success across a variety of developmental domains by bridging home and school practices in culturally grounded, meaningful ways. For example, to capitalize on the unique oral heritage of Latino families to support children's success in the classroom environment, early childhood and elementary school classroom curricula have been augmented to include oral storytelling and creative theater (Melzi, Schick, & Scarola, 2018; Souto-Manning, 2013), and curricula have been expanded to draw on family members' skill-sets and expertise, with family members then invited to the classroom to lead lessons and share their knowledge (e.g., Souto-Manning, 2013). Although educational literature is replete with suggestions and models for integrating culturally salient programs in schools to establish home-school continuity successfully and respectfully in the service of providing the best educational environment for children from ethnoculturally diverse families (Epstein, 1995), information on the effectiveness of these programs stems from anecdotal, descriptive data. While descriptive research is necessary and provides rich information about the programs, in order to exact large-scale change, evidence from randomized trials is needed to measure whether these classroom practices do, in fact, support Latino children's school success in meaningful ways. One new intervention program that has sought to fill this gap is *Reading Success Using Co-Constructive Elaborative Storytelling* (*R-SUCCESS;* Melzi et al., 2018).

R-SUCCESS is an intervention that we have been implementing in New York City preschools serving Latino children from low-income communities. R-SUCCESS is grounded on the evidence that shows that strong oral language skills enhance children's reading readiness, in particular unconstrained reading skills, those that cannot be directly taught, such as comprehension (Snow & Matthews, 2016). To support children's language skills, R-SUCCESS capitalizes on Latino families' oral practices by encouraging teachers to incorporate oral storytelling into their classroom routines. Teachers in R-SUCCESS classrooms can choose to make up a story, adapt a book as an oral story, or seek parents' assistance in selecting *dichos*, *consejos*, heritage stories, or legends on which to base the story to be shared. Each storytelling session is then divided into three main components: pre-telling, telling, and post-telling. During pre-telling, teachers are encouraged to set the stage for the story through co-construction. In other words, pre-telling activities are designed to provide teachers with an opportunity to build rapport and knowledge with the students, as well as to ensure child involvement during the telling. For example, after briefly introducing the story, teachers might elicit predictions about what will happen during the story, introduce and define key words, and/or familiarize the children with a phrase or *dicho* to be repeated during the telling. In the telling segment, teachers go beyond the here and now to create meaning solely through language and to do so in an engaging and elaborative manner that captures the children's interest. As they share the story with their class, teachers are encouraged to

move between the roles of sole narrator and co-narrator, thereby scaffolding children's active listening skills, in addition to their active participation. Finally, in post-telling, teachers support children's comprehension skills, through the use of open-ended recall questions. At the same time, teachers help the children distance themselves from the story, reflect upon what they have heard, and make connections to their own experiences. By removing the book as a focal point of the narrative interaction and encouraging teachers to rely solely on language to create meaning, R-SUCCESS supports children's oral and academic language skills. In other words, because R-SUCCESS involves the sharing of oral (rather than print-based) stories, children's understanding and story imagery rely solely on the language they hear.

A series of pilot studies exploring the effectiveness of R-SUCCESS in Head Start classrooms, when compared to classrooms trained in dialogic reading and business as usual classroom practices, has yielded promising findings. For example, after matching children in R-SUCCESS classrooms and dialogic reading class-rooms on a host of demographic variables and baseline skills, R-SUCCESS was found to be as effective as dialogic reading in supporting Latino preschoolers' expressive and academic (i.e., as measured by vocabulary diversity, conversational autonomy, and narrative macro- and microstructure) language, and was more effective in supporting children's receptive language skills and their overall ability to engage in storytelling successfully Moreover, R-SUCCESS children showed greater growth in social-emotional skills across the preschool year as compared to children in dialogic reading classrooms (Melzi, Schick, & Scarola, 2017). A second set of findings showed that when compared to their peers in business-as-usual classrooms, R-SUCCESS children were more successful at sharing narratives (both personal narratives and book sharing narratives) independently, and shared stories with greater coherence and more sophisticated language (Melzi & Schick & Scarola, 2016). Finally, a third study explored the effectiveness of R-SUCCESS in support-ing ethnoculturally diverse (56% Latino) preschoolers' academic language during a semi-structured play routine. Findings highlighted that, compared to dialogic read-ing, R-SUCCESS was more effective in supporting key indices of preschoolers' academic language, such as providing context, chronologically sequencing infor-mation, and using sophisticated language when sharing a prompted story about the character figures and toys the children were playing with (Schick, Wuest, Scarola, & Melzi, 2017). Taken together, these findings have important implications for poli-cymakers and educators, as the results suggest that training teachers to incorporate children's cultural funds of knowledge into their curriculum is an effective way to support seeking to support the school success of Latino children.

Conclusion

Extant research has documented the importance of home-school connections for children' learning, as well as for a successful transition into formal schooling (Crosnoe, 2015). The US educational system has relied on the home-school

connections common among middle-class, English-speaking European-Americans as a model for how families and schools should work together to support children's development and learning. As statistics show, children from ethnoculturally and linguistically diverse communities face disproportionate challenges upon school entry and throughout their academic trajectory. In the past, the families and communities themselves have been blamed for these difficulties, with the belief that, by virtue of their culture and socioeconomic circumstances, they failed to provide supports the children needed to succeed in schools. Historically, intervention efforts attempt to change current family practices to be more aligned with mainstream practices as a way to foster the skills children were "lacking." In doing so, these interventions are also stripping families of their cultural practices, and perhaps removing protective factors. These efforts have also perpetuated the deficit lens too often used in the fields of education and developmental psychology to understand the development and learning of children from ethnoculturally and linguistically diverse communities.

In this chapter, we focused on the home-school connections targeted to support Latino preschoolers' early literacy development, though we believe that these ideas are applicable to children from diverse ethnocultural and linguistic communities. We argued that, to be successful, home-school connections need to take a culturally grounded approach. In other words, efforts to bridge home and school must begin by identifying existing practices in children's homes and communities, and then use these practices as points of leverage to support children's learning. We presented five family-based interventions that relied on Latino families' cultural values and practices to support children's reading and writing. Two of these interventions created picture books in partnership with families to highlight socialization areas that parents considered important for their children, and three capitalized on the every-day experiences of and interactions between Latino parents and preschoolers as a way to support both early reading and writing. In all cases, parents reported enjoying their participation and demonstrated high levels of engagement, which in turn yielded positive child outcomes.

Nonetheless, as we argued throughout the chapter, we strongly believe that home-school connections must take a bidirectional approach, that is, they should focus not only on families but must also on schools by bringing culturally salient practices into the classroom setting. One effective way of doing so is by building on children's cultural funds of knowledge. We presented evidence from a recent intervention we have been implementing that supports children's early reading through incorporating cultural oral discourse practices into the classroom. Results show that capitalizing on families' funds of knowledge and practices strengthens home-school connections and supports children's early literacy. More efforts such as these family and classroom-based interventions are needed to change, once and for all, the lens through which we—both the larger society and the educational system—use to perceive and regard children from ethnoculturally and linguistically diverse communities. We must shift what we choose to emphasize; we must focus on what children bring from home and what they can do as the most important means to support them as they embark on a successful path toward learning.

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Volume 4 Commentary: Insights for Co-constructing Transformative Family-School Partnerships that Increase Cultural Responsiveness, Justice, and Care

Camille M. Wilson

Over the past few decades, dominant educational reform discourse and policies have fortified a culture of US public schooling steeped in academic achievement goals and "accountability" mandates that are too often exclusively linked to standardized test scores. The pressure for educators to groom their students to perform well on tests has come to heavily influence every aspect of education, from preschool curriculum to teacher education programs, school and district professional development agendas, and, most definitely, teacher and principal evaluation. Additionally, the nation's enduring emphasis on test score accountability has exacerbated the tendency of school administrators and teachers to encourage and implement school-centric approaches to family engagement or "parent involvement" (Cooper, Riehl, & Hasan, 2010; Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2009; Ishimaru, 2014). Educators, therefore, most commonly welcome families into schools to inform them of set curricular and assessment objectives with hopes that families will help insure their children meet such goals, and ultimately score well on tests. This dominant, top-down, parent involvement model falls short of fostering authentic and culturally responsive partnerships with families (Auerbach, 2011). Moreover, it particularly disadvantages children of color despite the fact that Latinx, African American, Asian American, and Native American students now comprise the majority of those served in US public schools (Maxwell, 2014).

In the opening chapter of this volume, coeditors Christine McWayne and Fabienne Doucet and their coauthor Jayanthi Mistry call upon readers to recognize the pervasive discontinuities between the structure, function, and culture of children's home and school lives while stressing how families are unsung assets to their children's educational progress. They urge educators to "flip the script" and embrace

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relational approaches to engaging families partly through initiating more respectful and dialogic communication, cultivating asset-based ideologies, and letting families have greater influence in developing educational partnership agendas. The editors, and other contributing authors, recognize schools as not only learning and achievement spaces, but also sites of culture, power, and socialization as they offer recommendations for developing improved family-school partnerships that are "culturally situated" and "culturally contextualized" (McWayne et al., 2019).

The volume's authors draw on an array of conceptual lenses (e.g., sociocultural, ecological, socioemotional, and critical) as they promote progressive partnership goals and strategies and frame the strengths and needs of ethnoculturally diverse students and families. The authors also address education holistically, paying attention to the institutional contexts of schooling and classroom-based practices, along with the politics, extracurricular programing, interventions, relationships, and historical legacies that help shape families' and students' broader educational experiences.

In the sections below, I reflect on the central question of this volume as stated in Chap. 1:

> How can family-school partnerships be most meaningful and effective, specifically, how can schools and teachers reconceive their role "with" families to support children's learning within diverse ethnocultural communities?

I first discuss key insights I gleaned from the various authors' answers to that question—identifying shared themes and some distinct contentions. I then pinpoint implications for enacting transformative family-school partnership practices. Along the way, I suggest how to conduct research on and with families to better understand the most equitable and effective ways of collaborating with them to support students' learning, development, and overall well-being.

The analysis I offer is informed by the volume's content along with my nearly 20 years of researching and collaborating with ethnoculturally diverse families, my social justice commitments, and my positionality as an African American mother of a Black, public school, male student. It is further influenced by the alarm and distress I feel about this current era of intense cultural and political polarization in the United States—polarization fueled by national leadership and oppressive policies that largely target people of color, immigrants, religious minorities, those who are disabled, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+), and/or those with low incomes. Such polarization threatens the physical and emotional safety of school communities by potentially alienating and harming already marginalized students and families (Minkle, 2018; Wallace & LaMotte, 2016). The ideas, partnership approaches, and research highlighted in this volume affirm the importance of boosting educational equity and inclusion and disrupting status quo partnership approaches in order to counter xenophobia, racism, and other oppressive dynamics. The authors call upon readers to invite in, and build upon, families' culturally diverse values, knowledge, goals, and sensibilities. As I suggest in the remaining sections, educational partners can do so by implementing a range of actions geared toward benefiting children of all backgrounds and by forging more caring and just school communities.

Action Areas for Reconceiving and Restructuring Family-School Partnerships

True educational partnerships are inclusive and democratic collaborations among educators, families, students, and often other community members who jointly contribute to enacting practices that nurture the learning, achievement, and overall educational well-being of students. For these collaborations to be most effective and supportive of students, they should be respectful of students and families, bring partners together as allies, encompass shared power and goals, and be democratic and socially just (Auerbach, 2011; Baquedano-Lopez, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013; Cooper, 2009; Cooper et al., 2010; Henderson et al., 2009). Yielding such results involves educators affirming ethnocultural diversity and including families in educational decision-making (Henderson et al., 2009). It also means being mindful of how federal, state, and district policy contexts, programs, and initiatives affect the power structures of schools and the relational dynamics among family-school partners.

In keeping with the volume's attention to diversity, the contributors highlight a variety of family-school partnership research and initiatives pertaining to an array of sociocultural contexts across early childhood and K-12 settings that are relevant to both US-born and immigrant families. The authors' assertions converge to reveal five core themes and areas of action needed for reconceiving and restructuring culturally responsive family-school partnerships in meaningful and effective ways. The themes relate to (1) rejecting deficit-based ideologies about students and families, (2) understanding schools as contested cultural sites, (3) unmasking schooling's racist and colonial legacies, (4) validating familial and communal knowledge via culturally relevant instruction, and (5) conducting innovative, collaborative, and critical family-centered research.

Rejecting Deficit-Based Ideologies About Students and Families

As Jennifer Keys Adair states in Chap. 8:

> When intervention programs begin with the idea that parents, families or even children lack something, they are only justifying the idea that people need to become more like someone else (usually someone from the more dominant or powerful group who has rights and privileges).

This is true when it comes to pedagogical, curricular, and school partnership approaches overall—approaches that too often situate students of color as "at-risk" to fail and/or "different" in ways that should be remedied or acculturated. Such approaches prompt educators to (even unwittingly) interact with students and families in condescending, offensive, or other counterproductive ways.

In Chap. 2, Kay Sanders and Monica Molgaard point to the proliferation of biased ideologies in early childhood programs, such as Head Start, which serves families affected by poverty. The authors explain that Head Start programs have tended to cast the parents they serve (the majority of whom are Latinx and/or African American)[1] "as incompetent and in need of assistance". Likewise, Hiro Yoshikawa (Chap. 3); Gigliana Melzi, Adina Schick, and Lauren Scarola (Chap. 4); and Sandra Barrueco (Chap. 6) each stress the stigmatization Latinx families routinely experience given some educators' deficit-based ideologies and assumptions about their English and Spanish proficiency, their intelligence, and their immigration status. These biased ideologies are fueled by the impact of xenophobic policies, as the authors discuss. Moreover, in Chap. 8, Adair describes the discursive links between biased ideology, beliefs, and practice as she discusses how Latinx immigrant families are increasingly labeled as having a "word gap" or rather lacking "enough vocabulary" and sufficient literacy practices as defined by English-speaking, middle-class, family norms. In her collaborative study of Texas teachers and administrators, Adair found the majority of teachers in various types of schools refrained from engaging Latinx students in higher level practices, such as "making decisions, showing initiative, helping each other, reading together, choosing partners, discussing and sharing personal stories, and creating projects". Though teachers believed that such practices were generally advantageous, they felt they would not work with Latinx students due to what teachers perceived as the students' linguistic limitations. Adair added, "And the lack of vocabulary was blamed on what parents lacked or, in other words, Latinx immigrant parents' deficits". In Chap. 4, Melzi et al. stress similar cautions based on findings from their study of pre-K Latinx literacy practices and educators' problematic casting of Latinx families' literacy activities.

Given the proliferation of deficit-based ideologies and practices in schools that target students of color, the authors stress the need for educators to recognize and affirm students' funds of knowledge[2] and their family-specific and culturally relevant values and strengths. Doing so positions educators to embrace asset-based ideologies about students and their ethnocultural backgrounds. The importance of rejecting racist perspectives and "colonial logics" is specifically tackled by Sanders and Molgaard in Chap. 2 and by Charlene Montaño Nolan, Megan Bang, and Nikki McDaid-Morgan in Chap. 7.

In Chap. 5, Greg Fabiano and Kellina Pyle also address gender issues by cautioning educators to resist overlooking the importance of engaging fathers and "not approach the father as deficient in a skill or ability". The authors emphasize how fathers significantly contribute to their children's "school readiness, vocabulary, self-regulation, and academic achievement" and should therefore be valued and spe-

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[1] This is based on 2013–2014 statistics regarding the racial-ethnic backgrounds of Head Start students reported by Child Trends Databank. (2015). *Head start*. Available at https://www.childtrends.org/indicators/head-start

[2] See N. González, L. C. Moll, & C. Amanti (Eds.), *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

cifically recruited to be active members of educational programs and school partnerships. Fabiano and Pyle profile a behavioral parent training (BPT) program that meaningfully engaged elementary school fathers of children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The program integrated team sports, particularly soccer, to spur enjoyable interaction among fathers, students, and staff. The authors assert it also created opportunities for fathers to learn about and model effective academic encouragement and skill-building practices for their children. They linked part of the program's success to its strength-based orientation toward fathers.

Understanding Schools as Contested Cultural Sites

In Chap. 1, McWayne, Doucet, and Mistry posit that, "Schools are examples of cultural communities because they share particular values, understandings, and mediational means (such as the tools and systems of written literacy) which are historically institutionalized and privileged in the valued activities of this community". The culture of US schools, however, is not typically nuanced and adequately reflective of the nation's vast heterogeneity. Schools, instead, commonly project what Delpit (1988) classically called a "culture of power" that privileges shared rituals, norms, and expectations about teaching, learning, assessment, and engagement (p. 282). Consequently, educators often take the lead in creating and imposing a schooling culture in which students and families are either validated or stigmatized, or even penalized, based on their conformity to both written and unwritten academic and behavioral codes. Such codes largely reflect the nation's dominant, white, middle-class culture (Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013; Cooper et al., 2010; Delpit, 1988).

In Chap. 2, Sanders and Molgaard address the phenomenon of white cultural dominance in schools. They, along with numerous other authors in the volume, stress that schools are powerful sites of cultural socialization and identity development in which students and families experience either cultural affirmation or rejection, nurturing or stifling, depending on educators' ideologies, school curriculum, instructional practices, and schools' policies and organizational culture. Discussions of how this is particularly so in early childhood settings are offered in Chaps. 1, 2, 4, and 7. Overall, research discussed throughout the volume shows that the nature and nurturing of school culture are complex and contested. Furthermore, the educational opportunities, barriers, accolades, or stigma students and families have can vary given how their specific ethnocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds are regarded as aligning with dominant social and cultural norms. So, given educators' positions of authority, it is essential that they recognize the power they wield as they engage families in partnerships.

While the majority of public school students are of color, as Melzi, Schick, and Scarola explain, approximately 80% of teachers are white. The authors suggest this can be a strong source of cultural discontinuity in family-school partnership goal development and practice. They, however, assert that such discontinuity is not a

fixed trait. Rather, they contend it can be leveraged to increase students' academic and sociocultural exposure and introduce "children to a breadth of learning styles and expectations." Still, similar to other chapter contributors, they stress that family-school partnerships should be "culturally grounded," implemented with a "bidirectional approach," and incorporate "comprehensive, culturally-and linguistically-attuned approaches that encompass child, parental, familial, community, and program influences." The authors further recommend partnerships be adaptable since culture itself is fluid. Indeed, having such attributes is key to family-school partnerships avoiding cultural dominance or rigidity and, instead, operating with asset-based orientations toward all families.

Unmasking Schooling's Racist and Colonial Legacies

In Chaps. 2 and 7, authors' discussions move beyond general multicultural discourse to explicitly and powerfully name the oppressive role that racism and colonization continue to have in schools and thus in school partnership successes and failures. Sanders and Molgaard acknowledge in Chap. 2 that racism and the racialization of people of color are pervasive in US society; hence it is imperative that educators avoid color-blind approaches to collaborating with families and identify and tackle racial inequities. They explain:

> A racialized society is one in which there are racial inequities in socio-economics, education, health, housing, and psychological well-being. While there is no biological basis for race and racial categories, from a critical race perspective, in a racialized society, racism is normative rather than an abnormal or atypical societal condition (Delgado, 1995). By racism, we do not only mean personal acts by individuals, but also, societal systems that support and reinforce white privilege.

The authors go on to offer various examples of how the dominant culture of US schooling and family-school partnerships is steeped in white privilege, which lends to the systemic marginalization of families of color in many schools.

Racial marginalization can occur in schools despite the efforts of many well-intentioned educators when educators lack sufficient racial consciousness and the will to disrupt the status quo. Indeed, racially marginalizing forces are embedded in school systems by design. Nolan, Bang, and McDaid-Morgan make this historical argument poignantly clear in Chap. 7 as they consider the educational experiences of Indigenous peoples in settler colonial nations like the United States and Canada. The authors explain that for centuries, "settler colonial nations have routinely created and enacted policies across generations intended to dismantle, disrupt, and assimilate Indigenous peoples through forced changes in familial structures and educative processes." They offer examples of how Indigenous peoples have faced conquest, forced removal, and "dispossession of lands and waters" that have had disenfranchising and traumatic effects on families—effects rarely acknowledged in schools. Nevertheless, a slew of racist public policies, educational initiatives, biased curriculum, and teaching practices have worked to erase, demean, or ignore

Indigenous families and cultures in ways that remain extremely salient to contemporary family-school partnership contexts. Nolan et al. go on to emphasize the importance of supporting partnerships with Indigenous families that are culturally informed by Indigenous values, traditions, and meaning-making.

Macro level political contexts related to the racialization of Latinx students and families in schools are detailed in Chaps. 3 and 6. Yoshikawa, in Chap. 3, describes the relevancy of families' immigrant status and the xenophobic history of US immigration policies. He contends that this, along with economic policies and practices, has villainized undocumented immigrants of color, while exploiting their labor. Yoshikawa conveys how the stress of racialized violence, harassment, surveillance, and opposition take a harmful socioemotional toll on immigrant children from families and communities impacted by such dynamics. Similarly, in Chap. 6, Barrueco explains how austere socioeconomic circumstances like performing extremely long hours of manual labor, frequent mobility, insecure and unsafe housing, and family separation affect the children of migrant workers and farmworkers. She conveys how these conditions—along with policies, biased treatment, and the false perceptions to which these families are often subjected—can traumatize children in those families. They can also hinder their learning, educational engagement, and relationship building in schools. Barrueco, however, emphasizes the families' sacrifices and their commitment to education, thereby humanizing their plight so educators can better understand their specific educational needs.

Altogether, authors across the chapters indicate how racialized and xenophobic dynamics can undermine families' trust in schools, restrict their presence in schools, and constrain their communication with educators. The authors' specific findings and analyses regarding the racist and colonizing effects of systemic marginalization on Indigenous and Latinx families are aligned with findings regarding African American students' and families' experiences that I and many others have described (Cooper, 2007, 2009[3]; Fields-Smith, 2009; Louque & Latunde, 2014; Posey-Maddox, 2013; Wilson, 2015, 2019). For instance, factors from the historical effects of slavery, literacy bans, and racial segregation laws to contemporary stereotyping, biased discipline policies, urban school privatization movements, and the racist violence fueling the current Black Lives Matter movement affect African American students' and families' educational opportunities and learning. Such factors also influence African American families' school partnership attitudes, disposition toward educators, and educational engagement activities as a whole (Wilson, 2019).

Authors' work in this volume points to the necessity of educators unmasking their ignorance and/or avoidance of the racialized realities and colonial legacies of US schooling. As Sanders and Molgaard assert, "Child care teachers are racial ethnic socializers," as are K-12 teachers. So such socializing should be done with socially just and culturally affirming intent. Ultimately, creating truly inclusive and equitable family-school partnerships requires educators at every level to intentionally counter the imposition of whiteness/white privilege, color-blind stances, and other biased approaches to family engagement and collaboration.

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[3] I published under the name Camille Wilson Cooper prior to 2011.

Validating Familial and Communal Knowledge via Culturally Relevant Instruction

Collaborating with ethnoculturally diverse families in responsive and equitable ways demands that educators recognize and validate the socially and culturally relevant knowledge that families have. Authors of this volume remind us that parents, kinfolk, and community members draw upon such knowledge to teach and socialize children outside of school, yet they do so in ways that—if respected and leveraged in classrooms—can facilitate children's academic learning. This was evident in the COACHES soccer program involving elementary school fathers that Fabiano and Pyle described in Chap. 5.

In addition, in Chap. 7, Nolan, Bang, and McDaid-Morgan describe how "Indigenous families and communities are predicated on relationality and interconnectedness across generations and include extended kin relations" that unite youth and elders in activities that foster intergenerational learning and cultural pride. They further state that: "There is now robust research to demonstrate that young people who are deeply connected to their peoples, lands, and waters are also more likely to be resilient in formal education" since such youth, "are more likely to pursue and persist in higher education" after gaining "some exposure to Indigenous history and culture in their schooling." One example they offer based on Jerry Lipka's (1994) research pertains to "Yupik women us(ing) polar coordinate geometry and pattern work in the making of grass coil baskets."[4] Thus, children in this Indigenous culture likely have culturally relevant exposure to mathematics in ways that have proven practical and productive for their communities, yet are rarely incorporated and leveraged in traditional schooling.

Several authors specifically discuss the significance of teachers incorporating familial knowledge and cultural norms in classroom-based literacy practices. For instance, in Chap. 4, Melzi, Schick, and Scarola disrupt the deficit-based casting of Latinx immigrant families' home literacy practices to suggest educators focus on families' contributions versus any comparative gaps. For example, they point to research that suggest Latina mothers "from diverse socio-economic backgrounds prefer to approach reading as a sole narrator who tells an engaging story and encourages the child to listen actively rather than contribute to the creation of the story." They further assert that many other mothers also favor culturally relevant stories of their heritage rather than mainstream "commercially available storybooks" in the United States. The authors therefore point to effective culturally responsive partnership practices such as those that have engaged families in creating "storybooks inspired by culturally laden narratives" and ones that have used "*fotonovelas* (comic books), traditional poems, songs, jokes, riddles and oral stories" or dual-language texts and theater arts activities. Melzi et al. call on educators to "draw on family members' skill-sets and expertise" and invite them into classrooms "to lead lessons

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[4] In this discussion, the authors reference Lipka, J. (1994). Culturally negotiated schooling: Toward a Yup'ik mathematics. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 14–30.

and share their knowledge." Their recommendations, along with those discussed in Chaps. 2, 6, 7, and 8, align with McWayne, Doucet, and Mistry's call for "school curriculum that reflects children's familiar knowledge and prior experience" in Chap. 1. The volume, in total, stresses how vital it is to affirm the range of experiential knowledge and multilingualism found among ethnoculturally diverse students and families.

Conducting Innovative, Collaborative, and Critical Family-Centered Research

Conducting research that is aligned to the values, principles, and findings shared in this volume means doing so in ways that contextualize families' cultural backgrounds and educational dispositions through strength-based and humanizing lenses. Authors across the volume emphasized that additional research is needed on the structure and implementation of culturally relevant educational initiatives and partnership approaches, as well as more studies on how family-school partnerships influence students' educational experiences and outcomes. Such research must be culturally informed to be valid. Several authors suggest that ensuring ethical and cultural integrity in research about ethnoculturally diverse families necessitates building trust with ethnoculturally diverse research participants and ensuring reciprocity and care as researchers interact with youth, families, and community members. It also means being more open to implementing collaborative research partnerships with families so they coconstruct the inquiry process and help interpret the findings that address their lives. Adair, for instance, shared an innovative collaborative inquiry approached called video-cued ethnography in Chap. 8, which involves research participants (e.g., youth, families, and community members) in making and editing films that showcase educational issues and scenarios true to their lives from which educators and other community members can learn.

The work of several contributors further pointed to the need for researchers to assume critical epistemological stances and counter "Western epistemic supremacy," as Nolan, Bang, and McDaid-Morgan state. This means decentering westernized and Anglocentric ideals about family structure, educational engagement, and academic success to understand and represent families on their own terms. Doing this will entail many researchers embracing paradigmatic shifts when it comes to the research methods they employ. So, as with many of the practical recommendations that authors offer in this volume, methodologically "flipping the script" can also help researchers be relational, inclusive, and just. As Adair shared, this entails maintaining a learning stance and elevating participants' expertise—steps she associated with enacting "humility." She reflected on research she conducted in several nations across the world to assert:

> What I did not understand then, and continue to work on now, is that humility is about engaging in ways that are recognizable, appreciated and welcomed by those from whom and with whom we want to learn. Withholding expertise or disengaging is just as arrogant

as taking full control of educational situations and assuming one's ideas are exactly what people need. It is not being timid or reluctant, nor is it about being confident or in charge. Being humble means listening carefully enough to the community we are studying to hear what they want even if it is not what we expect, desire or think is best. Humility is about being sure of one thing: that the insider's view of the world is the most important part of data collection in any research situation.

Demonstrating such humility, deference, and respect for ethnocultural communities is especially important when considering both the historical and contemporary dynamics of structural inequity that family members have encountered.

As Barrueco alludes to in Chap. 6, many ethnocultural communities are mindful of how research and members of various institutions can harm, exploit, and misrepresent their communities by offering overgeneralized, stereotypical, and at times blatantly racist findings. Of course, there is a legacy of pseudoscientific and otherwise biased research that has gravely harmed communities of color (Scheurich & Young, 1997). Hence, ethnoculturally diverse families and communities are naturally interested in how they and their children will benefit from research processes: They want to ensure there will be no harm. Communities of color are often especially concerned about being fairly and holistically represented. In light of the racial and colonial contexts earlier referenced, it is imperative that educational researchers be mindful that many research participants have heightened vulnerabilities given a combination of ethnocultural, racial, and socioeconomic factors.

Barrueco, reflecting on her mixed methods work, stresses the need to: "ensur(e) that the measures selected are scientifically and culturally sound"; use surveys and other instruments written in appropriate language and dialects; and ask questions in lay, accessible, and culturally sensitive ways that are not commonly found with conventional tools like Likert scales. The examples she shares signify the necessity of all researchers critically examining the methodological norms they employ, even if already progressively situated (e.g., participatory action research, critical race counter-storytelling, etc.) to ensure they are culturally appropriate. Drawing upon critical lenses in family-school partnership research is essential given the power-laden nature of partnership work and engagement practices.

Final Implications for Co-constructing Culturally Sound Transformative Partnerships

Throughout this volume, the authors have called for family-school partnerships that incorporate more humanizing, anti-racist, anti-bigoted, and inclusive practices. This entails educators affirming the worth and strengths of all families and providing students of all ethnocultural backgrounds equal educational access, quality, and mobility. In support of this charge, I build upon the contributors' offerings to suggest additional strategies for developing and sustaining family-school partnerships that transform the status quo. Employing these strategies will lend to students' care, empowerment, justice, and ultimately, their improved learning. The strategies

involve countering divisive and exclusive cultural politics, sharing power and promoting the structural inclusion of diverse families, and honoring families' agency, resistance, and leadership.

Countering Divisive and Exclusive Cultural Politics

First, I contend it is imperative that we as educators, researchers, and concerned community members more pointedly acknowledge the politics of education and the current divisive political era that is deeply affecting marginalized, ethnocultural students and families.

For instance, as I write this commentary, the United States appears to be concluding an atrocious period of state-sanctioned family separation and exclusion targeting Latinx family members who arrived in the United States seeking asylum from violent and oppressive Central American regimes. Families were torn apart as children were forcibly separated and housed in detention centers or "camps" while parents and other adult family members were jailed. While US government officials debated the legality of the families' arrival and treatment, the forced separation of these families proved to be one of many events that have resulted from xenophobic policymaking in the United States over the past couple of years. As of the 2018–2019 academic year, the family separation and detention tactics will affect the culture and climate of many schools as the deeply traumatized children who remain in the United States (whether or not reunified with their families) enroll in schools and require intense emotional support, social service assistance, and socioeconomic resources (Minkle, 2018). These children and their families, like all others, will need to be engaged with equity and care; and educators will have to learn new lessons about developing family partnerships given distinct contexts of political exclusion and trauma.

Adair, in Chap. 8, highlighted the pervasiveness of xenophobia around the globe and the tendency of dominant cultures to develop and foster deficit-based ideologies about, and practices toward, immigrant families who are culturally different from them. She noted various incidents of families being engaged—and ineffectively so—only on educators' and other community interveners' terms. Families' goals and their children's needs were subsequently overlooked. Adair addressed important international contexts and global forces, asserting that, "parent involvement, education and engagement interventions do not consider systemic, global-political forces that sustain the inequity and marginalized positions that push parents and families towards services and support in the first place." Thus, she like several authors in this volume urged readers to engage more in systemic critique rather than individual blame, and thus devise systemic solutions to the marginalizing forces that hurt families. This appeal is apropos across international settings and in the United States too. As earlier discussed, xenophobic response to ethnoculturally and linguistically diverse students and families in schools is not a new phenomenon; rather it is a reaction that has been prominent since the founding of US public schools and one that has targeted US-born families as well.

The need to implement family engagement and partnership approaches that explicitly counter xenophobic, racist, and colonizing ideologies and practices remains urgent, as does researching the goals, experiences, and engagement customs of various cultural groups. In addition to considering the strengths and needs of the Latinx and Indigenous groups focused on in this volume, continued attention to African American, Asian American, Muslim, and other religious minority groups—especially those routinely targeted with bias—is needed, as is attention to children of varied abilities, LGBTQ+ families, and those highly impacted by poverty. Overall, students and families who are not white, middle class, Christian, fully able bodied, heterosexual, and fluent in English are finding themselves very vulnerable to exclusion, bullying, and sometimes violence. As their vulnerability is heightened during fractured political times, so is the responsibility of educators to foster equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive school environments regardless of students' ethnocultural, racial, socioeconomic, religious, (dis)ability, linguistic, immigration status, or gender identity background.

Additionally, partnership practices and research need to be more responsive to diverse family structures. Fabiano and Pyle (Chap. 5) and Nolan, Bang, and McDaid-Morgan (Chap. 7) suggest the importance of educators being sensitive to, and accommodating of, varied family structures as opposed to structuring partnerships assuming that each student has a two-parent headed household. They note how children's family structures can be affected by various parental/familial custody arrangements and/or the presence of family elders living in the home. This influences which family members engage in school partnerships, when, and how. Such contexts should prompt educators to be more responsive and sensitive to family diversity.

All the dimensions of diversity mentioned have implications for how researchers should approach recruiting study participants, building rapport and trust, considering convenient times, places, and ways of collecting data, and determining with participants what kinds of questions to ask, conversations to start, ways to observe, documents to collect, and other research techniques to use.

Sharing Power and Promoting Structural Inclusion

Structurally revamping schools to be more substantively (rather than nominally) inclusive of diverse families is key to moving toward the transformative partnerships needed. Authors in this volume have offered great insights for diversifying curriculum, pedagogical techniques, and parent programs. Increasing the educational voice, choices, governance input, and reform influence of families to be more reflective of the nation's ethnocultural diversity is needed too. Hence, I urge practitioners and researchers to shift away from "delivery" programs and "intervention" tactics aimed at increasing family's school participation and instead focus on coconstructing educational programs, family outreach initiatives, and community engagement plans *with* families. It is essential that families, including students, be given

additional opportunities to share their values, educational priorities, and express their schooling ideas and concerns.

Green (2017) explicates a process of educators, students, families, and community members collaborating to engage in community-based equity audits that could be extremely helpful in advancing authentic partnership building. He describes how school communities can use the audit process to "disrupt deficit views of community," "conduct initial community inquiry and shared community experiences," form a "community leadership team," and "collect equity, asset-based community data" to jointly assess needs, set improvement goals, and develop inclusive and culturally responsive reform methods (p. 17). Green also overviews how participating in "critical community dialogues," along with other collaborative planning steps, is part of this process (p. 28). Additionally, researchers like Ishimaru (2014) and Su (2007) address ways families and educators can collaborate to develop bonding social capital within specific ethnocultural communities, and bridging social capital to unite members of various ethnocultural groups to increase cultural cohesion and coalition building in schools.

Honoring Family Agency, Resistance, and Leadership

Finally, while I and the other contributors to this volume have highlighted a range of inequitable circumstances affecting families, and urged educators to do their part in redressing educational injustice, it is essential to recognize that families have always enacted agency, resistance, and educational leadership. Families experiencing cultural bias and/or racism have rarely been passive partners; rather, they have employed a variety of advocacy and activism strategies to resist oppression and protect children's educational welfare and rights (Ishimaru, 2014; Wilson, 2015, 2019). Indeed, just as schools have always been sites of cultural socialization, they have always been sites of political resistance too. Families have helped each other know their rights and shared resources for the collective good of marginalized children and school communities overall. Moreover, their modes of resistance have often reflected specific cultural values and traditions. This is evident, for instance, by Indigenous peoples employing distinct cultural art forms to nurture their critical literacy and retain their cultural knowledge and language despite the assimilating tactics of schools, as discussed by Nolan, Bang, and McDaid-Morgan. Resistance efforts are also clear in African Americans and Latinx families implementing various forms of protest that derive from their civil rights struggles and community organizing legacies (Su, 2007; Wilson, 2015). Undoubtedly, a range of cooperation, dissent, confrontation, and coalition building efforts have proven vital to the survival and empowerment of many ethnocultural communities, so such efforts—which function as democratic tools—are worthy of greater understanding and respect.

In all, it is crucial that educators recognize and honor family members' agentic nature and need for self-determination. A wealth of research has shown that families have the capacity—and a successful track record—acting as educational leaders.

Families, in doing so, collaborate with educators, school staff, and community members to advance school reform that benefits not only their children but students and school communities at large (e.g., Auerbach, 2007; Cooper et al., 2010; Ishimaru, 2014; Su, 2007). While educators have not typically welcomed the more confrontational tactics of disgruntled families, it is important for educators to understand that such tactics reflect families' care, love, and often their fears (Cooper, 2009; Doucet, 2011). Hence, educators should work to constructively dialogue and establish shared ground with families. Community-based groups and other nonprofit organizations familiar with, and sensitive to, various ethnocultural communities can be helpful in building ties between educators and families. For instance, Yoshikawa described community groups in New York City striving to help advocate for the educational rights of immigrant children and families in Chap. 3.

Additional research on family and community-based advocacy and resistance is needed as well. Over the past few years, I have led a research partnership with an organization called 482Forward, which comprises community organizers who rally for justice-driven reform in Detroit schools. The partnership has partly encompassed my university research team and the community organizers collaborating on various participatory action research (PAR) projects aimed at informing their efforts to prevent school closure, increase family and community representation in school governance, and promote special education equity. Both adult and youth organizers have contributed to this research process, from the formulation of research questions to methods, data analysis, writing, and (re)presentations. Our collaboration has helped us cocreate a continual cycle of dialogue, mutual learning, adaptation, and reciprocity. The PAR aspects of our work have aimed to help empower families and communities in ways that align with the organization's mission. It has been a complex, yet utterly rewarding process. While I am not exclusively an action researcher, this partnership has inspired me to continue honing my collaborative inquiry skills and commitments.

For instance, in addition to writing for publication and including at least one community member as a coauthor on PAR-related manuscripts, my team has drawn upon our data to write practical pieces from which our community partners can immediately benefit. This has included a policy brief on school closure the organization used to inform its 2017 school closure opposition campaign in Detroit, and a research brief reporting the critical literacy praxis (Bishop, 2014) and community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) the organizers employ via their social media communication and lobbying efforts. The organizers shared that the research brief—which they disseminated to their funders and some other community partners—advanced their learning and critical self-reflection. Additionally, the organizers and my research team cowrote an internal guide to conducting PAR within community organizing contexts.

My experience, along with the discussions of implementing more progressive research methods in the previous chapters, suggests that more effort to embrace critical and decolonizing methodologies in family-school partnership studies is warranted. Indeed, research is "never neutral" and thus never apolitical (Patel, 2016). Thus, as with practice, research should be approached with explicit decolonizing and anti-racist intentions and techniques that promote egalitarianism—ideally in the

process, but always in the outcomes. This involves educational researchers conducting research with increased critical consciousness and valuing the Indigenous, critical, communal, and emancipatory epistemologies in which many ethnocultural values, customs, perspectives, and educational goals are rooted. Such effort is possible when enacting a variety of historical, qualitative, mixed method, and even quantitative methods. And, it is necessary for avoiding the distortions, erasure, stereotyping, and dangerous deficit-based frames that harm many ethnocultural communities and fuel inequitable education policies and practices (Patel, 2016).

Ultimately coconstructing transformative family-school partnerships in research and practice requires a willingness of all involved partners to disrupt traditional hierarchical dynamics and closed schooling and inquiry structures to yield greater learning opportunities and educational justice. Doing so will help ensure schools are "sanctuary" spaces of learning, cultural affirmation, emancipation, and care (Liou, Marsh, & Antrop-González, 2017). Families of all backgrounds can then be authentic partners in facilitating children's educational advancement.

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