



# Engaging Families

*Supporting Students from Cradle to Career*

Resource Issue 2013

## *Handbook on Family and Community Engagement*

A resource for SEAs, LEAs and schools

The *Handbook on Family and Community Engagement* is a resource designed to guide state, district, and school Title I personnel in providing high-quality, research-based family and community engagement programs and experiences.

Thirty-six experts on family and community engagement contributed to the *Handbook*. Each chapter is grounded in research and provides practical action principles for working in the field. The concluding chapter lists specific recommended practices that may be replicated at the state, district, and school levels.

With the U. S. Department of Education's (ED's) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Academic Development Institute and Center on Innovation and Improvement produced the *Handbook*.

To support the use of the *Handbook* as a resource for states, districts, and schools, ED's Regional Comprehensive Centers have designated family engagement regional specialists. These specialists will work through the state education agencies (SEAs) in their 16 regions to introduce a series of webinars for districts and schools covering the *Handbook* topics.

Pre-recorded webinars, Power Points, and more on the *Handbook* are available at <http://www.families-schools.org/>.

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**Family Engagement Team**

The contact information for family engagement regional specialists located in ED's Regional Comprehensive Centers are listed below. Contact them for technical assistance on using the *Handbook* to engage families

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<b>North Central Comprehensive Center</b>	Jane Hill <a href="mailto:jhill@mcrel.org">jhill@mcrel.org</a> Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) 4601 DTC Blvd., Suite 500 Denver, CO 80237
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### **Information Resource Center (IRC)**

The Information Resource Center operates a contact center that offers members of the public information, referrals, and in-depth assistance on all aspects of federal education law and policy as well as on nationally focused Department initiatives. Services are provided via a toll-free telephone number (1-800-USA LEARN) and a Web portal at <https://answers.ed.gov/>. There education stakeholders are able to access the answers to more than 100 frequently asked questions, as well as communicate with the Department via e-mail. Parents may also search FAQs and ask the Department a question via Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/rQrItk>.

### **Stopbullying.gov**

The departments of Education and Health and Human Services worked in partnership to [relaunched](#) the site, [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov). It emphasizes action steps that individuals can take to prevent and stop bullying in their schools and communities, featuring easy-to-use tools and resources for community leaders, young people and families, including information on how to

- Recognize the [warning signs](#) and when to take action,
- [Prevent bullying](#) before it starts,
- Implement [strategies for intervention](#),
- Share your community's [resources](#), policies or strategies to prevent and address bullying, and
- Access information on bullying [laws](#) in your state.

The site will help you share ideas and start discussions about the role you can play in preventing bullying. Show your support on your own website with our [widgets and badges](#) and subscribe to [email updates](#) to find out about content on the site. We also encourage you to consider submitting your materials for inclusion in our [resource database](#). You can also follow StopBullying.gov on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) for more information on how to take action.

### **Office for Civil Rights Post Online Resources for Parents and Families**

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has recently posted online resources for parents and families, and child advocates. These resources—which include information on navigating the complaint process and ensuring that all students receive equal access to a high-quality education—are available in 19 different languages on the [OCR webpage](#).

#### **Resources that can help parents of children with disabilities or special needs:**

- The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities: <http://nichcy.org>.
- The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC):
  - <http://www.nectac.org/contact/contact.asp>.
    - This is for parents of children who are not yet in school. If your child is under 3 years old, look for information about Part C; for children who are preschool age, look for information about Section 619). [Part C and Sec. 619 of IDEA]
- Parent Technical Assistance Center Network: <http://www.parentcenternetwork.org>.

### **Provide Effective Services for Families of Children with Special Needs**

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has technical assistance centers that offer statewide resource for families of children with disabilities and special health care needs. Staff are parent/professionals and are available to talk

to parents and professionals about special education, other services and disability specific information. The staff provide training, information and support to parents and others who have an interest in children from birth through twenty-six and who receive or who might need special education or related services. They enable parents to have the capacity to improve educational outcomes for all children. Visit <http://www.parentcenternetwork.org/region1/links.html> to find the Parent Technical Assistance Center near you.

### **Resources for Parents Following Traumatic Events**

Here at the Department of Education, as elsewhere throughout America, our hearts ache for the Newtown, Conn., community. In a letter today to school districts around the country, Secretary Arne Duncan noted that,

"Whenever a school experiences violence and the lives of children and adults are lost, we struggle to find words to express our emotions and explain how this could have happened."

Many parents and family friends are having a difficult time expressing their own feelings of anxiety, worry or sadness, and often we do not know how to talk with children about such a senseless and horrific tragedy.

Below is a list of resources specifically designed for parents and guardians to provide guidance on talking to children following a traumatic event.

For a complete list of resources visit ED's [Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center](#), and read Secretary Duncan's "[Resources for Schools to Prepare for and Recover from Crisis](#)."

- [Tips for Adults on How to Talk with Children About Connecticut School Shooting](#) [PDF]
- [Helping Young Children and Families Cope with Trauma](#) (SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network) [PDF]
- Spanish - [Ayudando a Niños\(as\) y Familias a Enfrentarse con el Trauma](#) [PDF]
- [Childhood Traumatic Grief Educational Materials for Parents](#) (SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network) [PDF]
- [Tips for talking to children and youth after traumatic events: A guide for parents and educators](#) (SAMHSA) [PDF]
- [Parent Tips for Helping Infants and Toddlers after Disasters](#) (SAMHSA) [PDF]
- [Parent Tips for Helping Preschool-Age Children after Disasters](#) (SAMHSA) [PDF]
- [Parent Tips for Helping School-Age Children after Disasters](#) (SAMHSA) [PDF]
- [Parent Tips for Helping Adolescents after Disasters](#) (SAMHSA) [PDF]

For more information and to see documents in additional languages, visit

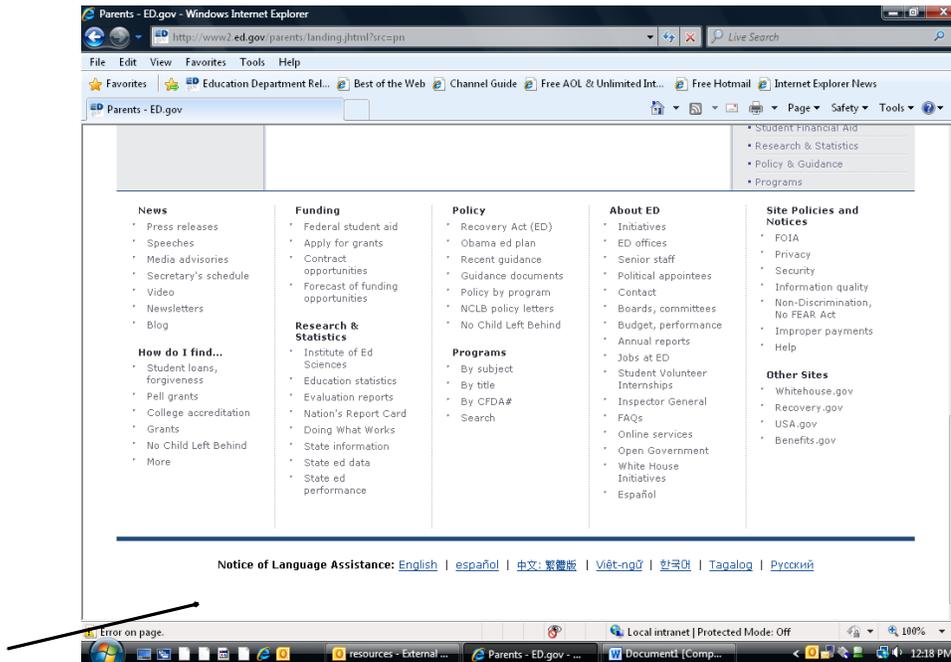
<http://rems.ed.gov/HelpingYouthandChildrenRecoverFromTraumaticEvents.aspx>

### **Notice of Language Assistance**

Many parents are not able to access any information from the Department simply because of a language barrier. Because of [Executive Order 13166](#) which simply states that federal agencies will improve access to services for persons with limited English proficiency, seeking information will no longer be a problem.

A new Limited English Proficiency (LEP) directive on the U. S. Department of Education's (ED) policies and practices has been written to ensure that LEP individuals have equal access to ED's programs, services, activities, resources, and issues. As a result, ED has added six languages at the bottom of web

pages on <http://www.ed.gov>: the **Notice of Language Assistance: English | español | 中文: 繁體版 | Việt-ngữ | 한국어 | Tagalog | Русский** that indicates other languages in which the information can be accessed. ED has telephonic interpretation where interpreters for more than 170 languages are available to assist ED in its outreach efforts.



## Effective Parent Programs

The newsletter highlights examples of effective parent programs. Here are four:

### Parent Teacher Home Visit Project

Home visits are not "drop ins", but rather an appointment set between two willing colleagues in a setting where teachers do not have the power/institutional advantage. Teachers visit families once in the fall and then again in the spring. The focus of the first visit is on building a relationship. In this visit, teachers and parents (known in the model as co-educators) get to know each other, and teachers learn about families' and students' strengths. The focus of the second visit is on building capacity. During this visit, teachers shares important and meaningful tools and information with families. The home visits project and training is based on a community organizing model and principals of family empowerment, endorsed by the state and local teachers union, local interfaith organizing group, and championed by school district leaders who are willing to do business a little differently for the sake of student success. Nine states have adopted and adapted the model of parent/teacher home visits: Alaska, California, Colorado, Montana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, Ohio, and Virginia. To learn more, visit [www.teachervisits.org](http://www.teachervisits.org) or call 916-448-5290.

### International Parent Leadership Consortium (IPLC)

The International Parent Leadership Consortium (IPLC) initiative was implemented through the International Programs in order to facilitate leadership and learning opportunities for international parents. The IPLC serves to engage international families through building parent leadership capacity. The mission of the program is to strengthen the diversity of parental leadership across the county to positively impact achievement for all students. Parents actively participate in leadership

sessions, in which they develop their knowledge and understanding of a variety of resources in the school system and hone their communication and leadership skills.

Interpreters are provided. Districts are building immigrant parent capacity to support student success. Initiated in the spring of 2006 in Howard County, the program has equipped over 300 immigrant parents to be leaders who support their schools and communities for student success. There are now three districts in the state of Maryland that have the leadership program modeled after Howard County's International Parent Leadership Program (IPLP): Howard, Anne Arundel, and Prince George's Counties. For more information, contact Young-chan Han, (410) 767-6756, [yhan@msde.state.md.us](mailto:yhan@msde.state.md.us).

### **Parent University**

Parent University started in 2010 as an initiative of the Office of Family and Student Engagement in the Boston Public Schools (BPS). Free courses are offered throughout the academic year in a variety of languages to parents and family members of BPS students. Classes range from math and science to learning how to apply for college, financial aid, and nutrition advice courses. The sessions are held on the campus of Northeastern University. The program is funded through federal Title I funds. For more information, contact Boston Public Schools Communications Office at 617-635-9265 or [communications@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:communications@bostonpublicschools.org)

### **Parent Involvement Matters Award (PIMA)**

The *Maryland Parent Involvement Matters Award (PIMA)* program is the first of its kind in the nation to shine a spotlight on parents and those with legal responsibility for a child who have had a positive impact on public schools. The program encourages all parents to get involved. To learn more about PIMA and read about the many ways parents are making a difference in Maryland's schools and communities, go to <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/pima>. For more information, please contact Barbara Scherr, Family Involvement Coordinator, Program Improvement and Family Support Branch, Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0291 or email [bscherr@msde.state.md.us](mailto:bscherr@msde.state.md.us).

## **Did You Know?**

### **The Parent and Family Engagement Web Page Has a New Icon**



When you visit the Parent and Family Engagement web page, <http://www.ed.gov/parent-and-family-engagement>, in the column to the right a new icon has been added. Click on the button to learn more about Affordable Care Act. Young adults can learn of health benefits for which they may be eligible. .

# Family Engagement Outreach Team

The Office of Communications and Outreach contacts work with state and local education agencies to empower parents with the information to help them be full partners in the education and academic progress of their children.

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