Resources for school communities

ANNOTATED RESOURCE LIST

A brief guide to a range of resources relating to parental engagement.

Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

NATIONAL SMARTER SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIPS

Acknowledgement

Disclaimer

This annotated resource list is designed as a quick guide to some of the useful resources that are currently available. School communities are encouraged to explore these resources which offer a range of ideas, strategies and information for strengthening parental engagement. The companion document 'Parental engagement research – Key references' highlights some of the key research literature.

Australian resources

Family-School & Community Partnerships Bureau

http://www.familyschool.org.au/

The Family-School and Community Partnerships Bureau is an organisation dedicated to increasing parent engagement and community involvement in schools. It conducts research, disseminates good practice and provides practical support and advice to parents, principals and teachers. The website contains a monthly newsletter, results of a national parents survey, and a blog for two-way communication.

Two key resources on this website are:

- Family-School Partnerships Framework – A guide for schools and families (2008) – Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
  http://www.familyschool.org.au/pdf/framework.pdf
  The contents include principles and supporting structures which underpin effective Family-School Partnerships, Key dimensions of Family-School Partnerships, and suggested strategies for school communities and school systems for developing partnerships.
  This is an excellent resource with potential for adaption for a wider audience. Resources are user friendly, relevant and practical.
- http://www.familyschool.org.au/talk-tools/
  This is a checklist to assess a school's relationship with its community.

Parental Engagement
NSW Department of Education and Training

http://www.lowsesschools.nsw.edu.au/default.aspx

Resources on this site are for use by teachers, schools, parents/families and community organisations.

It includes community engagement tools, a community engagement survey, focus group discussion starters, practical actions, the *Priority schools* program induction toolkit and associated papers, the *Developing home, school and community partnerships: A working paper* (2003, DET), and a **Reflection and planning matrix** from a 2003 working paper.

A particularly useful section for teachers and school personnel is:

- **Leading Learning**
  http://www.lowsesschools.nsw.edu.au/wcb-content/uploads/psp/file/Strengthening%20Community%20Engagement(5).pdf

  This is a new professional learning resource containing three workshops; its purpose is to assist teachers and school personnel to strengthen their capacity to engage with parents, families and communities. It is a user friendly and practical resource.

Families as Partners in Learning
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/familiesaspartners/

The *Families as Partners in Learning* website is a practical resource for early childhood services and schools to build and strengthen family partnerships. It provides early childhood professionals, leaders and teachers with comprehensive information on the importance of family partnerships, strategies from best practice examples of family partnerships, and tools and resources to assist in the development of successful family partnerships. Blogs can be used as a two-way communication tool. It is a practical and useful resource.

Other features of this website are:
- a Powerpoint presentation for Principals, teaching & non-teaching staff
- a Powerpoint presentation for parents
- an Ultranet which is a student-centred electronic learning environment supporting high quality learning and teaching; it enables the connection between students, teachers and parents. The Ultranet supports parents becoming partners in their child's education.

Another useful section on the Victorian Education website is:
- *School Governance – Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria*
- http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/schoolcouncils/default.htm
- This website provides information for existing and prospective school councillors to support them in their roles. The materials are designed as part of a flexible training and support program, and can be accessed online by individual school councillors or as part of a formal group training session.

The Learning Together Program and Learning Together @ Home
Department of Education and Children's Services, South Australia

http://www.earlyyears.sa.edu.au/pages/Programs/learning_dispositions/

The *Learning Together* program is a DECS program that has operated since 2003 in South Australia. The program is aimed at families with children aged birth–four. It focuses on the importance of children's oral language development, the development of strong dispositions to learning and the critical role parents' play. The resource includes Powerpoint presentations and information sheets about the *Learning Together* program model and key elements of learning.

Families as First Teachers
Department of Education and Training, Northern Territory

http://www.det.nt.gov.au/teachers-educators/early-childhood-services

The site features the *Families as first teachers* program that builds family knowledge of early learning through active engagement in quality early childhood education. Play based programs support families through modelling, side by side engagement and discussion. Resources provide families with information about how young children learn and how parents can make the most of everyday opportunities. The site includes a *Learning with family* resource book and newsletter.

What Works. The Work Program
School and Community: working together Series
Website funded by DEEWR

http://www.whatworks.edu.au/dbAction.do?cmd=displaySitePage2&subcmd=select&id=398

This resource is intended to support partnerships between Indigenous communities and schools, it includes information on:

- conversations, relationships, partnerships (for parents and communities and for staff)
- how schools work
- learning at home and at school
- engagement.

The site includes numerous case studies that may provide strategies that could be used in similar settings.

Walk Right In
Department of Education, Western Australia

http://www.det.wa.edu.au/aboriginaleducation/detcms/navigation/category.jsp?categoryID=7059836

The purpose of the *Walk Right In* resource is to motivate, inspire and empower school staff to support parent involvement in education.

The package includes strategies to encourage Aboriginal families to be more involved in their children's education and lifelong learning. It includes information on staff development, parent education, leadership and administration, family meals and budgeting. There are useful links to additional resources such as:

- classroom resources and contacts
- what's happening around the nation
- programs, groups and departments which have a commitment to improving outcomes for Aboriginal people
- professional and personal support.

The package is designed to be interactive and is useful for teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, independent community groups, student teachers or individuals.

Partners 4 Learning
Council of Catholic School Parents

www.partners4learning.edu.au

Partners 4 Learning is a resource developed to support partnership in Catholic school communities to assist teachers, principals, school administrators and school personnel to strengthen their capacity to engage with parents, families and communities to support children's learning. The framework identifies the key elements of effective partnerships and the distinctive characteristics of Catholic school partnerships.

Dare to Lead
Principals Australia

http://www.daretolead.edu.au/servlet/Web?s=169694&p=DTL08_ProDev_Main

The *Dare to Lead* project focuses on improving educational outcomes for Indigenous students.

The site shows on a table, a range of resources and who they are best suited for in schools, and for what purpose. Resources are intended for use by *Dare to Lead* presenters and other interested school leaders who have attended *Dare to Lead* workshops and include leadership tools, promotional tools, and professional development tools.

Involving Parents in School and Child Care
Raising Children Network

http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/involving_parents_in_school_and_childcare.html/con of this wesitetext/489

Information on this site includes each level of child development, education and making links with school. There is also a monthly newsletter, and book references. It advocates for school partnerships, focusing on the child, creating an environment that supports development and building parent teacher partnerships that make the difference in a child's achievements.

Building Parent Teacher Partnerships
Australian Scholarship Group

http://www.kidslife.com.au/Page.aspx?ID=1452

This site is supported by the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) and has links to areas of interest in parenting and education. Articles from The Scholastic member magazine of the ASG published on the site contain practical ideas and tips for parents as the first educators of children, supporting early literacy development, relationship building with educators, some examples on how to keep in touch with school, and becoming involved in classroom activities.

International resources

United States

A Toolkit: Title 1 Parental Involvement
SEDL | National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools

http://www.sedl.org/connections/

This toolkit contains legislation that is not relevant for Australia but some of the components may be useful. The website contains links to resources for schools, researchers, parents and communities. It emphasises connections that impact on student achievement. The toolkit is designed to provide information to those who are implementing parental involvement programs and contains a list of tools that may be used in program implementation.

Toolkit – Parent Involvement
http://www.k12.hi.us/~konawahs/parent_involvement_tool_kit.htm

The inspiration for this toolkit came from Konawaena High School, Wisconsin US. The toolkit contains legislation that is not relevant in Australia but it does offer practical examples of what one school did to ensure No Child Left Behind (US Legislation). The toolkit contains a number of live links to the step by step process taken and provides ideas to help schools establish their own processes.

The Action Team - Community Learning and Partnerships
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

http://dpi.wi.gov/fscp/bbhghlts.html

This site has a number of relevant articles. *The Action Team* offers guidance and ideas to help schools establish and maintain action teams of parents, teachers, other school staff, and community members. It features practical ideas on gathering information, timely tips for terrific teams, and sample sheets such as a one year action plan, sample surveys and conference tips.

Working Together: School-Family-Community Partnerships
Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations
New Mexico Highlands University

http://www.cesdp.nmhu.edu/toolkit/teacher_tools/promoting-positive-parenting/index.html

Module 2 of this toolkit is *Promoting Positive Parenting*. It focuses on helping families develop positive parenting skills in the home environment for children as learners at home. The resource provides ideas for respecting family cultures, positive ways to talk to children, reaching out to families. It is a resource for families and teachers.

Strengthening Families/Strengthening Schools Toolkit
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

http://tarc.aecf.org/initiatives/mc/sf/index.htm

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Schools Toolkit provides information and resources to help schools work in partnership with families and communities – to strengthen families, strengthen schools, and help children do better.

- Information includes:
- involving schools in strengthening families
- developing social networks
- providing services and supports
- families and schools
- professional development.

United Kingdom

Leading Parent Partnerships Award Program Toolkit (LPPA)

The toolkit is only available in hard copy from the UK and can be ordered online:
http://www.prospectseducationresources.co.uk/search.html?q=LPPA

Information in the toolkit includes an introduction to the benefits of working in partnership with parents and carers, research evidence, current national (UK) policy and developments. There is detailed guidance on how to address each of ten chapters with self evaluation charts, tables, templates and checklists to assist schools in implementing the program and to put in place practices to strengthen their partnership with parents. It is a very practical implementation resource.

Working with Parents, Committed to Community
Teachers.tv

http://www.teachers.tv/search/all?q=families+or+parents

The videos on this site look at varying issues for school leaders and teachers, showing the experiences of others in a range of situations. Titles include: *Engaging with Parents – The Three Way Relationship*, and *Committed to Community*, a useful resource as a discussion starter for sharing and developing family engagement practice.

Parents as Partners in their children's learning toolkit
Learning and Teaching Scotland
http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/publications/p/parentsaspartnerstoolkit.asp?strReferringChannel=search&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-615801-64

This toolkit has been designed for parents, principals and school staff, and local authorities. It provides practical information on how parents can be involved in their children's learning. The toolkit includes checklists, practice examples and activities under topics such as:

- Involving All Parents
- Home and School Partnership
- Links with Community
- Developing a strategy for parental involvement

Canada

Involving Parents in the School
Ontario Ministry of Education

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/

The site contains tips which help to identify, and respond to, what parents in the school community need and want. The 'Getting Started' section provides guidelines for preparing a parent survey on ways parents may become involved in the school. There are tips on:

- developing an action plan
- putting out the welcome mat
- the meet and greet and bring a friend programs.

Moving Beyond Parent Involvement to Parent Engagement
Michigan Department of Education

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Parent_Involvement_Part_1_12-16-04_111426_7.pdf

This information and toolkit was developed to assist in the development, assessment, and implementation of parent engagement policies, programs and plans. The legislation contained in the toolkit is not relevant to Australia. Included are tools on coordination and evaluation, inclusion and professional development and training. The toolkit provides assessment kits, sample policies and the *School-based Community Engagement Model.* This is a comprehensive toolkit which provides ideas for school leaders and teachers.