

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE LONG-TERM EFFECT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN A CHILD'S  
EDUCATION: A TEN-STEP APPROACH

A Thesis Proposal Submitted to  
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary  
In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

Eraina Marie Ross-Aseme

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LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THESIS PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

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GRADE

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MENTOR  
Dr. Charlie Davidson

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READER  
Dr. Leo Percer

## ABSTRACT

ERAINA MARIE ASEME

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, 2012

MENTOR: DR. CHARLIE DAVIDSON

TITLE: THE LONG-TERM EFFECT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN A CHILD'S EDUCATION: A TEN STEP APPROACH

Parental Involvement in a child's education is very important to the child becoming a productive citizen. Some parents find themselves getting in at the start of their child entering elementary school; parental involvement should begin before the school age years. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of establishments such as schools, churches and businesses partnering in a child's education. The goal of this project is to empower parents to build stronger support systems with schools, neighborhoods, churches and communities. Its aim is to show parents, school systems and businesses that collaboration in the education arena can be strengthened to achieve a positive student outcome coupled with approaches and tactics parents can use to gain valuable information. In the long run it's a way to prepare the younger generation to compete in a global economy. Therefore, a holistic view of the child is realistic physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually reaching student achievement.

Abstract Length: 150

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Thesis Project is to show the long-term effects on different life development stages because of parental involvement with children's education. The Thesis will include the Introduction of the project and the four key stages of development of a child, including the time of conception, physical growing stages, educational years, and spiritual development. In addition, there are a number of barriers that may cause a student to drop out of school between races, bad habits, divorce, and lack of resources, in spite of parental involvement.

In addition, there are a number of diverse households such as cultural, racial, economic status and the like. In today's society, an increase number of couples have racially diverse households that also play a factor in parental involvement. Some racially mixed couples face the challenges of acceptance in society as a couple. This ultimately may affect the child academic success. Another factor is culture, Americans have behaviors that may be different o another culture. Some non-American children will demand the same things at home as their American peers. These expectations may bring conflict to the non-American home and make life very challenging for the parents.

Surveys of individuals from metropolitan Kansas City will be included in four key stages to show the importance of parents' involvement in their children's education. Even though a total of forty surveys were distributed, a total of fifteen surveys were returned to be studied. Therefore, based upon fifteen respondents responses to the twenty questions answered, this Thesis project will analyze the data from answers of those fifteen surveys. Although the survey

did not require respondents to give income and career levels, or the current marital status of the respondent, the survey did ask the “Highest level of education earned.” This question investigates the readiness and focus of the adult in preparing a child for academic success. Along with the surveys, extensive research was done in reviewing books, journals, articles, and personal experiences in education of school systems, the community and businesses.

After gathering data from the surveys and researching other published information of parental involvement others will learn of the effectiveness of parental involvement of a child’s education coupled with their spiritual formation as a child. The respondents of the fifteen surveys are all over the age of twenty-one years old. As adults these respondents expressed of an active involvement in church and Sunday School as a child that has been in favor of their success as an adult. This information proves that church attendance has a lasting effect of a child’s spiritual formation in finding success in school.

At the conclusion of the project, references will be included of suggested readings, statistical information of parental involvement of various schools districts, and Sunday school attendance of the ecumenical community charted responds to survey questions. A sample of interview questions and cover letter are included.

### **The Statement of the Problem**

New parents are not always certain on how their child’s education experience will influence them from the early years to the end of the child’s development years. Therefore, writing more about the involvement of volunteers and parents through researching materials written for this worthy cause will encourage parents to be more involved in their child’s education.

In the Thesis project, the Thesis will focus on four areas of the child's academic progress that may play a role in a student's outcome : (1) to show the importance of the development of the healthy uniting of two cells in forming a human being (2) showing how the early stages of development can be influenced by parental involvement physical, emotional and social, (3) though the child has been given proper nurturing while growing up, the reinforcement of the parents boosts many things for the child such as morale and attitude of a child's education, (4), communicating the educational values throughout the years of a child's life is also influenced by his or her exposure to spiritual insights and Christian value. Oftentimes, parents should have a guide to help with the steps that can influence their involvement. Having a positive student outcome helps long-term for family and society. Therefore, the parent's investment of time in a child's activities may benefit the future of the parent of networking with others in the school and community.

### **The Statement of Limitations**

Though the subject matter of parents supporting their child's education is an important one, several areas will not be included in this writing. Americans that are handicapped play an important role; however, this paper will not address their situation. Another area that will not be addressed is those who have been abused mentally or physically. The matter of abuse is very complex and can cause those who have not received proper training to give advice or make assumptions that may be damaging for persons still dealing with the issue as adults.

Additionally, the forty surveys that were distributed may have had a broader view of behavior patterns of parental involvement in a child's education. Nevertheless, the fifteen

surveys received from the respondents will serve as key elements to explore the conditions and manners of parental involvement in a child's education.

### **The Theoretical Basis for the Project**

In some cases, couples make plans to start a family, and in many cases they want the children to be healthy, learned, and be productive citizens. God has given children to be raised and cared for by parents. When the Lord God blesses the parents with children, parents do not know what is going to happen on life's journey with the raising of children. The Bible states in the Book of Romans, "I appeal to you therefore brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."<sup>1</sup>

Also, scripture shows parents that the interaction of education children should happen daily with children. The responsibility for raising children is for adults. Children need the guidance of parents and other adults who have their best interest. In the Book of Deuteronomy Chapter 11 verse 19, states "You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."<sup>2</sup> In other words, there is never a time to take-off in teaching children.

Prior to accepting my calling into the ministry, these desires were what I had been taught even though we were from two different cultures (United States of America and Nigeria). In both of our lives, I have proverbs and experiences from our parents that have helped shaped us as

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| 1. Romans 12:1-2 (ESV).

| 2. Deuteronomy 11:19.

individuals. One of the familiar proverbs quoted throughout the years is that “It takes a village to raise a child.” Several Scripture verses have played a role in the structure of our household; therefore, the subject matter of parental involvement has influenced me to write about the importance of honoring what is in Scripture as well as the anointing of the Holy Spirit to raise productive children.

In order to take care of the Father’s business, people must be attentive to God’s blessing. As it is mentioned earlier in Scripture, “and you are walking by the way;” adults should interact with children to discourage him or her from dropping out of school.<sup>3</sup> There is not a number one reason children drop out but parent being involved can help discourage a child from dropping out of school. Dropouts are from all races with a higher level for some than others.

The Department of Education has several publications that validate the number of students dropping out due to several factors.<sup>4</sup> A source published statistical information about the dropout rates in all ethnic groups for the year 2009 as follows: White 5.2; Black 9.3; Hispanic 17.6; Asian/Pacific Islander 3.4; and American Indian/Alaska Native 13.2.<sup>5</sup> Statistics such as this show the significance of parental involvement in a child’s education and reflect on some of the barriers that may cause the difference between races.<sup>6</sup>

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3. Deut. 11:19.

4. National Center For Education, “Dropout Rates in the United States: 2005. U. S. Education of Commerce, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/dropout05/> (accessed April 23, 2012).

5. [National Center For Education, “Fast Facts.” U. S Education of Commerce. http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display](http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display) (accessed April 23, 2012).

6. Ibid., National Center for Education.

## **The Statement of Methodology**

Trying to understand why so many students drop out of school, parents must be involved in their child's education to reduce the risk of dropping out of school. Many people like to start focusing on a child's education when he or she enters the educational system for the first time. When one thinks about it from a biological and social level, it may be a somewhat late start. Based upon the fifteen surveys received mainly from African Americans from different economic and education backgrounds, and the additional research of printed material received, parents and others will gain a clearer understanding of helpful suggestions to achieve a child's academic success.

Therefore, this thesis will reflect on four areas of influence on a child's education: early stages of learning, upfront learning, life journey learning and vineyard learning.<sup>7</sup> Each area will describe how parent involvement plays a role in a child's education.

### **Chapter One – Early Stages of Learning**

In this section, a biological approach will be used from the time the male and female gametes unite to form an embryo. Also, the writer, showing the impact of the development of the child, and especially the mother, will review the health of the parents. Though health is important, barriers will be reviewed to show how the mother's health habits affect the unborn child.

### **Chapter Two – Upfront Learning**

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7. Early Stages of Learning is seeing the impact of the unborn child based on the parents' health, mentally, emotionally and physically. Upfront Learning will show the effects of a child's development in a nurturing environment. Life Journey is showing the significance of extracurricular activities in a child's academic success, and Vineyard Learning section will show the importance of spiritual environment in a child's education.

Love and affection expressed from parents affect the way a child views himself or herself. When there is a lack of it growth can be detrimental to the social behavior of an individual. When a child is cared for it is demonstrated in various ways. This section will show the effectiveness of sincere care and interest of a child physically, emotionally, culturally, and socially.

### **Chapter Three- Life Journey Learning**

On this life journey, a child needs to be exposed to educational endeavors early in life. A child will not be able to receive information that can be influential for the rest of his or her life when there are a limited number of educational experiences such as sports, church attendance, volunteering and school events. This section will explain the significance of having a child being involved in the family matters.

### **Chapter Four – Vineyard Learning**

Not everyone attends church on a regular basis; however, raising a child within a church helps to establish a well-rounded child as they became an adult. The early teaching of the fruits of the spirit and stewardship has made an impact on our children spiritually and emotionally. Therefore, this section of the thesis will demonstrate the value of involving a child in extracurricular activities such sports, camps, clubs, and outreach programs to help strengthen a child's spiritual life that are providing by the faith community. Not only does the home church provide the child spiritual strengthen but regular church attendance definitely has an impact on the child's spiritual development.

## The Review of the Literature

The field of education has some educational giants in the various disciplines. According to Drs. Timothy Clinton and Ron Hawkins, “Parenting is demanding and rewarding. Many people prepare and study for years to enter a chosen profession, but for parenting we usually receive on-the-job training.”<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the name of Dr. William Jeynes caught my attention in the subject matter of parental involvement and other influences in the development of a child’s academic advancement.<sup>9</sup> The following materials written by Dr. Jeynes will be reviewed to assist in my thesis.

The author William Jeynes’ book *American Educational History: School, Society, and the Common Good* describes the early settlers in the colony of Jamestown. This book shows how parents were involved early in their child’s education. Various cultural groups occupied the regions and the expansions of the charity schools are highlighted as well as separate schools for African Americans. The isms of education for women, Native Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans, and the decisions to erect common schools are addressed. Other materials written by William Jeynes have had a profound impact on the subject of parental involvement in a child’s education.

“Parental Involvement and Academic Success” has been published in several journals. In the article, the author takes a historical perspective of the student outcome on academic achievement. Both primary and secondary education are measured to see the effectiveness of the

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8. Tim Clinton, and Ron Hawkins. *The Quick-Reference Guide to Biblical Counseling*. (Grand Rapids,MI: Baker Books, 2009), 187.

9. William Jeynes, *Parental Involvement and Academic Success* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group 2011), 1.

various levels of parental involvement. Social scientists are giving parental involvement a special place of influence on a youth's educational outcome. He also points out the communication between parents and children are imperative an aggressive child without constructive parental engagement can make some unnecessary mistakes academically.

Also, William Jeynes' editorial, "Parental Involvement Research: Moving to the Next Level" describes the traditional role of parental involvement as children with homework, stay by the rules made at home, and attend school function.<sup>10</sup> However that has somewhat changed in the school environment based on recent meta-analyses which indicate requiring high expectations of one's children's communication with other children and on parental style.<sup>11</sup> These details suggest that the parent may be more involved than what school officials think.<sup>12</sup> The latter element helps maintain boundaries that encourage love and structure for children.<sup>13</sup>

According to William Jeynes in What We Should and Should Not Learn from the Japanese, the American and Asian cultures are vastly different; therefore, learning styles are diverse.<sup>14</sup> The author presses for a middle of the road approach for adopting teaching methods for Asian students.<sup>15</sup> He points out that American educators reject the usage of educational tools

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10. William Jeynes, "Parental Involvement Research: Moving to the Next Level," *School Community Journal* 21.1 (Spring/Summer 2011).

11. Ibid., 9-18.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. William Jeynes, "What We Should and Should Not Learn From The Japanese and other East Asian Education Systems," [http://www.drapuig.info/files/japan\\_system.pdf](http://www.drapuig.info/files/japan_system.pdf) (accessed April 23, 2012).

15. Ibid.

from the Japanese, Taiwanese, and Chinese. Another cultural group that social scientists are studying is the level of parental involvement in the urban setting.<sup>16</sup>

William Jeynes defines studies in the article “The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Urban Secondary School Student Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis,” stating that fifty two studies were conducted on students in an urban setting of secondary education along with four different standards used in the study. Ethnicity, income, education, and occupation of parents were included.<sup>17</sup> Educators have recognized that parental involvement has a major significance in a child’s academic achievement. However, families in urban settings have more challenges such as family separations, and other pressures not experienced as greatly as others.<sup>18</sup> The author deals specifically with four questions that reveal how achievement can increase for urban students with parental involvement: (1) To what degree is parental involvement associated with higher levels of school achievement among urban schools?; (2) Do school programs of parental involvement positively influence urban students?; (3) What aspects of parental involvement positively influence urban students?; and (4) Does the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement hold across racial groups?<sup>19</sup> Oftentimes American cultural success is downplayed according to the author. He feels that Americans have had great achievements in the area of education but Americans do not recognize them.

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16. Ibid.

17. William, Jeynes, “The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Urban Secondary School Student Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis,” *Urban Education* 42.1.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

In his article, “The Effects of the Religious Commitment of Twelfth Graders Living in Non-Intact families on Their Academic Achievement,” Jeynes spends incredible time analyzing the parent of non-intact families especially when it comes to the engagement of religion in the families.<sup>20</sup> Religiosity orientation of Black and Hispanic families seemed to have a major impact on intact families versus its counterpart of non-intact families. Religion appears to help students outcome who have experienced family trauma such as divorce or separation of parents. The fact that some children may practice religious ritual may have a hidden agenda such as seeking parent’s approval: “(1) Other behaviors not conclusive to religious people are avoided and reiterate unacceptable behaviors (2) Religious work ethic (3) Belief in God internally.”<sup>21</sup> Religion plays a key role in parents’ involvement in education as well as spiritual. Consequently, traditional family structure has changed and new views are being looked at regarding student outcome.

In *The Effects of Several of the Most Common Family Structures on the Academic Achievement of Eighth Graders*, the author states that for over two decades the structure of the traditional family has changed.<sup>22</sup> However, traditional families have been interrupted by divorce and death most are duly to unwed parents.<sup>23</sup> “There are three schools that have an adverse effect on a student’s outcome: (1) absent parent school of thought, (2) socioeconomic school of

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20. William Jeynes, “The Effects of the Religious Commitment of Twelfth Graders Living in Non-Intact Families in Their Academics Achievement,” *Marriage and Family Reviews* 35.1/2 (2003), p.p. 77-97.

21. William Jeynes, “The Effects of the Religious Commitment of Twelfth Graders Living in Non-Intact Families in Their Academics Achievement.”

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

thought, and (3) non-parental adjustment school of thought.”<sup>24</sup> The presence of stepparents may cause undue stress for children.

Dr. Jeynes notes in his book *The Impact of Parental Remarriage on Children*, that through a study measures the outcome of adolescent. The families viewed held different marital status.<sup>25</sup> The author makes reference that in the past, the legal separation of couples had a traumatic impact on the children of the couple may not be so absolute in modern times.<sup>26</sup> Though much research has been written on divorce and other couple separation matters, not much work exists on stepfamilies or “step households.” In summary, he points out that a divorce can actually benefit the children due to the reconstruction of the household of having another person present to pick up the slack with raising the children.

In addition to William Jeynes’ work on parental involvement, there are biblical references that influence the rise of children’s academic achievement as a topic. Dr. Jeynes noticed that family dynamics began to change in the 80s in the United States. His work emphasized that family structures began to change about two decades ago.<sup>27</sup> These changes of family structures have drawn attention to the educational outcomes of children. He also points out that educated parents have a stronger impact on children in the home versus parents without an education, and especially with parents of color. Parental style seems to have a major impact on the academic achievement of children. Researchers (Brown and Iyengar) have stated,

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24. Ibid.

25. Jeynes, “The Impact of Parental Remarriage on Children: A Meta-Analysis,” *Marriage & Family Review* 40.4.

26. Jeynes, “The Impact of Parental Remarriage on Children: A Meta-Analysis.”

27. William Jeynes, “The Salience of Family Factors in Children’s School Experiences,” *Marriage & Family Review* 43.1/2 (2008), p.p. 73-97.

that the following are factors to consider of parental involvement: parental control, gender, parenting style, parental education, perceptual differences, ethnicity, and diversity. The Latino community is highly influenced by religion and educational than social scientist have once believed in the past.<sup>28</sup>

Sources note that during the settlement of the colonies in the United States, religion played a major role in the school system but later was removed by the courts from the school systems.<sup>29</sup>

Dr. Jeynes notes there is a movement to give religion its rightful place back in the school system.<sup>30</sup>

Dr. Jeynes' work, *The Relationship Between Biblical Literacy, Academic Achievement, and School Behavior Among Christian-and Public School Students* shows a movement to place Bible courses into the curriculum of public schools.<sup>31</sup> It is believed that Bible literacy will help increase a student's knowledge of the Bible and improve behavior. Utilizing the Bible in the public school curriculum reveals that public schools are not conducive to the type of environment like a religious school. Due to a moral decay in public schools, the writer states it to be an urgency to teach Bible literacy.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, Dr. Jeynes' book *The Learning Habits of Twelfth Graders Attending Religious and Non-Religious Schools* tackles the issue of Catholic and non-Catholic religions school

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28. Ibid.

29. William Jeynes, "The Relationship Between Biblical Literacy Academic Achievement, and School Behavior Among Christian-and Public School Students," *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 18.1 (2009): p.p. 36-55.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

student's differences.<sup>33</sup> Research supports the increase in achievement levels of students attending religious schools.<sup>34</sup> The author explains that the social scientist contributes to the difference of achievement levels due to factors such as amount of homework, school atmosphere, and school discipline policy. He asks what degree of students attending religious schools have better learning habits than students attending non-religious schools, and to what degree do better learning habits contribute to student academic success? "He states that religious parents reiterate self-discipline more than other schools and parents."<sup>35</sup> Many more parents would be involved if the school systems are more user-friendly.

Dr. Jeynes shows how this can be done in *Helping Families by Fostering Parental Involvement*. He suggests that school systems need to work both ways in providing an opportunity for low-income families to be involved in their child's education. Schools need to reach out more by showing sincere helpfulness to low income and minority families both males and females such as access to basketball courts, weight rooms and other athletic facilities, Parent Day, outreach, and recognize existing involvement in empowering their child through encouragement and communication bonds.

William Ouchi notes in *Making Schools Work: A Revolutionary Plan To Get Your Children The Education They Need*. He explains the challenges in expecting good things to happen in a school district such as the one that was being researched. He clearly notes that what made the school successful was creating a program that catered to the population of the

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33. William Jeynes, "The Learning Habits of Twelfth Graders Attending Religious and Non-Religious Schools," *International Journal of Education & Religion* 4.2 (2003): p.p. 145-167.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

neighborhood where the school was located.<sup>36</sup> Parental involvement is being to help other children as well. There are certain activities that parents can be aware of in engaging in a school and/or classroom.<sup>37</sup> This will help parents to gain knowledge of the processes used in the school.

In *Working Parents Can Raise Smart Kids*, John E. Beaulieu and Alex Granzin describe how parental involvement does not have to be so long and involvement such working in classrooms or otherwise. The authors believe that the reinforcement at home and the showing up of parents to a couple of school programs was sufficient for a child to be encouraged during the school year.<sup>38</sup> While a parent is pursuing a career, the academic success of his or her child may be alter if the parent neglects taking time with the child. Not everything is gained in school for a child life continues to present challenges as a child grows and matures.

Phillip C. Schlechty writes in *Shaking Up The School House* that although new methods and practices have been introduced to the school system, it remains the same.<sup>39</sup> The reason for this catastrophe in the school system is the fact that school officials lack a willingness to change to meet societal changes. When a system wants to change a system that is regulated by others, the changing system must be willing to grasp what is taking place at the start. This author feels that is why the school system is not being as effective as it could due to the slowness to be innovative with the changing times.

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36. William G. Ouchi, *Making Schools Work: A Revolutionary Plan To Get Your Children The Education They Need* (New York: Rockefeller Center, 2003), 4.

37. Ibid., 218.

38. John E. Beaulieu, and Alex Granzin, *Working Parent Can Raise Smart Kids*. (Tacoma, WA: Parkland Press, 1999), 115.

39. Phillip C. Schlechty, *Shaking Up The School House: How to Support and Sustain Educational Innovation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 5.

## Electronic Sources

In “Issues In The Research, Theory, Policy, and Practice of Urban Education: Including Families and Communities in Urban Education,” edited by Catherine M. Hands and Lea Hubbard, one author discovers family engagement in school systems are orchestrated by the elements that help shape the partnering of the child’s families and communities.<sup>40</sup> Collectively, school systems, culture, and political structure have an adverse effect on parental involvement.

Mary M. Bacon, during a keynote address titled “Every Shut-eye Ain’t Sleep,” she approached education partnerships that encourage families to have a level playing field to promote a positive educational process. When businesses support the school district, the benefits are countless.<sup>41</sup> She encouraged that every component of the community should be a part of educating the child.

“Policy Perspectives” by James S. Coleman expresses a great need for the children’s families and the community to be strengthened to achieve successful student achievement. Generally, school administrators and staff are not always reaching for the same goal as the student’s families that they serve. He urges both school administrators, students, and their families to work close together to achieve the ultimate goal.<sup>42</sup>

“Achieving the goals: goal 8, Parental Involvement and participation” by U.S.G.P.O., Supt. Of Doc’s show different ways parents, schools, and communities can become involved in a

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40. Lea Hubbard, and Catherine Hands, Ed. “Including Families and Communities in Urban Education.” IAR Information Age Publishing, Inc. <http://overdrivesearch.org> (accessed April 23, 2012).

41. Mary Bacon, “Every Shut-eye Ain’t Sleep,” state.tn.us website <http://www.state.tn.us/education/lead/doc/MMB-Keynote.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2012).

42. James S. Coleman, “Policy Perspectives: Parental Involvement in Education.” Office of Educational Research and Improvement. ebook. U. S. Department of Education. (accessed March 1, 2012).

child's "education through a more personalized school opening, school-family compacts (direct partnering), Principal For the Day, Adopt-A-School, Netday, Open House, Family Information and Resource Centers, and Voicemail and Interactive Telephone Technologies."<sup>43</sup> For years schools have had open houses inviting parents to meet teacher and school staff. These school open door invites can help make the transition for parents, teachers, students, and school staff acquainted with each other as well as help to keep open the lines of communication.

*Parental Involvement in Childhood Education* by Garry Hornby outlines ways to involve parents such as various informal activities for encouraging parents to come to school, varied formats, of parent-teacher meetings (both formal and informal), a variety of forms of written communication, telephone contacts, and to a lesser extent, use of technological options, and home visits.<sup>44</sup>

In *Parental Involvement in childhood education: building effective school-family partnerships*, Garry Hornby was inspired to do work on parental involvement when he worked as an educator for 35 years in New Zealand. He found that establishing a connection with parents early in the school year was important.<sup>45</sup> Even though the author's career in the education arena was not in America, he still recognized that parental involvement is important.

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43. Superintendent of Docs. "Achieving the Goals: goal 8, Parental Involvement and Participation." United States Government Printing Office. ebook. (accessed March 1, 2012).

44. Gary Hornby, "Parental Involvement in childhood education: building effective school-family partnerships." ebook. Springer Science + Business Media, 2011.

45. Ibid.

“Parental Involvement” shares that the development of a child’s character is influenced by the involvement of the parent in the school organization called PTA. PTA is an organization that serves as a clearinghouse for parental involvement.<sup>46</sup>

An article published by Stephen Murphy titled “My Tiger Mom’s Subtle Ways” that shows how a subtle approach of a Japanese mom instilled high achievement in her children’s education. Culture plays a critical part in a child’s education in a diversified home.<sup>47</sup> A parental style can be harmful or helpful to parents who want academic success for their child.

G. Olsen and M. L. Fuller point out in their article “The Benefits of Parent Involvement: What Research Has To Say”<sup>48</sup> that parental involvement is needed to help a student desire academic achievement. Income and social status is not what detects the success of a student; rather, it is the home environment, future realistic goals, and parental involvement in school and community.

An article by P. C. Broderick and P. Blewitt shows that there are four parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglecting-uninvolved.<sup>49</sup> Each style has a dominator who ultimately affects the learning behavior of the child. A child’s behavior is centered on the environment in which they are raised. A parent’s demand or lack thereof is important to the education future of their child. Therefore, the educator knowing the child’s

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46. National PTA, “Mission, Vision and Values.”<http://www.parentinvolvementmatters.org> (accessed March 1, 2012).

47. Stephen Murphy, “My Tiger Mom’s Subtle Ways,” <http://www.pta.org/> (accessed March 1, 2012).

48. G. Olsen, and M. L. Fuller, “The Benefits of Parent Involvement: What Research Has to Say,” <http://www.education.com> (accessed March 1, 2012).

49. P.C. Broderick, and P. Blewitt, “Four Parenting Styles,” education.com, <http://www.education.com/reference/article/four-parenting-styles/> (accessed March 1, 2012).

parental style can be valuable information on achieving academic success.

### **Theological References**

In the beginning of Scripture, the creation of man is described in this way: “So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”<sup>50</sup> God created male and female to take care of God’s creation. God is an uncreated spirit and without sin, so there was a high hope for the creation of the first humans when they rebelled and the Savior was sent for a dying world. When the Savior was sent the restoration of man and woman can be united. Genesis 2:24 states, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” Two parents who love each other serve as a bond for the child. The unity that exists between couples is transferred into the activities of a child as he or she develops emotionally, physically and spiritually. The development of the children has a direct effect on the family structure. Due to the unwillingness of man and woman to follow God’s commandment in the Garden of Eden, they forced a separation from God. Therefore, a gamut of things happens when sin slips into the lives of God’s creation. One of the issues affecting academic achievement is the subject of divorce. The separation of man and woman has caused a major disaster in families. These divorces have had a domino effect on the academic growth of their children. Sometimes with a change of divorce one of the partners are now absent from the scene of discipline a child.

The Bible states, “The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgrace his mother.”<sup>51</sup> Research has shown that discipline is needed for children in the home

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50. Gen.1: 27 (KJV).

51. Prov. 29:15.

and in schools. In the religious setting, structure seems to be the main ingredient for discipline. Some families have seen the benefits of being in the structured school environment.

According to Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” As parents raise their child, they expose him or her to the world. However, unwanted exposure of children to an unhealthy environment stifles the growth of a student. Parents help shape their children’s behavior and moral values by taking them to church and engaging them in Sunday School, or other church activities.

Perhaps Christians know that it is their Christian duty to teach children how to live morally in society; therefore, identifying school environments with positive learning styles helps the overall cause of raising children upright. Though children are not the only ones that are taught, they are the subject of discussion for this Thesis. Romans 8:28 states, “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” Every Christian has a calling to do ministry in one way or another. When parents recognize their purpose, it may improve their interaction with the school system and community. Those parents recognizing their call in ministry of enhancing the education system must share what God has given to help others. In most cases, the school curriculums draw professionals who are trained in areas of education and who give the best for students to be able to learn. However, unprofessionalism behavior can dramatically affect a school system as well as a child. Parental involvement also draws others who can help children in an environment to learn.

Some single parents are trying their best to provide a balanced household. The Bible states in Proverbs 20:11-12 that “[e]ven children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure, and whether it is right. Ears to hear and eyes to see-both are gifts from the

Lord.” Though parents try everything in their power to protect the child from the hearing and seeing immoral behavior it enters the household through all types of media, i.e., cell phones, IPODs, IPADs, Internet, just to mention a few. The senses that God has given me were made for good use but through corruption God’s gift is often misused and abused causes children to be victims of misfortune.

It is important that parents, educators and the community recognize that everyone has different gifts that God has granted them. The Bible states in Ephesians 4:11-13:

I was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Everyone has been given a gift from God and it is up to those that recognize the gifts of others to help develop it. For one to recognize fully what God has given an individual depends on the person’s level of maturity physically, emotionally especially spiritually. Without the maturity of knowing how to use the God-given gift, it may be misused and underdeveloped. An undeveloped gift can destroy families and communities. A student’s outcome will not reach their full potential when the gift is undermined. I Corinthians 12: 1 says, “Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.”

Human work can be good or bad work. Because of the power struggle Satan had with God, evil now exists. Due to the sin of Adam, humans have the potential to oppose God’s will. The Bible says in Matthew 12:33, “Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by [his] fruit.” When parents are involved in a child’s education good fruit can be harvested if proper guidance is given to the

child academically. Oftentimes the experiences of a child can expose him or her to matters that are harmful to the future of the child. Raising a child in an environment with love and care often produces a situation to be more favorable for a child. The positive reinforcement leads to a productive outcome on the child's part.

Many times when parents are so busy and do not have communication daily with their child, they are not aware of what a child may be experiencing at school. In some cases, educators are unaware of the demand of education system policy and the lack of connection with the child. According to I Corinthians 13:11, "When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things." A child's priorities are different partly due to the world around him or her. As the American child experiences life changes, the maturity level of a child may increase their responsibilities through these experiences. Some parents realize a need to raise families, and the community's education and training is needed to improve the quality of life.

II Timothy 3:14-15 states, "But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. You have been taught the holy scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus." Biblical teaching has raised caring individuals, though some have strayed away from living a Christian life. Nevertheless, the foundation of love is shown through the Bible and the teachings help a person to understand and treasure moral values and beliefs.

Christians know that God created everything, but humanity did not obey the command given to them in the Garden of Eden. Therefore, God sent his son Jesus to save sinners from sin.

While Jesus provided ministry on earth, He knew that He was about His Father's business. Christ showed humanity how to share and provide for the future. Though Christ's mission was eternal, humanity was given the Holy Spirit to empower them to what Christ has directed the Christian to do. John 7:16 states, Jesus answered, my teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me." Jesus' example of teaching has influenced many generations. According to Matthew 4:23, "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, healing every disease and sickness among the people." The religious schools have hope for those students and families that may not fit the societal norm to still be successful in schools. Jesus' earthly ministry shows humanity that steadfastness and long-suffering is part of survival in society. Especially in some low-income families that have many odds against them, faith in God and religious beliefs may give hope in a hopeless situation. Jesus showed this in His earthly ministry repeatedly.

Parents must be aware of the inabilities of their child academically in order to achieve a desired student outcome. Educators have their parts to play as well. The Bible says in Proverbs 1:5, "Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance." All that a child may experience in life may have a deeper concern that may not surface academically for many years to come. Educators and parents who are dedicated to the success of the child can make the connection on how to reach the child. School systems many times use a systemic way of handling student achievement and missing the mark of where the weakness is for a child. Parents are at ease when their child makes progress in school. Matthew 11:29 says, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for

your souls.” When parents raise God-fearing children and put their trust in God to work through the challenges in life, humanity can find rest.

There is a vast world for children to discover and parents should want their children to take advantage of those opportunities that the Lord will unfold to them along the way. However, in the midst of discovery come misfortunes that may cause the child to get off the unbeaten path. Colossians 2:8 (ESV) says, “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”

Children are given to parents by God. And just like God has a plan for the parents. God has a plan for each child. Jeremiah 29:11 (ESV) says, For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Parents must be willing to follow the guidance of the Lord to provide a base for children to build a strong foundation. The benefits that a child will be received in preparing the future can be remarkable.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Early Stages of Learning

Oftentimes it is assumed that learning begins when a child starts school. However, a child's development and learning begins at the time of conception. The health of the parents especially the mother can influence the child's physical development while the embryo is developing in the mother's womb. This is important to note since the dependency of the growth of the child in the mother's womb relies on the food consumption and habits of the mother. However, the father's plays a different role physically than the mother. The father's genetic make-up will impact the development of the child, this is evident when the cells come together from the parents.

### Conception

God created man and woman to take care of God's creation. Another task that God gave man and woman was to multiply the earth. The Bible says in Genesis 2: 18, "And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him."<sup>1</sup> Though God created man and woman, and could have increased the population instantly, God gave man and woman the instructions to increase the population.<sup>2</sup> When instructions were given to the first man and woman to avoid eating from a certain tree in the Garden of Eden, they chose to do otherwise. These instructions from God established the freedom of choice. With this freedom, God's creation proved that human dependence is needed by God.

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1. Blue Letter Bible. "Book of Beginnings-"BlueLetterBible.1996-2012.<<http://www.blueletterbible.org/Bible.cfm?b=Gen&c=2at=KJV>> (accessed May 1, 2012).

2 . Gen. 9:7 (KJV).

## **Sperm and Egg**

Unfortunately, the origination of sin of Adam and Eve has caused each human born to born in sin. Therefore, humans must seek God through the Son of Man for repentance. Even though God created man and woman to have reproductive cells such as the sperm and egg to produce a child, the fact remains that every child born is in sin. Prior to the choices made by Adam and Eve, the first human beings had the opportunity to be created without flaw. The flaws brought on by Original Sin have a lasting effect on human beings. These defects are seen in the physical development of human beings. Due to the abnormalities of these reproductive cells it may cause the underdevelopment of a human being. The deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) in these twenty-three chromosomes can be disturbed by any number of factors, and it consists of the genetics of the embryo.<sup>3</sup> The chromosomes can carry certain genetic codes that can tailor the union of both the male and female reproductive cells. These offsets can have a negative effect and produce a human being that may have some challenges in developing.

## **Behavior**

The negative effects of the behavior of a child and their parents often hinges on the early care for the child. In society, individuals who have chosen to birth a child without being married and/or no long-term relationship may cause a child to experience some difficulties. The father of the unborn child is not always at fault. For an example, a father may have an ailing relative and spends time to care for them. But the mother feels compelled to dismiss the father from the child's life to the responsibility of the father. The unwed couple chose not to marry or to stay together for various reasons; therefore, the mother has no escape route since she carries the

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3. Jeffrey C. Pommerville, *Alcorno's Fundamentals of Microbiology* (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2004), 135.

unborn child in her womb. During the pregnancy, the female body experiences many changes, but the experience is different for every woman.

When a pregnant woman experiences difficulty, it can affect the child emotionally and physically. For example, if the woman was raped and decides to raise the child, she may forgive her defender even though seeing the child reminds her of the incident, causing some resentment or other actions to take place. Some pregnant women do not comprehend the direct effect of their behavior of an unborn child.

### **Health of parents**

About twenty years ago, children could go outside and play, and were creative in the games they played. As Robert Chad reports, Thomas Jefferson once noted, “Exercise and application produce ordering our affairs, health of body, cheerfulness of mind, and these make us precious to our friends.”<sup>4</sup> Computer games slow the American child’s ability to burn calories.<sup>5</sup> As Americans shop to provide a healthy meal for their families, the choices can be difficult. The grocery store shelves have an abundance of processed foods and artificial preservatives that affect the health of Americans.

Oftentimes, the child comes home from school and cooks his or her processed meal in the microwave or chooses to eat fast foods, which is ready within minutes in comparison to a cooked meal on the stovetop. But studies show that home cooked meals create the opportunity to include

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4. Roberta Chad, *When Staying Home Is Not An Option* (Bedminster, NJ: Achiever’s Technology Resources, Inc., 2001), 47.

5. Better Health, [http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Computer\\_games\\_health\\_issues?open](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Computer_games_health_issues?open) (accessed August, 11, 2012).

different foods groups.<sup>6</sup> Also, this type of lifestyle causes hypertension in children as well as parents. According to Dr. Fred Pescatore, “Hypertension is becoming increasingly prevalent in the childhood years.”<sup>7</sup> Consequently, it is important for the mother of the unborn child eats nutritious meals to help potentially to develop a healthy child. As a result, the early detection of an underdeveloped child may cause the mother to make the choice to abort the unborn child legally and illegally.

Nevertheless, the health of the parents is not sufficient due to a lack of exercise and proper eating. Instead of getting healthy prior to childbirth, a child is born while parents may or may not be in the best of health. These unhealthy conditions of the parents can pass to the unborn child unknowingly and produce a baby that may have some development issues. If the parents were aware of an unborn child's health, it could affect the parents for years to come. The naked eye cannot see human reproductive cells; however, instruments exist that can detect these cells and, in turn, detect potential birth defects. Earlier detection of birth defects helps parents to seek the proper care of the unborn child. Some couples choose to prepare for what has been predicted by the doctors, others give up their child to be raised by others, and others abort the embryo.

Another factor that has a direct impact on a parent’s health is stress. Stress has been linked to many different health issues such as diabetes, high blood pressures, and cancer.<sup>8</sup> These health issues affect increasing number of childbearing age women as well as those with school aged children. Sources stated that when World War II took place, women were asked to fill the

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6. Home-cooked meals vs Fast food.

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/437152-home-cooked-meals-vs-fast-food/> (accessed August 28, 2012).

7 . Fred Pescatore, M.D. *Feed Your Kids Well* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1998), 151.

8. Terrace Smith, *Healthwise Handbook: A Self-Care Manual For You* (Boise, ID: a Healthwise Publication, 1997), 28.

jobs since men had to go to war.<sup>9</sup> Since that time women have seen the benefit of working outside the household and have been slow to go back and raised the family.<sup>10</sup> Their children and grandchildren have seen these same women work outside the home. Therefore, when young girls grow up they are compelled to work outside the home while trying to balance all of the other activities of raising a family. As a result of trying to keep everything balanced, stress may set in.

### **Mother's Nutrition**

A mother's nutrition is important to the unborn child. Prenatal vitamins prescribed to a pregnant woman can have a long lasting effect for her unborn child when taken properly. Some young women choose to hide their pregnancy, which can have a damaging effect on the unborn child's health. Therefore, the prenatal care of the unborn child is crucial to reach the potential that God has destined for the child and parents to reach. Americans see impoverished parents lacking the resources to live healthy lives repeatedly. When these individuals gain access to public health and support systems, they are, in most cases, able to produce a healthy environment to raise the child. Another added feature for raising healthy children is that the business community in the urban society is sensitive to the health of the public by having early and late store hours.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, most small towns and cities may not consider the health issues for families by keeping stores hours convenient for working parents. The health professionals urge parents to practice healthy habits before a baby is born.

### **Economic Status**

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9. Jone Johnson Lewis, "Women and World II – Women At Work," [http://womenshistory.about.com/od/warwwii/a/women\\_work.htm](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/warwwii/a/women_work.htm) (accessed April 30, 2012).

10. Ibid., Lewis.

11. Michael Van Straten, and Barbara Griggs, *Super Foods for Children* (New York: Dorling Kindersely, Ltd., 2001), 7.

Some impoverished parents lack resources such as housing and health insurance, but their education level is contributing factor. The lack of proper nutrition and living conditions can lead to problems for the child such as bedwetting, expressing emotions, lying, insecurity, temper tantrums, bullying, and getting teased.<sup>12</sup> When parents know about hereditary tendencies, the matter can be handled properly early.

It is a myth that uneducated parents produce uneducated children. With the proper exposure of resources, a child living in an improvised area can succeed. Children in poor neighborhoods have a greater chance of becoming involved in activities that are not conducive to productive living conditions. This is due to not having a positive role model or positive influence on the child's life. The birthrate of improvised individuals lowers due to the lack of necessary means to survive in the society, and increases the children's chances of poor health and weak immune systems as well as being underdeveloped. The lack of resources can cause health issues: physical and emotional that may seem normal but sometimes the health issue is ignored, and can effect a child for life. This long term effect can sometimes be carryover into adulthood. For an example, recently, Dr. Bernardo K. Carducci learned that a shyness of a child is deemed as a disorder by some medical professionals. Dr. Bernardo J. Carducci, cautions the parents of a shy child to use strategies that allow their child to warm up to.<sup>13</sup> Forcing a child to interact abruptly could cause long-term effects in a child's social behavior. Many other behavior problems or

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12. Dr. Todd Cartmell, *The Parent Survival Guide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 7, 8.

13. Bernardo J. Carducci, Ph.D., *The Shyness Breakthrough* (Emmaus, PA: Roadalestore Inc, 2003), 145-146.

patterns have an adverse effect on the development of a child.<sup>14</sup> The positive development of a child is important to the role they will play which will affect every means of society: business, laws, health, politics, etc. Therefore, early detection is better rather than discovering the behavior disorder later.

## **Parenting Skills**

The development of technology has impacted every market in modern society. This invasion of technology includes the interaction between an unborn child and the mother as well as the unborn child's surroundings. Some educated parents are aware of the effects of technology and tend to prepare for the child's future because of it. For the younger generation of parents in their twenties and thirties, the traditional social entertainment has changed and now includes electronic games such as PlayStation, a digital computer station to play games from a CD-ROM and many others computer games. Some players of these games have steered away from average interaction of one-on-one conversation. It is not uncommon for an unborn child to move when the baby is uncomfortable from a sudden noise or contact. Therefore, the mother must provide the proper care before the birth of her child to ensure the best possible physical development of the baby.

Not only do sounds affect the baby, but the mother's nutrition also has an impact on the baby's health. During pregnancy, the baby is constantly growing consuming everything the mother digests. "One of the startling discoveries of biochemistry is that the genetic code is redundant because in most cases there is more than one codon for each amino acid."<sup>15</sup> Now

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14. Ibid., Carducci.

15. Jeffrey C. Pommerville, *Alcamo's Fundamentals of Microbiology* (Sudbury, Massachuttes: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2004), 205.

mothers are able to identify the father of the child through DNA testing. The procedure used in DNA testing was discovered “in 1953 by American biochemist Alfred Hersey and geneticist Martha Chase.”<sup>16</sup> The balance of these elements in the amino fluids helps with the bodily functions of the fetus, allowing a proper distribution of nutrients to the body. Every second the unborn child is growing and developing; therefore, the burden of ensuring the child receives proper nutrition is the mother’s. “Growing infants, children, and pregnant women, who need protein for the formation of bones, muscle, and other tissue, take in more nitrogen than they lose and are said to be in positive nitrogen balance.”<sup>17</sup> Along with the insurance of the mother eating properly, she must see her doctor on a regular basis.

### **Regular doctor’s visits**

A doctor visit can help the parents during stages of the unborn child’s development and for the health of the mother. During the four week prenatal care visit to the doctor, which is considered the first and second trimester, vitals of taken as well urine samples to monitor any unusual changes of the mother and unborn child.<sup>18</sup> With each prenatal visit, there may be other request for early detection. With the advancement of technology, sonograms have been administered to determine factors such as the sex of the unborn child and to listen the baby’s heartbeat. Those administering the test will even issue a diagram sketch of the unborn child. In some cases, the preparation for the baby’s arrival has been based on myths, causing parents to prematurely prepare for the wrong gender. Unfortunately, the dissatisfaction of the sex has

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16. Ibid., 29.

17. Miriam E. Nelson, Ph. D., *Strong Women Eat Well* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 2001), 101.

18. Baby Center Medical Advisory Board, “What to expect at your prenatal visits” Babycenter, [http://www.babycenter.com/0\\_what-to-expect-at-your-prenatal-visits\\_9252.bc](http://www.babycenter.com/0_what-to-expect-at-your-prenatal-visits_9252.bc) (accessed April 30, 2012).

forced parents to orient the rearing of the child of the desired gender. In some cases, the parent's behavior affects the way he or she raises a child, leaving the child with unresolved sexuality issues.

Ignoring the early warning signs can cause a child to be confused for years due to misunderstanding that there is a problem with him or her. A need to help a child in his or her early stages of development exists and should be nurtured. Just as a physical abnormality can occur in the development stages of a child, so it can happen genetically. Therefore, the parents play a key role in a child's life in leading the way to a healthy life without jumping onto a social trend.

Increasing numbers of families are changing due to divorce, court systems, societal influences, and this change causes a difference in raising children from prior years. According to the 2010 Census, the population in the United States is over 309 million people, and with this growth rate in population a change in family life is probable.<sup>19</sup> People come to the United States to live a better life, which introduces cultural ways that affect all systems and especially schools. The growing number of families entering the various school systems every school year brings about another challenge of providing support for our children.

Many of the school systems are in desperate need of funding for school programs. Those interested in a positive child outcome must create programs in the school district. This involves administration and staff; and parents to plan to help satisfy the lack of funding for the schools. Due to the lack of skills and sometimes the education level of the parents, the child goes without the support to have a desired student outcome.

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19. 2010 Census Data, "Redistricting Data." <http://2010.Census.gov> (accessed April 30, 2012).

For the most part, parents have wanted their children to excel at a higher standard than themselves. Households with two parents seemed to help a child to be more productive in school for several reasons: parental reinforcement, shared responsibilities, parenting styles.<sup>20</sup> Depending on the historical background of each parent's background; parent involvement helps shape and mold the new parent. Parents from disturbing emotional, social and intellectual backgrounds can have an adverse effect when raising their children. Then again, due to their experiences, parents from challenging backgrounds can help ensure that things will be different for their children.

Though parents make a pledge to take a different stance on how they are going to rear their child, they may live in an environment that is not healthy for the child. This could have a negative effect if no positive reinforcement is applied. No matter the parenting style, there is a dominant factor at the center of it. The parents and cultural values surrounding the family influence the parenting style. When the unborn child is cuddled in the womb of the mother, he or she develops and begins to feel sensations of the mother and her environment.

### **Talk Therapy to the Unborn Child**

Although the unborn child spends the longest time with its mother, at a certain stage of development he or she can begin to notice other sounds outside of the mother's voice. There is evidence that unborn children can hear while in the womb. According to an article by Anne Richley in *Pregnancy Life* titled "*Your baby's movements inside your bump*, mothers are convinced that babies can hear in the womb."<sup>21</sup> Therefore, knowing there is a possibility of the unborn hearing while in the womb more parents are talking to their unborn child.

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20. William Jeynes, "The Salience of Family Factors in Children's School Experiences," *Marriage & Family Review* 43.1 (2008).

21. *Pregnancy Life*. <http://www.madeformums.com>. (Accessed August 28, 2012).

## **Voice Tone**

While the baby is in the womb, a parent should nurture and speak to the unborn child. A voice tone can be harsh or nurturing. Even though the unborn child does not understand the words, the voice tone is innate. These messages are not necessarily formulated until the birth of the child and he or she views the world. For example, hearing musical instruments may be heard by the unborn child but not applied until the child is able to reach interact child with a musical instrument.

## **Embryonic Fluid**

The embryonic fluid serves as a protective environment and nourishment for the unborn child. This fluid also contains important nutrients to help with the growth of the child.<sup>22</sup> The first trimester includes development of the eyes, ears, limbs, and other features even though they are not yet functional as such.<sup>23</sup> These facts help the parents understand the importance of early development of the child. Health problems could bring unwanted stress for the child and their family. An unhealthy environment could affect how the family supports its child's education. For example, if health issues are identified, the demand to care for the child occupies the parents' valuable time that could be used for other demanding matters.

## **Induced Environment**

When a woman is impregnated due to rape, it is a traumatic experience. Not only does the woman experience the unwanted sex of an individual, but the conception of a child leaves the mother confused at times on what to do. The mother bearing a child due to rape or not

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22. U. S. National Library of Medicine, "Amniotic Fluid," <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002220.htm> (accessed April 30, 2012).

23. Health & Pregnancy, "First Trimester of Pregnancy," <http://www.webmd.com> (accessed May 5, 2012).

emotionally tie to a person may cause a child to be emotionally unbalanced. If the mother decides to keep the child may affect the development of a child emotionally especially if the man impregnating the woman has not been identified. Fortunately, the advancement in the medical field has allowed mothers to identify the father through DNA testing.

### **One Night Stand**

The unresolved issue of not knowing the father's identity often leads to a feeling of violation and neglect by the mother. This type of situation causes emotions to be on a constant roller coaster due to an unknown father. A growing child may not ever know his or her real father due to embarrassment or heartache on the mother's part. Some mothers will try their best to raise a productive child to have academic success.

### **Violence**

Another area that can affect parental involvement is the area of violence of the parent. A parent who constantly shows his or her child handling issues through violence encourages the child's life to be miserable for the school staff and parents. The removal of religion out of public schools is directly associated with the increase of violence. "School shootings happened much earlier than reported; however the occurrence happened in the urban core added to the ongoing challenges already present."<sup>24</sup> "These shootings were influenced by negative emotions such as hate, anger and music promoting violence."<sup>25</sup> We have witnessed such cases in the news media. One therapist said that some of the children with these strange behavioral backgrounds contribute to school violence such as school shootings, bullying, drug abuse, and teen

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24. William Jeynes, *A Call for Character Education and Prayer in the Schools* (Santa Barbara, CA: PBC-CLIO, LLC, 2010), 228.

25. Ibid.

pregnancies.<sup>26</sup> In many cases, the parent engaged in the violence will not seek help, which can cause a child to harbor emotions that may show up how they interact with others and even show signs of physical abuse.

It is alarming to see the disrespect in education in our schools and the difference between the demands of educators forty years ago. Schools are investing in “metal protectors but forgetting to cater to the human heart.”<sup>27</sup> A number of things can contribute to the increase violence in schools that promote negative behavior such as media, reduce religious mandates, and dysfunctional families. Many times the media will show news coverage that will cause ratings to increase locally and globally. With the influx of different cultures, the peoples bring their religious practices that some individuals are unaware of the routines that these cultures are involved. Due to the lack of knowledge or dislike of these practices others in society will have a negative view on these individuals. In addition, the society has had a major impact on the family causing new demands like never before. These new demands sometimes cause families to have conflicts that may affect a child academically as well as socially.

## **Marriage**

God brought man and woman together to form a covenant. The uniting of man and woman through marriage calls for God’s creation to work together in rearing children. Various experiences of each parent bring different ways of raising a child. Sometimes the roles of the parents change from when the couple first married. Demands on the couple may stem from

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26. Jeynes, *Christianity, Education and Modern Society* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2007), 5.

27. Jeynes, *A Call For Character Education and Prayer in the Schools* (Santa Barbara, CA: PBC-LIO, LLC, 2010), 231.

demands that a career; which can affect parental involvement. Though marriage is a covenant designed by God, other changes have occurred that changes the family structure. In “How Do Child Outcomes Vary Among Types of Family,” the author discovers that

Comparing two-parent families will all single-parent families often masks important subtleties. Subsequent research has added to an understanding of the range of family structures by examining separately the data for divorced, widowed, never-married, cohabiting parents, married stepparents, and same sex couple families. While this research has revealed important nuances about the effects of these different family types on children, many questions remain unanswered. In addition, understanding the findings is complicated by the fact that studies do not use consistent definitions of family types or consistent comparison measures across data sets. And, as noted previously children may experience more than one type of living arrangement over their childhoods. This section provides demographics on different types of families and discusses some research findings on various childhood outcomes.<sup>28</sup>

In other words, types of families have a major impact on the parental involvement in a child’s education. Not only does the parent of the child bring baggage, so does the educator. The education systems sometimes are overprotective, causing feelings toward students and others who express their true feelings. This type of action leaves the parent and child on edge to what is really the achievement goal of any given education system. An example may be found in the following story from Massachusetts:

In a bold comparative analysis of *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Jada Williams, a 13-year old eighth grader at School #3 in Rochester, New York, asserted that in her experience today’s education system is a modern-day version of slavery. According to the Fredrick Douglass Foundation of New York, the school’s teachers and administrators were so offended by Williams’ essay that they began a campaign of harassment--kicking her out of class and trying to suspend her-that ultimately forced her parents to withdraw her from the school.<sup>29</sup>

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28. Mary Parke, “How Do Child Outcomes Vary Among Types of Families” [http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications\\_states/files/0086.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications_states/files/0086.pdf) (accessed April 30, 2012).

29. Liz Dwyer, Ed., “A 13 year-Old’s Slavery Analogy Raises Some Uncomfortable Truths in School,” Good.is.com, <http://www.good.is/post/a-13-year-old-s-slavery-analogy-raises-some-uncomfortable-truths-in-school/> (accessed April 30, 2012).

Societal and class issues may affect the overall achievement goals for families in certain communities. Though the parental involvement may vary due to these social norms, the key is that there is parent support in their child's education. Also, with positive parental support individuals that have had difficulties have achieved academic success. Many famous people overcame disabilities that affected their ability to experience positive academic outcomes. For example, some famous people with dyslexia have contributed to the society in spite of being dyslexic.<sup>30</sup>

When parents, teachers, administrators, and school systems work together, the entire community can benefit. With a constantly changing society, new ways of parental involvement must be sought. Starting with parenting involvement at the early stages of life is a proactive step toward helping children achieve a higher standard of excellence.

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30. Disabled World, "Disabled World Towards Tomorrow," May 2006. [http://www.disabled-world.com/artman/publish/article\\_0060.shtml](http://www.disabled-world.com/artman/publish/article_0060.shtml) (accessed April 30, 2012).

## CHAPTER TWO

### Upfront Learning

The aim of this chapter is to show how nurturing parents affect a child's academic success based on parents' parenting style and a teacher's teaching style. Therefore, children instinctively learn through the behaviors of parents and teachers who influence their lives. Several areas will be reviewed of individuals: age, level of education, extracurricular activities, and areas lived, social, pregnancy, spiritual formation, and community involvement. The responses from the surveys will be from different classes and economic status of people occupies the pages of this chapter. (Appendix A)<sup>1</sup>

According to Kunjufu,<sup>2</sup> there are six types of teachers: (1) custodians, (2) referral agents, (3) missionaries, (4) instructors, (5) teachers, and (6) coaches. The author believes that the school system strategically places teachers in roles that promote certain student outcomes that may be otherwise unfavorable in enhancing learning. Teachers who possess this type of learning style and behaviors can be seen in the information gathered from the surveys. Though there are responses from different economic strata and ethnicity, the bulk of the surveys completed are from African American urban and suburban communities. It is obvious that parental involvement largely impacts a child's education by the responses given.

### Nurture and Love

When students are encouraged and love it motivates them. Kunijufu states,

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1. Appendix A is a survey that was distributed to individuals of different cultural and economic backgrounds.

2. Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu, *100 Plus Educational Strategies to Teach Children of Color* (Mishawaka, IN: Better World Books, 2008), 5.

The power of words: praise and criticism. Understand the power of words. Promise yourself that you will never say anything negative about your students. Keep a daily chart of the number of times you praise the child vs. criticize. Children want attention, and unfortunately, many have found they receive more attention being negative than being positive.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, physical and emotional interaction are positive antidotes for enhancing the interest of a child to become successful. Part of the nurturing process is for groups of people to be able to identify themselves in the stories told in history books and identifying professions that students want to become. Kunijufu writes,

The educational system omits the roles of entire groups who created knowledge while ostensibly suggesting that Blacks should reorient their natural thinking processes. Afrocentric educationists critique Eurocentric universalism. Afro-centric writers also attempt to correct the historical record by bringing the cultural accomplishments, folkways, and mores of Africans to the fore so that Blacks (and others) can learn from those histories.<sup>4</sup>

A child learns from everyone he or she meets. Consequently, a parent should strengthen his or her child's values. Due to the demands of survival to provide safety, food, shelter, and other necessities, the time constraints placed on a parent's time may be limited. However, the parent must find time to be involved in the child's education in spite of the demands of life.

Oftentimes, the lack of a nurturing environment and love for a child is displayed through negative actions such as bullying from a child. For some children it is a way to get attention by harassing others. An involved parent can help minimize such conflict if he or she is aware of the child's emotions and needs. Anne G. Garrett notes that educators, families, and communities can increase their ability to recognize early warning signs by establishing close, caring and supportive relationships with children and youth. Unfortunately, there is a real danger that early

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3. Jawanza Kunjufu, PhD., 32.

4. Ibid., 26.

warning signs can be misinterpreted. Nonetheless, certain behaviors and characteristics should alert educators to the possibility that a child is bullying others. These may include the following: verbal abuse (general name calling, appearance, academics, or athletics), spreading rumors, prejudice, physically hurting, pranks and mean games, destroying property, personality characteristics, poor emotional self-control, crowd pleaser, poor support system, isolation, behavioral characteristics and attitudes and feelings.<sup>5</sup>

Some children have negative experiences that can affect the children that they attend school with. Parents have the responsibility of raising loving children. In fact, the Lord gives believers instructions to bring encourage and love their children.<sup>6</sup> A proper upbringing reduces chances of a negative reaction such as bullying to surface in a child. Parents are also required to provide for the children.<sup>7</sup> An author Anne G. Garrett in an article *Bullying in American Schools: Causes, Preventions, Inventions*, writes:

Because of the devastation of what can happen to a child emotionally and physically, early detection of bullying of the child's emotional being is essential. Parental involvement will not necessarily eliminate the harassment of a child but it can be minimized with certain actions of others. According to a survey conducted by Haywood County Schools, based in Waynesville, North Carolina on bullying, the contributing factors of bullying were listed: Low self-esteem, lack of confidence; Patterning behavior from parents and older siblings; Lack of parental involvement; Lack of discipline; Lack of supervision in designated places such as restrooms, playground, hallways and bus; or that a child is different in some manner.<sup>8</sup>

The importance of nurturing and loving a child to achieve a positive academic outcome cannot be overstated. Parental involvement at all levels is the first step to achieving academic success

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5. Anne G. Garrett, *Bullying in American Schools: Causes, Preventions, Inventions* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2003), 27-31.

6. Eph. 6:4.

7. 2 Cor. 12:14.

8. Ibid., Garrett, 152.

for a child. Alexis Aiger states, “Children with parents involved with school perform better academically attend school more regularly, have better social skills and have an increased chance of graduating high school and attending college. Despite the benefits of parental involvement in the lives of students, schools often struggle with getting parents involved. Focusing on communication and forming partnerships with families will help your school improve parent involvement.”<sup>9</sup> In addition, Alexis Aiger in an article titled *Ways To Improve Parent Involvement In School* writes:

There are many ways to have a strong communication with parents and schools. An article written by Alexis Aiger notes is, “Communication is essential to all relationships, including the relationship between two parents and schools. Schools can improve communication by holding events where the school, students and parents work together such as fundraising events, open houses and parent-teacher conference. Communication can also be improved with a monthly newsletter and school website.”<sup>10</sup>

Communication amongst parents in an organization is a way to stay informed of the happenings in the school. Sometimes parents are so busy that getting the updated information can be challenging. An excellent way of introducing oneself to others in the school and community is through volunteering with school groups. When parents engage in a project together, the parents are able to use skills to help foster relationships with others.

The second point in the author states is “to form partnerships.”<sup>11</sup> Though some schools do not have a reputation of forming bonds with parents and others in the community, some

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9. Alexis Aiger, “Ways To Improve Parent Involvement In School” According to the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education. <http://www.livestrong.com/article/193674-ways-to-improve-parent-involvement-in-school/>, (accessed April 30, 2012).

10. Ibid.

11 . Alexis Aiger, “Ways To Improve Parent Involvement In School,” LiveStrong.com, <http://www.livestrong.com/article/193674-ways-to-improve-parent-involvement-in-school/>, (accessed April 30, 2012).

schools have reaped the benefits of these partnerships. Aiger refers to partnering with parents and schools while other partner with actual businesses to open opportunities for students to receive hands-on experience and networking with a company of interest for future career opportunities.<sup>12</sup>

Businesses that have an interest in the community will look for ways to interact with the people of the school district and community. This is a direct benefit to the business of forming a partnership internally and externally. Internally employees who may not volunteer elsewhere may be fulfilled in helping other in the school district. The fulfillment of the employee may affect the morale in the business, which could affect the mission and goal of businesses. Externally a business' involvement in the school district gives a positive image for the business of being an interest partner in education.

The third point states that parents need to feel a part of the decision-making at school.<sup>13</sup> Having a parent communicate the problems or matters of interest to other parents helps minimize the number of concerns that may be asked to school officials that could interfere with staff and/or officials school time. Selected persons are involved with the parents to ensure balance.

The fourth point is “open house.”<sup>14</sup> It is essential for schools to have open house. This may be the only time a parent meets the teacher and school staff. When school has open house it opens an opportunity for parents to communicate their desires about their child's academic goals

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| 12. Ibid.

| 13. Ibid.

| 14. Ibid.

with the teacher. In some cases, the approach is different of hosting open house at schools but the principle is still the same of meeting the teacher and other school staff and administrators that are involved with a child's education. Oftentimes this is done at the beginning of the school year. An open house at the beginning of the school year allows parents and teachers to take a proactive approach of a child's academic success.

Budget cuts encourage the school system to operate programs and to aid in helping the student's achieve academic achievement. Therefore schools will often rely on volunteers to get some of the work done. As a result, the fifth point is "volunteers."<sup>15</sup> Parental involvement is crucial in a child's education. Some schools have organizations such as PTAs or PTOs to help give parents a chance to volunteer their services to help the local school. Though organizations offer volunteer opportunities, parents can volunteer in many other ways to enhance the learning experience of the child. By volunteering, a parent from a professional background can help improve the school to update approaches in fundraising, communication, planning, organization planning and the list goes on. Therefore, exposure to updated ideas helps improve a child's motivation and develop his or her skills that are otherwise unnoticed. Volunteering at a religious organization also enhances learning helps broaden your knowledge as well as strengthen your resume.<sup>16</sup> This project conducted surveys of adults who have experienced or are employed currently by school systems like those described. The survey responses show evidence of the need for upfront learning. The study of educational values and parental involvement will

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15. Alexis Aiger, "Ways To Improve Parent Involvement In School"  
<http://www.livestrong.com/article/193674-ways-to-improve-parent-involvement-in-school/>, (accessed April 30, 2012).

16. Alexis Aiger, "Ways To Improve Parent Involvement In School"  
<http://www.livestrong.com/article/193674-ways-to-improve-parent-involvement-in-school/>, (accessed April 30, 2012).

continue to be a topic of discussion as society changes with the demands needed in a changing world. Sometimes to gain a better understanding of a school system tone must be involved in some capacity.

The surveys were distributed to fifteen persons who are educators, parents, and church members from different parts of Metropolitan Kansas City, Missouri. These individuals range from the ages of twenty three to seventy years of age. Forty percent of the individuals surveyed were raised in the urban communities and the other communities varied. The majority of the age group surveyed was in their thirties. Therefore, this age group is of child-bearing age with an average of twelve years out of high school.

Those that completed the survey indicated their age and marital status. The twenty questions that were asked, eighteen of those questions were objective, and two were fill in the blank questions. Five questions seemed to be answered equally among those being surveyed. Questions two, nine, twelve, fifteen, and sixteen seemed somewhat consistent to the view of the effect of parental involvement. The second question that was asked, "Were you active in school?" Seventy-three percent responded "yes," and fifty-five percent were involved in sports while forty-five percent were involved in music.

These numbers suggest that parental involvement was present due to the demands associated with the activities involved with extracurricular activities. The survey included questions regarding school involvement, mentorship, parental involvement background, and leadership positions held as a volunteer. In addition to asking these questions eighty percent of the persons polled were raised in the church.

The common thread that appeared in the responses to the designated questions above showed four elements of thought of parental involvement: 1) extracurricular activities, 2) influence of parent in education, 3) the role as a volunteered leadership, and 4) upbringing in the church.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Andrew D. Dick writes in his dissertation that extracurricular activities are beneficial in five areas:

- 1) Students who participated in extracurricular activities had higher grade point average than students who did not participate.
- 2) Students who participated in extracurricular activities had a higher rate of school Attendance than students who did not participant.
- 3) Students who participated in only sport activities received more disciplinary referrals than students who participated in only non-sport activities.
- 4) Students whose families have a higher level of socioeconomic status were more likely to participate in only non-sport activities.
- 5) White students were more likely to participate in extracurricular activities than Hispanic and other racial ethnic backgrounds.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the seventy-five percent of the people surveyed showed strong evidence that extracurricular activities played a major role in their education. Since forty percent of the respondents were raised in the urban core, the choice to be active in sports and/or music is not surprising. Though twenty -percent admitted to being active in religious activities in school may have influenced their moral character as a child as they grew up to become an adult.

There have been studies that show some students are able to reach academic success through the participation of extracurricular activities.<sup>18</sup> The chart below shows the responses to the number of respondent's highest level of education. The response to Question 2 indicates that extracurricular activities played a key role in the student's academic success. However, there are some researchers that disagree with the positive impact of extracurricular activities.

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17. Andrew Dick, "The relationship of participation in extracurricular activities to student achievement, student attendance, and student behavior in a Nebraska school district," Ed.D. diss., The University of Nebraska - Lincoln , 2010. In Dissertations & Theses: Full Text [database on-line]; available from <http://www.proquest.com> (accessed May 1, 2012).

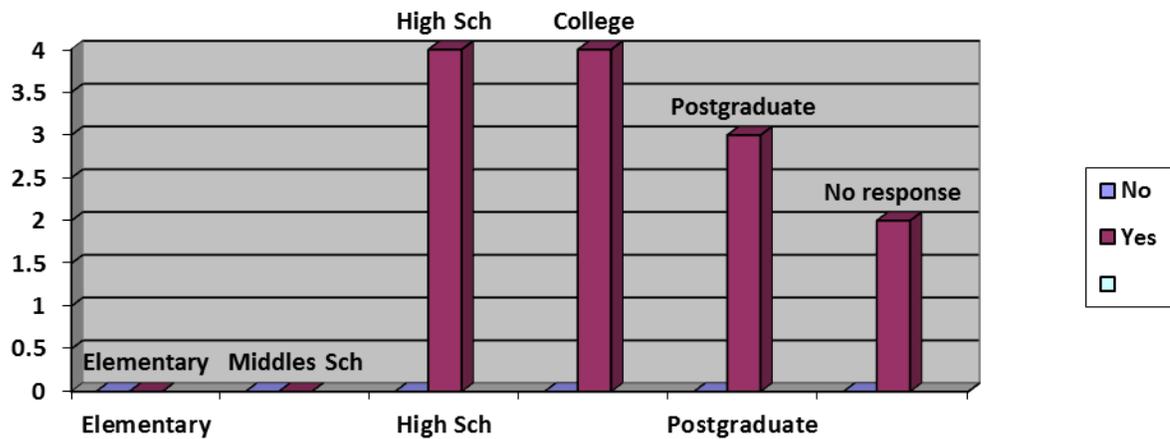
18. Ibid., Dick.

Fredricks and Eccles write,

One criticism is that few studies have adjusted for the self-selection factors. That may explain why some individuals choose to participate in extracurricular activities and others do not. As a consequence of self-selection factors, differences in the outcomes between participants and nonparticipants may reflect preexisting difference between the two groups. Selection factors also are often associated with positive developmental outcomes and failing to control for these variables overstates the benefits of extracurricular participation. In fact, once self-selection factors are included in analyses, the strength of the relation between extracurricular participation and development outcomes is reduced and in some cases is no longer significant (Holland & Andre, 1987, Larson, 2000).<sup>19</sup>

Below is a chart that depicts the level of education of those responded to the survey. In reviewing the chart below a major of the respondents either graduated from high school and/or college.

**Table 1. Respondents Highest Grade Graduated**



Also influential in a child’s academic success is the influence of the parent. The responses to Question 9 were quite surprising. Out of the fifteen surveys conducted, only one respondent stated that “teacher, parent, mentor, friend and relative had the most impact on their education.” While this answer was shocking for all the choices this respondent selected, the other

19. Fredies and Eccles, “Is Extracurricular Participation Associated With Beneficial Outcome? Concurrent and Longitudinal Relations,” <http://www.rcgd.isr.umich.edu/garp/articles/fredricks06.pdf> (accessed April 30, 2012).

categories for Question 9 were parents, and then teachers who had the most impact on their education. Parents are the first teachers for their children. For that reason, parental involvement comes in different levels of involvement. Due to a parent's work schedule, the only involvement he or she may have is checking a homework assignment's completion.

### **Parental Connection**

Parents connecting with the school system and drawing out the connection with a child's education can eventually make the education experience a positive one. Ellen Hall and Richard Handley in their book *High Schools In Crisis: What Every Parent Should Know*, note that

[p]arents ultimately hold the reins on the public schools system because their tax money supports the system. Parents can push for reductions in class size, voice concerns about building designs when a new school is proposed for their district register a dissatisfaction with the pressure to teach to the test, and ask that teachers be given more latitude to innovate in their classrooms. Parents can also work with high school to encourage a climate of cooperation and inclusion to alleviate the devastating effects of bullying, shunning, and cliques.<sup>20</sup>

Sacrifices must be made to reach a desired level of parental involvement. Sometimes it is easy to engage in our daily routines of wanting to watch our favorite television program or other activities that bring comfort to us. Making meaningful time to getting involved in the school community allows the support to be channeled to the success of school children.

People who are committed to public education should be willing to consider any workable option. A well-informed parent who is adamant about having a top-quality high school in the community can be a great boon. Schools and parents can work together to create the ideal educational environment.<sup>21</sup>

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20. Ellen Hall and Richard Handley, *High Schools In Crisis: What Every Parent Should Know* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 166.

21. Ibid., Hall and Handley.

22. William Jeynes, "Helping Families By Fostering Parental Involvement," *Phi Delta Kappan* 93.3 (Nov. 2011): 38-39.

Though parents want to be involved with their child's education, the school system must have an open door policy for parents to feel welcome at the school. Parental involvement should start early in the child's life. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, parental involvement begins while the embryo is still in the womb. Most parents set high goals for the child to be successful. Most parents want their child to succeed in life. From the experiences of a parent, the parent learns to be a responsible parent by providing the necessary needs. In article published by Phi Delta Kappan, the author suggests specific ways schools can incorporate parental involvement:

School systems need to work both ways in providing an opportunity for low income families' to be involved in their child's education. Schools need to reach out more by showing sincere helpfulness to low income and minority families both males and females; such as access to basketball courts, weight rooms, and other athletic facilities, Parent Day, Outreach, recognize existing involvement in empowering their child through encouragement and communication bonds.<sup>22</sup>

Therefore God has given the parent a special task in raising a child.<sup>23</sup> When a parent follows the instructions of God, blessings of wisdom will be provided to the parent. Each generation of parents are faced with new challenges. We have seen the transition of how school systems have changed in the United States. New demands are required from school administrators, teachers and students. With living in such a competitive society parental skills do not always move with the new ways of society. Sometimes the way children are disciplined by parents is condemned. In parenting all things, do not come easy from generation to generation of the child. Each generation comes a new set of challenges that a parent and child has to contend with. Furthermore, Dr. Elmer Towns, a seminary professor and co-founder of Liberty University, states, "Methods are many; principles are few. Methods are always changing but principles never do."<sup>24</sup> Although America is constantly changing due to technology, lack of moral values, global

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23. Prov. 22:6.

24. Neil T. Anderson, and Elmer Towns, "Rivers of Revival," [http://elmertowns.com/books/preview/rivers\\_revival/Rivers\\_of\\_Revival%5BETowns%5D.PDF](http://elmertowns.com/books/preview/rivers_revival/Rivers_of_Revival%5BETowns%5D.PDF) (accessed May 5, 2012).

warming, economic issues, and political bartering, a parent should try to be well informed.

New paragraph needed. According to the response to the survey, Question 6, a total of fourteen persons owned a library card out of the 15 respondents; this is to suggest that the importance of accessing information. Despite the fact the response to “Do you have a library card?” was answered, “Yes,” ninety-four percent of the respondents’ answers may have been due to the respondent’s age. If this same question was asked to those in their early twenties, the answer may be different significantly because of technology’s influence with this age group. The younger generation is more technology savvy; therefore, other alternatives are being used to educate students. As a result, parents may find it necessary to increase their computer skills in order to have an influence on their child’s learning.

### **Teacher Influence**

Next to the parent, a teacher has a strong impact on a child’s education. Oftentimes teachers in the elementary schools are young, vibrant, and eager to change the world as fresh college graduates. These teachers face the reality of the classroom in spite of classroom labs and internships while attending college. While some do not survive, many survive, and the reward is a fresh new mindset and eyes viewing the vision and mission, and reaching goals for school systems and families. Even though some can remember a special teacher that had an influence on their education, many are not able to recollect the turning point in their experience in school.

With the demand of both parents working, the child spends more contact with their teacher(s). Not only does a teacher have to ensure that his or her lesson plans are executed to meet the school’s program, and school district demands, but he or she is also faced with the challenges of discipline, ethnicity, politics, and cultural issues. Repeatedly, new teachers,’ as

well as seasoned teachers, dreams turn into nightmares in dealing with the issues just mentioned. The case study in the college course in becoming a teacher does not seem as realistic in facing enormous challenges in the classrooms. However, teachers who seemed to be able to have a handle on their classroom environment have an impact on a child's education. Therefore, when a teacher has the support of the parents they will go beyond the call of duty and make sacrifices on the child's behalf. Some will go as far as to purchase resources for their classrooms to enhance the learning experience. Lewis W. Diuguid a longtime columnist for a popular newspaper in Kansas City, wrote in *A Teacher's Cry: Expose the Truth About Education Today* that

Students often deal with their quandaries by becoming angry, because they see their abilities falling short of an outsider's expectations. That isn't good because life is about expectations-those being set and met. ". . .She referred to it as "education malpractice." Teachers face the heat from students who don't understand why they have to stretch their minds, from parents who complain when their kids get bad grades, and from administrators who offer little or no support. Teachers then feel outnumbered, and some surrender and dumb down their lessons just to survive another year.<sup>25</sup>

It is with this attitude of the teachers that a school district may experience low performance that eventually affects the accreditation of the school district. In spite of some of the challenges that teachers face, some are available to overcome the obstacles and make a long lasting impression on a child's academic success. Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that the teacher had the most impact on their education. If the surveyed respondents were asked this same question as a child, of what education level were the student at when these teachers impacted their education, a resounding answer may perhaps be at the elementary level.

Children learn many new and exciting things as well as gain new experiences in

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25. Lewis W. Diuguid, *A Teacher's Cry: Expose The Truth About Education Today.*

elementary school. Since the teacher is present at school and not the parent(s), the emotional bond of the student and teacher is vastly different from the bond with the child and parent. The connections that teachers make with their students help achieve academic success. For that reason, the teacher must connect with the student to reach his or her full potential. The teacher uses various ways to reach the students in his/her classes.

Mark Gerson relates a story in “*Dispatches From An Inner-City School That Work*” about how he was able to be an effective teacher who taught in the inner city that was successful in reaching the students through basketball:

When word circulated that “Mr. Gerson got game,” I had passed the first test necessary to begin earning the trust of many of my students. Having successfully challenged them at their game, I could not be dismissed easily—on the court, in the classroom, or out of school altogether. I continued to use basketball as a way to continually accumulate trust.<sup>26</sup>

This example shows the connection that teachers make with students that help to cultivate a successful learning environment for the teacher and the child, and ultimately the parents and the community as well. Positive influences in school penetrate in all levels in life. The same troubled student with a dysfunctional family life can still acquire a sound education through a caring teacher. In addition, Alan Blankstein addresses elements in “*Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education*”<sup>27</sup>: (1) high performance, (2) high standards, (3) systems for success, and (4) generating the will that failure is not acceptable.

### **High Performance**

When teachers have a winning attitude and are open for helping students to achieve

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26. Mark Gerson, *Dispatches from an Inner-City School That Work* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 58.

27. Pedro A. Noguera, *The Trouble With Black Boys: And Other Reflections On Race, Equity, and the Future of Public Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 161-169.

highest standards possible, the school will gain a good reputation and a great record of student achievement. Aiming for the success of the school and student must be a partnership that all can learn. Oftentimes school systems will keep information gained from officials in-house that affect parents and their families. The sooner the school, student, and the student's parents can know about what is expected of them, the better it becomes to adopt the plan to accomplish the goals set forth for the school.

### **High Standards**

Typically, to provide structure in a learning environment consistency must be exercised. In other words, the school should share with parents the child's achievements and how the school maintains the standards to the support of the parents. Not only is communicating with the parents on a regular basis important, but also with the teachers and school staff. Everyone needs to know his or her role on the team to achieve a positive student outcome. Another factor in reaching standards is empowering the team with the proper controls. Empowering the team helps close the gap of potential mistakes of deficient participants (i.e., teachers, students, parents, administrators).

### **Systems for Success**

It takes the school district officials and administrators to work together of identifying students with special needs as well as all involved in educating students.

Alan Blankstein writes, "Each school in the district systematically ensures student success through an approach similar to the 'pyramid of interventions' used by mental health professionals. Staff collectively evaluate existing preventions and interventions and create new ones as part of a coherent continuum of support to ensure that all children get what they need to succeed."<sup>28</sup>

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28. Ibid., Noguera, 166.

To measure systems for success, checks and balances must be in place to find out if the needs are being met of the students, teachers, staff and the communities. After all, the citizens serve as registered voters of passing or vetoing bonds and debating issues regarding education as well as selecting persons to serve on the School Board.

### **Generating Will**

Noguera and Blankstein posed the question: “What will it take for everyone involved to resolve the failure is not an acceptable option for public education?” Consider that the need is a willingness to take the tough issues and face them. Once the issues have been identified, then the challenges must be dealt with and commitment of the school staff and administrators to follow.

### **Volunteer Leadership**

Leadership should not be taken lightly; it is a learning experience. There is a slight difference between corporate and volunteer leadership. Corporate leadership is driven by profits and volunteer leadership may rely more on passion. A leader is held accountable when he or she is paid and consequences when a particular goal is not met; however, a leader in a volunteer organization has a different type of reward. The passion of doing the task comes from within the person. Each person has God given gifts and skills that drives them to achieve the satisfaction of fulfilling them. Those who have identified these gifts and skills can make great contributions to school system and organizations if it matches the goal of the organization. According to the survey conducted, sixty-seven percent of the respondents answered “Yes” to Question 15, “Have you ever held a volunteered leadership position in the school?” John Reynolds in *Volunteering*

writes, “The single most important piece of advice I can give is: Work from your heart as well as your head. In judging your priorities, indulge your subjectivity.”<sup>29</sup>

Jesus’ leadership example shows parents and teachers qualities worth demonstrating. John Edmund Haggai writes, “I have made close study of the leadership shown by Jesus Christ, who qualifies as simply the greatest leader who ever lived.”<sup>30</sup> Jesus Christ was fully human but also divine. He had a mission sent from God. Repeatedly, Jesus took risks unheard of during his time. Sometimes making a difference requires a risk. Haggai wrote, “Without risk, there is no forward movement.”<sup>31</sup> In order to be a leader in a volunteered organization, one must take risks, otherwise the organization will become stagnate. In the same way, if there is poor leadership in a school organization, an organization may be more of a hindrance than a help. Many of the volunteers never have held a leadership position; therefore, it is all new to them. In addition, a leader needs a certain type of modesty when volunteering as a leader. Seals and Parker write,

One model of an effective leader can be seen in the book of Esther. Mordecai raised the orphaned Esther as his own daughter after the death of her mother and father. From the time she was young, he instilled certain qualities in her:

1. Know Yourself
2. Communicate clearly and precisely
3. Make decisions.
4. Have well-defined goals.
5. Strive to develop people’s self-confidence to a level of performance beyond their expectations.<sup>32</sup>

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29. John Reynolds, *Volunteering: How Service Enriches Your Life-And How Its Unexpected Halo Effect Boosts Your Career* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 74.

30. John Edmund Haggai, *The Influential Leader: 12 Steps To Igniting Visionary Decision Making* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2009), 8.

31. Ibid.

32. Eugene Seals and Matthew Parker, *Called To Lead: Wisdom for the Next Generation of African American Leaders* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 34-35.

A person has to know what makes him or her tick in order to provide effective leadership. A person needs to be able to motivate, direct, lead, and plan in order to identify his or her strengths and weaknesses. Recognizing these areas helps the leader know how to build his or her team. Being able to communicate effectively is half the battle in leading others. Risk taking, setting goals, and team building helps the leader reach the organization's goal.

### **Church Involvement**

Acts 2:1 states, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." God has called the saints of God to be on one accord in serving him. It is in this oneness that lives can be changed and developed. Question 16 on the survey asked, "Were you raised in the church?" Eighty percent of the respondents answered "Yes". When children are raised in the church, it helps build moral values and discourages irrational actions to happen amongst children as they reach their teen years. Sources have revealed that when prayer was removed from public school as well as the Bible in the early 60s, violence in schools seemed to increase.<sup>33</sup> At first, violence resulted from shootings, but now violence is coupled with shootings and social network systems. More organizations, corporations, and schools are taking disciplinary action on negative action resulting from social networks.

For many the church is a safe haven to grow spiritually while experiencing the life journey of wholeness. With the high response to this question on the survey one could speculate that there is a correlation with Question 15, "Have you ever held a volunteered leadership position in the school?" There are several types of churches. Getz & Wall write that

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33. William Jeynes, *Christianity, Education and Modern* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2007), 9.

[t]hough admittedly an oversimplification and sometimes overstated, the following observations can help us evaluate what kind of structures we have developed in our own churches to emphasize a particular vital experience, they are as follows:

- Churches That Emphasize Bible Teaching
- Churches That Emphasize Relationships
- Churches That Emphasize Outreach<sup>34</sup>

All of these church structures have made a significant impact on others. Though the central theme is different in the three church structures listed, they all make a difference in the life of others. Students that have trouble reading in school have the opportunity to strengthen the student's reading by learning biblical truths. On the other hand, emphasis on relationships helps others with problem solving and gain knowledge on feasting on the Word through praise and worship. Churches also can focus on outreach to those who are the least fortunate and that reach out to anyone who needs a church in the midst of crisis. Thus, attending church can be a structural activity in worshipping God.

A parent should have physical, emotional, and spiritual balance for a child to be made whole. God has a plan for all believers but we have to walk according to God's will. Whether parents are called to be leaders of PTA or a PTO or a leader at church it all works together

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34. Gene Getz, and Joe Wall, *Effective Church Growth Strategies* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000), 52-55.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Life Journey Learning**

Our experiences as a parent and a child help shape us to be the person that God has allowed us to be. Therefore, the paths we choose to travel carry the parent's footprint of experiences. In volunteering our services are from the experiences we have gained along the way. Though willingly provide volunteer services for a child's education, there are ways of sharing to help ease the reluctance of volunteering. In addition, the chapter will include a ten-month plan for the parent to be involved on elementary and high school level where applicable.

The school has a great appreciation for volunteer parents, and especially as many school budgets are so low. Those parents who are passionate for their child's academic success are looking for future results that will make long lasting impressions personally and universally. Parents should join an organized body of the school system such as PTA or PTO on the elementary and high school level to keep an inroad of the goings-on with the school. Many parents do not have the time to attend school board meetings; therefore, joining these in-house organizations can help them stay well informed of reports, status, rules, regulations and decisions affecting the child. The parent should meet the teachers, principal, and school staff. As soon as possible, the parent should find out who makes the decisions for the school district. The parent should meet Superintendent of Schools and School Board President and school board members.

#### **Self-Care**

Parents should communicate with each other on how a child should be raised. More importantly, the mother should seek medical attention and chart the progress of the pregnancy to ensure all matters are being addressed timely. Eating healthy and avoid eating out provides a

more meaningful healthy style for the pregnant mother. Overindulgence and poor choices of food can cause complications that can be detrimental to the development of the child.

As soon as the child is delivered into the new world, the parents should take an active role in making sure they expose the child to early educational opportunities for gaining the best possible ways of learning. As the child develops, learning takes place at every level. The toys, relationships, extracurricular activities, and cultures will have an impact on the child's academic outcome. Here are a few suggestions that seem fitting for parents to consider the following areas to address:

1. Choose two names (male and female) that will not cause difficulty for the child in the professional world.
2. Change lifestyle that may be harmful the unborn child, i.e. such as smoking, drugs, consumption of alcohol, etc.
3. Set a time to talk to the unborn child about the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the pregnancy and forward.
4. Go to doctor's visits regularly.
5. Drink plenty of water and avoid soft drinks and other sugary drinks.
6. Avoid salt as much as possible.
7. Take walks and other exercise as prescribed by the doctor.
8. Analyze the doctor's reports on development of the child.
9. Purchase playthings that aid in a noticeable gift of the child.
10. Keep home child-proof.

All of these suggestions are important to gain the most growth from a child's education. These activities will help parents develop a healthy, whole child. A whole child is raised to be healthy physically, emotionally and spiritually. When parents exercise self-care, they are more prone to be healthier and have more energy to interact with their child.

Once the child has reached his or her toddler years, the parent should begin to look into areas that will enhance the child's experience in his or her school years. These areas allow the parent to get a closer look at how the school system operates in a particular district. This also

gives the parent a holistic approach to provide a conducive environment for a child's academic outcome. When the parent gains valuable knowledge about the school district and the community, they can quickly identify resources for enhancing a child's experience. As a child grows, he or she will face life's journey that will offer several options to choose from. These decisions will not only affect the child but also the family and community.

Commitment is needed from others who are willing to make a difference in the society. Our definition of empowering practice requires not just a change in the ways we think about ourselves as members of communities, but also requires one to act on the different information."<sup>1</sup> Knowing the steps of success for a child can make a realistic decision in improving the life for all. Once the child has reached his or her toddler years, the parent should begin to look into a Ten-Step Approach of being parental involved in a child's education the following:

### **1. Talk to Other Parents of School-Aged Children**

When parents talk to other , there is a shared interest in helping their children succeed academically. Even though parents come from different backgrounds culturally and economically, there still is a common thread that runs through the world of parenting. Experiences of other parents can help alleviate unnecessary problems while enhancing the opportunities of raising a child of having a positive academic outcome.

Prepare some personal business cards that include your name, address, phone number(s), email and/or website. The website could include a personal biography. One should survey the neighborhood to see where children live and include a personal theme. This introduction to neighbors could be included in daily walks in the neighborhood to find out who your neighbors

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1. Harvey Bertcher, Linda Farris Kurtz, and Alice Lamont, *Rebuilding Communities: Challenges for Group Work* (New York: The Hawroth Press, 1999), 15.

are. Once you meet someone, introduce yourself as the neighbor that lives at certain address, a description of the house, how many children you have their ages, your occupation, and desires in life. Hand out your personal business card with your information. Allow them to introduce themselves. Here are questions to ask your neighbor:

- How long have you lived in the neighborhood?
- Do you have any children? How many? If no, how many nieces or nephews?
- What do you like about the school district? Are there any dislikes?
- Do you have a babysitter or does your child attend preschool?
- How does the school handle discipline?
- Have you ever had an embarrassing moment when your child misbehaves? How was it handled?
- Does the school give homework?
- How is the principal's style of leadership?
- Have you noticed a change at the school?
- Are you involved in the school?

## **2. Join a Church Preaching the Word and Attend Church Regularly**

A church preaching the Word is one that teaches the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ as well as the commandment that God gave Jesus, the Savior to save the world. Preaching the Word is teaching about the Holy Trinity of God as the Father, as the Son and as the Holy Spirit. Hearing the Word of God will empower the saint to serve God, family and the community. In addition, regular attendance includes attending the worship service at least four weeks or five

months a month depending of the number of weeks in a month. Also, weekly attendance includes attending Church School, Bible Studying, and utilizing skills and talents in a ministry.

Becoming a member of a church is a duty that believers must adhere to work out their soul salvation. Hearing the Word of God helps the believer grow spiritually. When believers worship, fellowship, and serve together, they can grow spiritually and emotionally as the body of Christ. Acts 2:1 says, “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” The church is to give instructions to teach, preach, serve and practice good stewardship as believers. When a child is raised in the church, the parents are preparing him or her for solid life foundation. Therefore, parents can make the best use of church for child rearing as follows:

- Attend Sunday School regularly and be on time.
- Teach tithing early; prepare envelope at home.
- Parents review what the Sunday School lessons are about and take sermon notes.
- What songs/hymns do you remember?
- Parent review a part of the church weekly.
- Pray with the child or have the child lead the prayer during dinnertime.
- Purchase a Bible for your child.
- Get involved with a youth group activity.
- Parent should volunteer to lead youth group.
- Encourage Pastor to have a youth group roundtable discussion.

**3. Visit the Schools in the Immediate Neighborhood of the School District (see Appendix C).**

Oftentimes, a child has to attend the school in their immediate neighborhood. In due time a parent will be more familiar with the school that their children attend and gaining appreciation more for the neighboring school than the others in the school district. By visiting the other schools in the school district parents can understand of the school programs and school staff and administrators of the school system. As a result, parents can build alliances with other parents of other schools in the school district.

It is always a good practice to know your school because your child is going to spend time with teachers and school staff, and you will want to know those people. With the number of changes in laws and funding for public education, the parent should be aware of matters affecting their child's education. By visiting the school it will help remove barriers that may exist that could hamper a child's education if unresolved:

- call the Principal to set a meeting.
- attend open house and meet your child's teacher.
- what is the current school enrollment? How is it different than the past 3 years?
- what are the organizations that parents can get involved? Child?
- what volunteer services are needed at the school??
- what are needs of the schools?
- set a time and sit in classroom to observe your child and teacher.
- tour the school.
- set a budget for school fees based on child's involvement.
- meet the bus driver the first day of school.

#### **4. Attend School Activities**

Schools engage in activities to achieve different goals. At times teachers and school administrators will present activities to inform, empower and motivate students as well as parents. Being in attendance of these school programs will allow parents to build a strong relationship with the teachers and/or school staff. These relationships will give parents insight to the possible future of his or her child's choice of teacher and/or other information that will affect their child's academic success. Furthermore, students can be identified of having a unique gift or talent to share that will benefit the society, i.e., art, sports, theatre and public speaking.

A child builds confidence as well as team spirit when he or she participates in school activities. Children need confidence not only in the academic realm, but also in all areas of life. A child who is motivated with team spirit will usually become a well-balanced person. Also, a child will be able to be creative in expressing ideas, sharing visions, and dreams. School activities can help the parent improve skills that can prepare the child for the future as well as give the parent exposure to the school system, Also, the gifts and talents that are possessed by the parent can make a lasting impression for the school and the school district. Sometimes a school system and community are not aware of what resources are present in their own backyard. Unveiling new skills and talents will enhance a child's school experience and can assist the child's school if the principal and school staff is open to the child's family. By attending school activities, parents may find themselves teaming up with other volunteers as follows:

- Get a school calendar and make preparations to attend meetings.
- Invite a friend or relative to join you.
- Buy an extra ticket and give it to someone to attend.
- Give an encouraging word to participants of the activity.

- Have your child write a report of the event.
- Share the school activity with co-workers and church members.
- Ask the church to support the event.
- Seek out a participant to speak at a church event.
- Encourage your child to be participant of a group or organization.
- Attend event practices and/or rehearsals.

## **5. Get Involved In a Community Organization**

When a parent accepts the responsibility of being a volunteer in the community, he or she sacrifices personally, financially, emotionally and mentally. Not all organizations cater to the passions of the parent. Therefore, find an organization that can fulfill the desires of the parent, and at the same time accomplish the task of helping his or her child academically. Many of the organizations within the community are directly or indirectly linked to the school system. Oftentimes, the people involved with the community organization have had children that once attended the schools in the school system in the community. The resources to be gained from others of the community organization can be helpful in raising a parent's child.

Find out what passions you have for your community. There are so many organizations that are looking for committed and dedicated persons to help strengthen the organization and achieve its mission, goals, and objectives. Sometimes it is difficult to show what a parent knows in their career for promotion. Therefore volunteering is a good way to hone in on new skills while sharing others. "One of the primary issues in building a career is the need to increase your profile. But so many people tell me that the kind of relentless self-promotion they see in some of their peers is out of the question. So volunteering can be ways to let others inside and outside

your industry know who you are without showboating.”<sup>2</sup> When volunteering, one will discover the persons involved have different passions for the organization. This is no time to gain a title just to say one are in charge. Mark Price notes in article that non-profit leadership turns over because of “economic stress, Board member stress, and junior staff revolving door.” With a high turn-over in some non-profit organizations volunteers should learn all the jobs of the organization to help meet the demands of the group.<sup>3</sup> Find listed below information that may help in volunteering with schools and school organizations:

- Buy a current copy of the book “What Color Is My Parachute?” by Richard Bolles.
- Ask the school secretary what community organization is actively involved in the school and then rank them from one to ten.
- Look at the school bulletin board for community activities.
- Go to public library to obtain a card for you and your child; check out books regularly.
- Find out the meeting times of the organization.
- Keep a portfolio that contains records of the organization.
- Allow your child to come to some of the meetings.
- Arrive at least 10 or 15 minutes before the meeting begins to have small talk with members.
- Volunteer for a task but know when to say “NO”; teaching volunteers how to prioritize.
- Learn how the organization affects the school and community.

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2. John Reynolds, *Volunteering* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1998), 22.

3. Mark Price, “High Turnover in Nonprofit Leadership-What Can Be Done?” Charlotte Observer, <http://pattonmcdowellblog.wordpress.com> (accessed May 5, 2012).

- Get a current copy of Roberts Rules of Order.

## **6. Study the School's population**

As school systems plan budgets, the population of the school district is a significant variable to the budget. The number of student's in a school district determines how much money and other resources it will take to operate the school district. When a parent reviews the population, he or she will discover trends that will alert a parent of possible danger zones in his or her child's school setting. Knowing the issues around population shifts can proper parents to future changes.

The number of teachers hired at the school affects the classroom population. Therefore, classroom space and population may affect your child's academic outcome. Oftentimes overcrowded schools lack the necessary resources to provide quality education for students. People that are not aware of the lack of resources often request demands that are impossible for the school. When a parent has knowledge of the school population, he or she can help identity the weaknesses and strengths of the school district. More importantly, parental involvement will allow the parent to form partnerships and increase the opportunity for the school to reap benefits otherwise overlooked. It is important to know the demographics of the school district, find listed below areas to be reviewed:

- Find out the population for the local school that your child attends.
- What are the population trends for the last 5 years?
- What is the housing market condition; what property taxes will affect funding?
- What is the school district's population?
- How does the school district population compare to other surrounding school districts?

- What is the ethnicity breakdown in the local population?
- What is the teacher ratio per child in classroom at the local school?
- What is being done to accommodate the overcrowded or the declining enrollment?
- What is the classification of school staff?
- Find out how a child with special needs is handled?

## **7. Get a Copy of the School District's Action Plan**

When a school district has a plan of action and shares it with the parents and community each entity can find out their role in the plan. The short and long term goals listed in the plan helps the parent to understand his or her function with their child's activity in school. Each school level has a curriculum to assist in achieving outstanding performance for a child's academic outcome. Once the knowledge is gained of the expectation of school district action plan, everyone can find his or her place in the plan to reach student achievement.

Every organization must have a plan to be successful. When a child is exposed to actions early in life, he or she can be aware of required activities that should exist with an organization. With the advancement of technology, information is readily available for the school district. An action plan from the school district is a great tool to have as parents try to reach for the greatest approach to help their child to succeed. Not only does reviewing the plan on a regular basis help the parent to see the direction of the school district, but the parent can discover his or her role in school matters on educating their child.

- Identify the objectives outlined by the School Superintendent, staff, teachers and Board Members.
- What is the mission statement and vision for the District?

- Locate the School District office and ask for a tour of the building.
- Read the action plan and see where you, your child, and family fit in.
- Identify the short-range and long-range goals.
- Attend school board meetings and ask questions.
- Form alliances with other parents and share concerns.
- Meet school board member(s) and identify the board member representing your area; review plan with him/her.
- Share plan with child.
- Find out what goals have not been met and why?

## **8. Locate School Boundaries**

School districts are divided into boundaries to balance the school population and to offset financial stability of the school system. A number of things can happen to cause the school systems to redraw school boundaries that ultimately affect the population of the schools and funding to the school district. In some cases, the established boundaries can affect a homeowner's tax liability of paying taxes in two school districts if the real estate property is on the borderline of the school district.

In some cases, school districts have been devastated with the downturn of the economy causing homeowners to be foreclosed. These foreclosures affect the funding a school district receives. Over time, these school boundaries become unevenly divided, causing emotional and physical burdens on the residents and businesses in the community. Unfortunately, those who live in rental properties are not always concerned about the financial obligations to the school district. However, some renters are concerned about what school their child will attend. Schools

boundaries help determine many different activities for a school district. Here is some following info to look into regarding school district boundaries:

- Where does the school bus pick up and drop off?
- What are the boundaries in all directions, i.e., north, south, east and west?
- What businesses exist in the school district?
- Are there any new housing development planned?
- How are foreclosures affecting the school district?
- What are the grade levels at the student's school, i.e., elementary, middle school and high schools?
- What is the dropout rate for the district?
- Which school seems to receive the highest rating and why?
- How many students are hired at the businesses located in the district?
- Are there plans to re-zone in the school district in the near future?
- What is the stock ticker symbol of publicly traded stocks for the business partnership firm?

## **9. Identify the Businesses in the School District**

The presence of businesses in a school district is vital part of the education of children. At first glance, businesses offer opportunities for school districts to receive financial backing through taxes and other resources such as volunteers from the company. These businesses also give school systems a chance to train future employees through mentorship and shadowing programs to students. The business partnership between the school and parents help strengthen the school district and community.

Business partnerships are crucial for a school district. Employees and executives employed at businesses can make valuable contributions to schools. In fact, the students may one day be an employee of the firm. This early intervention of partnering with schools is a win-win for the business and school district. A business' involvement can help market products and services offered by the business. Many businesses have designed plans for employees to do community involvement of their employees by giving them paid time off. Another benefit that businesses give is sponsorships as well as scholarship to deserving students of the school district. Business partnerships can be beneficial to a school district; therefore, the following is an approach that can be used to access information about the businesses:

- Request a company profile or annual report from the companies.
- Meet with a counselor to identify scholarships offered by companies.
- Find out what internships or mentorships available.
- What type of product or service does the company provide?
- Who is the community liaison?
- Ask PTA or PTO president for partnership information about the business?
- How many students/parents have been hired at the business from the district?
- What school activities do the business participant in? Why?
- What are some of the success stories that the district prides itself with?
- How long has the business been involved with the district?

#### **10. What Does The School District Pride itself in?**

Every school district has a culture that shapes the student within its school system. These structures are stimulated through people, events, landmarks and places. As children are educated

in a school system, lasting impressions are made by students, school staff and even family members, and the community in a given school district. While the everyday routine of the classroom instructions and school activities are taking place, history is being made at any given time as God utilizes the knowledge and wisdom of humans to engage in receiving new information through the methods, techniques and strategies of teaching in the schools.

School districts pride themselves on many different areas. An informed parent can be better equipped in being involved as a parent in a child's education. The State and Federal levels of government award public schools that perform well. These recognitions may allow additional opportunities to apply for grants available for special programs and/or new equipment to enhance the learning environment. There are a number of activities that school districts have a high regards to, they are as follows:

- Attend school rallies.
- Ask for special pass for attending school graduations.
- Attend award ceremonies.
- Form a bond with movers and shakers of the school district.
- Get involved with fundraisers and find out checks and balances of the activity.
- Give principal and secretary a gift at the beginning of the school year.
- Become involved at the voting poll in the district.
- Donate regularly in kind services and school supplies.
- Purchase school yearbooks every year.
- Get your child's picture taken every year.
- Purchase a gift for teacher during the school year.

## **Parental Involvement Blueprint**

Some schools do not communicate well. Therefore, many times the only way to find out the happenings of the child at school is for a parent to measure his or her level of involvement is to talk to other parents or see how things are with their children born to the family. When there is only one child in the family it is difficult to speculate what the child outcome will be. One thing for sure is if we follow the guidance of God and provide a spiritual foundation as well as academic one, the chances of a positive student outcome is great. Parents should also prepare themselves for the involvement of their child but planning their life according. This blueprint focuses on home, career, church, community, and relationships. Here are some guidelines that a parent can set aside with being involved as a parent:

1. Spend time talking with your child often.
2. Serve on a community event together with your child. This will allow your child to see how you do things away from home.
3. Seek diligently to gain knowledge about the school district allows for your family to be recognized as a concerned parent and citizen.
4. Increasing communication helps sharpen communication skills for the parents and child.
5. Confirm daily homework even if the teacher does not assign any.
6. Show your child how to organize his or her room.
7. Encourage your child to turn in clean and neat school projects.
8. Purchase folders for child to carry homework. Do not allow loose papers to be carried at any time.

9. Teach children to keep you informed of school supplies needed ahead of time.
10. Keep current pictures of family on your desk or locker.
11. Parents should set a good example.
12. Parents should try to achieve the highest degree possible to encourage child.
13. Parents should be good stewardship of time, talent, and money.
14. Keep an eye on credit card offers, and sign up for opt out, to avoid children from receiving credit card information.
15. Plan your work, and work your plan.

Every parent has diverse circumstances in being involved in their child's education. Some parents work multiple jobs, making it difficult to be closely involved with their child's education, but becoming involved in school at different levels can improve the communication for the parent. This blueprint will serve as a guide for a parent to be involved in his or her child's education. Along with parental involvement, it may advance the parent in his or her career achieving lifelong goals that will impact the society.

### **Teamwork for Parents**

Since parents are such an intricate part of a child's education, much can be gained when parents are employed by the school district. However, a parent should be aware when seeking employment with the school district that his or her child attends. Being employed by the school district may limit parental involvement due to a conflict of interest in some areas. John Edmund Haggai writes that "[M]ost leaders of any worth have faced times of crisis. The famous preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon resigned 32 times during his London ministry."<sup>4</sup> There are times the

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4. John Edmund Haggai, *The Influential Leader: 12 Steps to Igniting Visionary Decision Making* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2009), 202.

parent volunteer will get frustrated because of the way things operate. During this oasis period, the parent must have a support team of not losing hope on the school system or the community.

At all times the parent is the ambassador for the child and the school system. This position calls for accountability and responsibility on the parent's part. An involved parent should know how to maneuver the resources of the school system and at the same time be humble and a team player for his or her child's academic success. All parents would love to have a child with A's dotting the grade report frequently. Nurturing and loving a child outweighs more than having a straight A report card. Chances are if the child stays focused, he or she may gain an understanding about the importance of possessing good grades in the future. In addition, the parents involvement in the school system helps gain valuable information academically and otherwise.

### **Parent/Volunteers Score Card**

At the beginning of the school year when the parent meets the principal, school staff and teachers there should be questions formulated in the parent's mind "Parent/Volunteer Involvement Questionnaire" (Appendix C) as to what to find out about the school's openness of parental involvement. There are three areas that will be addressed as a summarization of the sentiments of the school official's opinion of parental involvement and partnerships of the local community. The areas that will be analyzed will include the parent's level of involvement, benefits of the parent/volunteer/partnership for the school system and benefits to the child.

1. Parental Involvement – the demands on parents these days can be taxing causing many parents to come home from a long day at work and relax in a comfortable chair.

But the parent's involvement help reinforce what is being taught at school at home or at least follow-up and staying in touch with the child's work.

Because the parent's involvement is a volunteered position the accountability of their involvement is shown through the child's outcome. This score card allows the parent to see at first-hand what the school administrator is seeking to accomplished with parental involvement. Most school administrators would agree with Dorothy Rich author of MegaSkills, "All parents want their children to become successful, caring adults. Similarly, many parents want to be involved with the formal education of their children. Sometimes, however they don't know where to start, when to find the time, or how to go about making positive connections with the schools."<sup>5</sup> Across the educational lines of parental involvement many educators know about the difference that can be made of having parental involvement.

2. Administrator/Educator-since an open-door policy is needed from the building administrator; hearing from them is key to why there are benefits for parent volunteers. Parent volunteers must feel welcome into the building to volunteer at the school.

Some building administrators have a difficult time in allowing parents/volunteers in the building.

Maria Hines, APS' family liaison supervisor, said families sometimes do not feel comfortable at schools, so the specialist help breakdown walls between schools and parents. She said that, traditionally, some parents have seen their role as separate from the schools; they drop their kids off, see them at the end of the day and have little or no contact with anyone inside the school. In order to work, both parents and school administration have to buy into the volunteer program and recognize the value of having a strong parent presence.<sup>6</sup>

Both parents and school administration must be open to one another.

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5. Dorothy Rich, "Parental Involvement in School." <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/succeed/parental.cfm> (accessed May 1, 2012).

6. Maria Hines, "Schools Welcoming More Parents," <http://www.aps.edu/news/schools-welcoming-more-parents> (accessed May 1, 2012).

3. Business Partnerships-students must be prepared to live a productive life. Skills are needed on every hand for the child in the States. The global market is becoming more and more competitive making it almost impossible to secure a job with only a high school diploma.

The business industry must take time to form partnerships in the school system especially with the world market getting smaller and industries demanded to have more workers that are skilled.

The business relationships formed between the school and families are important to be competitive in a global market. According to Jim Leatherwood, *Facing The Future Together: Form in Successful School-Business Partnerships* list five reasons businesses must collaborate with schools, they are as follows:

Fewer graduates will be prepared by high-skilled demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workplace;  
The American worker will be displaced by skilled employees from other countries;  
Uneducated, unskilled workers will be condemned to lives of poverty;  
Finding and retaining good teachers will become increasingly difficult;  
And America will lose its competitive edge in the global marketplace.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore it is crucial that business educational partnership continue to have a solid and sound workforce with equipped workers.

The information gathered on this score card will be helpful to all involved in a child's education. As a parent gets more involved opportunities will be presented to allow the information gathered to be woven into the fabrics a child's academic learning environment. The merging of new information will help parents who are pressed with time to spend with their child.

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7. Jim Leatherwood, "Facing the Future Together: Learn How to form Successful School Business Partnerships," <http://www.successfulschoolbusiness.com/site-content/site-content/about-the-book.html> (accessed May 1, 2012).



## CHAPTER FOUR

### Vineyard Learning

When serving as a parent volunteer and pastor for many years and actively involved in the community locally it brought with it many new adventures. And the rural communities that were traveled to weekly and sometimes bi-weekly in serving the people the needs were vastly different. Parental involvement is crucial for families, school systems, businesses and communities. Some are of the opinion that only the child's future is determined by the child himself or herself. According to Wolterstorff:

There are those in the contemporary world who say that parents do not have the primary right to determine the character of their child's education. I think, for example, of A. S. Neill of Summerhill fame, though he is but one representative of a position widely shared in the Western world. Neill was has the right to determine the character of a child's education—nobody other than the child himself. Only the child has the right to decide whether he or she will learn this habit rather than that one. Children as well as adults must be allowed self-determination. Children come with a cluster of innate desires and interests such that mental health and happiness will be achieved if, but only if, these are allowed to find their satisfaction within the natural and social environment of the child.<sup>1</sup>

A child should have the academic reinforcement at home. In today's society, rearing a child may have changed somewhat but care and nurturing are still needed for a child to enhance a child's emotions and development. While conducting a survey of fifteen adults parents and non-parents there are three specific areas that need to be improved in Parental Involvement.

The three areas of improvement are:

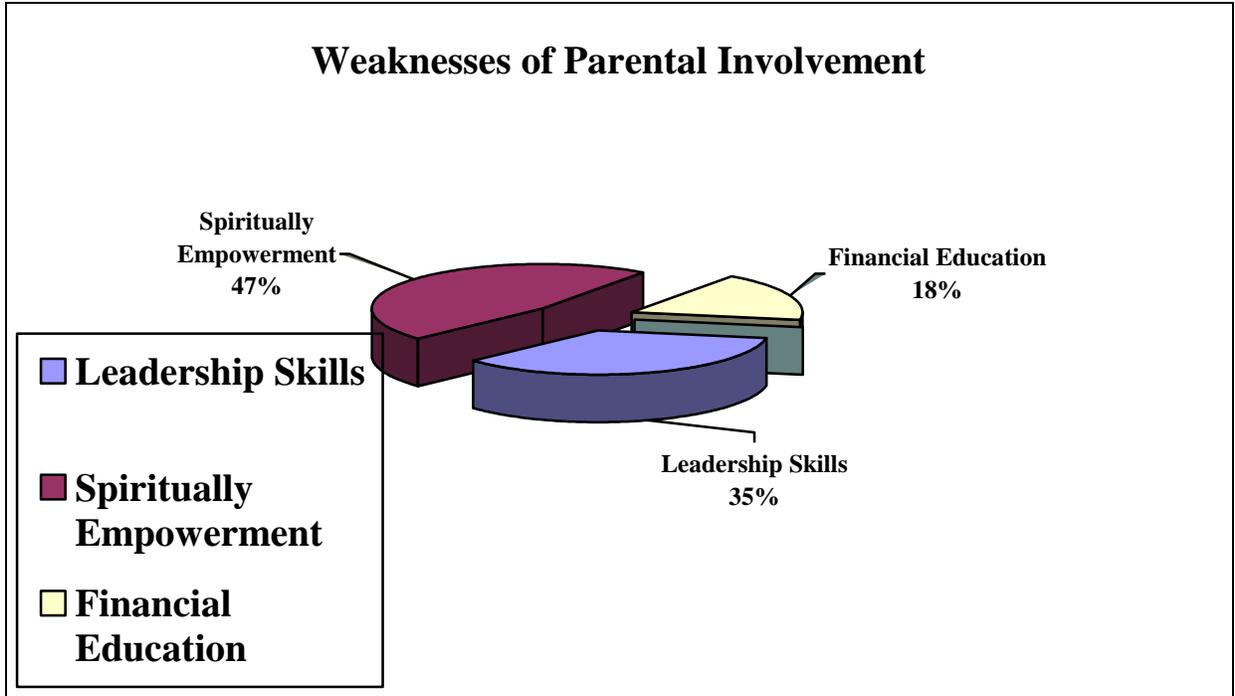
1. Encourage Child To Be Spiritually Empowered
2. Opportunities For The Youth and Parent To Develop Leadership Skills

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1. Nicholas P. Wolterstorff, *Educating for Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), 212.

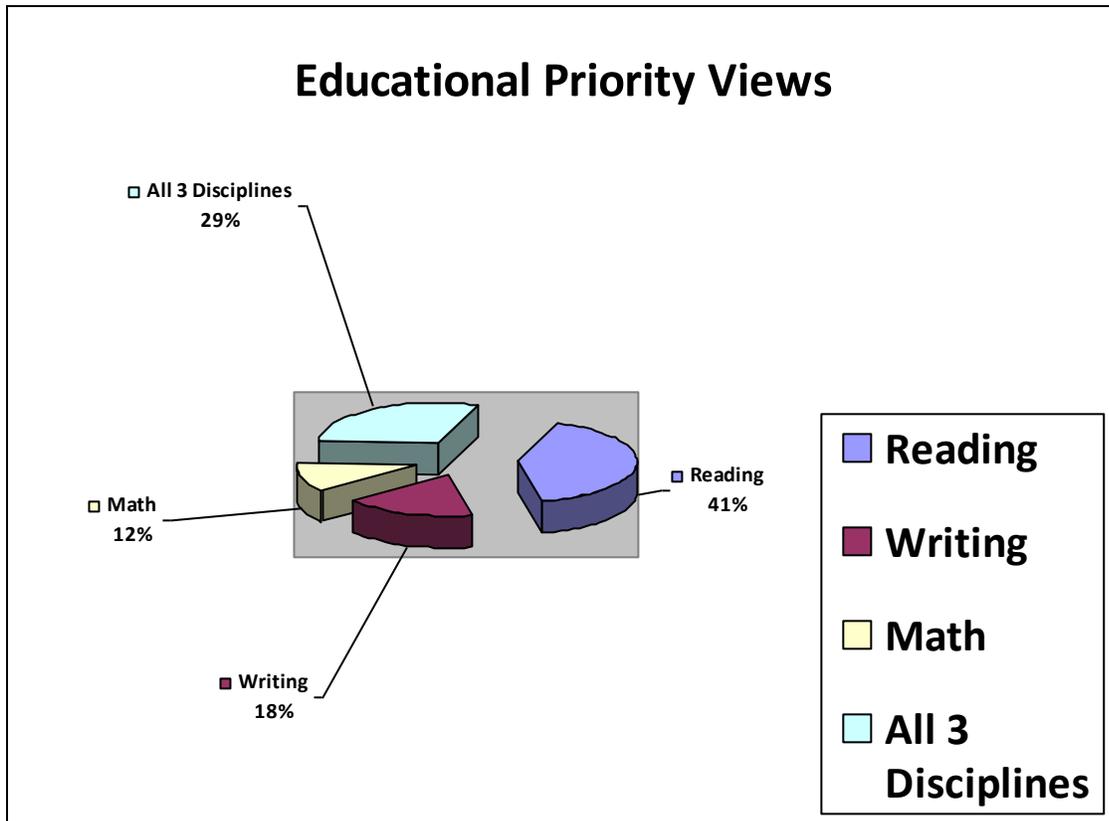
3. More Financial Education

**Table 2. Weaknesses of Parental Involvement**



Oftentimes, parents feel that many school administrators are not open to their suggestions. Being involved as a parent takes commitment and dedication. Thus, the survey conducted revealed an alarming opinion on how parents viewed the importance of areas in education: reading, writing, and math. Listed below are the thoughts of parental educational priorities:

**Table 3. Educational Priority Views**



**Three Areas of Improvement for the Parent to be Effective in Parental Involvement**

**Encourage the Child to Be Spiritually Empowered**

A little over half of the respondents indicated that they did not attend a Church School as an adult. This response indicates a strong correlation to the fact that their children and/or grandchildren are not sent to a Church School as well. Sources have said that when religion was taken out of public education schools in the 60s, it affected the moral and behavior of children causing violence to increase in schools.<sup>2</sup> The lack of religious teachings has weakened the spirituality well-being of children in society. The evidence of this is displayed behaviorally, and,

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2. Jeynes, *Christianity, Education and Modern Society* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2007),

in some cases, at school, home, and the community. There seems to be a gap with the churches and school involvement. Churches will award scholarships, reward good academic performance and give away school supplies to students but the presence of the church is not seen enough in the schools.

For example, Pastors and others in the faith community must understand the involvement of parents, and create strategies to be involved as a parent and a volunteer in the school system. When children see familiar faces in the schools from the church; therefore are empowered by interacting with someone of the faith community. A 65-year-old respondent who grew up in both the urban/suburban community stated on a questionnaire: “Not enough emphasis is placed on the importance and value of education/training.”<sup>3</sup>

Teachers and administrators are faced with many demands from the government and parents. There are not enough personnel to take care of these demands; therefore the service of the volunteers are at high demands. Many times the volunteers lack skills and talents that are needed to reach certain demands of the school system. But when a parent actively seeks to enhance his or her skills as a parent it can make an impact on how a child stimulating the child’s learning behavior.

Another respondent at the age 54 answered the same question and said,

In today’s society it is imperative that parents educate their children properly prior to and during their early school years in order for it to make a lasting life-long impression as these are the most vulnerable and impressionable years of children’s lives. It sets the stage for them to develop positive intrinsic values about learning and to become life-long learners.

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3. See Appendix A for full questionnaire.

Another 54 year-old respondent stated that “[y]es, education is very important. If you can read you can write. Your success depends on your education. Therefore, a child’s success in education depends upon the parents’ early preparation in education.”

Even though most parents stress getting an education to their children, the church does not influence the parent effectively to pursue a positive child academic outcome. A failing child may attend church, but the parent may not seek guidance from the pastor or other church leaders who may be able to help set strategic learning activities for the child. Sources have noted that other countries are advanced in math and science making it very difficult for the American child to compete.<sup>4</sup> However, success is measured differently in cultures, and the fact remains that the American child is challenged with math and science coursework.

Preparation is a key element to be successful. Sunday school is beneficial for children who have difficulty reading. The Sunday school teacher can serve as a role model/mentor who in most cases may be a teacher in public and private school during the week. A teacher can take time to help with phonics and spelling, and other learning disabilities for the children in his or her Sunday School class. If the church’s aim is to help produce productive citizens to support the Great Commission and build stronger families, the church must do a better job in rising to the occasion in creating an environment for participation in Sunday School.

The matter of addressing undereducated children and non-involved parents can be approached by using a check-in technique by the pastor or youth pastor/minister to find out school activities. This is one of the many approaches that can be done during Sunday School.

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4. Jim Leatherwood, “Facing the Future Together: Learn How to form Successful School Business Partnerships,” <http://www.successfulschoolbusiness.com/site-content/site-content/about-the-book.html> (accessed May 1, 2012).

Furthermore, the pastor can go and visit the schools in the community of where the church resides and occasionally asked if the pastor can sit in the classroom to observe the student's and teacher's interaction. Another method that may be taken is for the pastor to accompany the parent during a school visit. This allows the pastor to get a first-hand look at the challenges in the school system and can ask God specifically for the needs of the child and parent.

When the Pastor and other church leaders can gain valuable knowledge of what the child and parent are faced with in achieving a successful student outcome, meaningful programs and ministries can be administered. Once exposure has been gained from the church community of how the school system is operating more people will be able to see their role in the education of a child.

### **Opportunities for The Youth and Parent To Develop Leadership Skills**

In technology fields, leadership is quite different from many years ago in the Industrialized Age. The definition of a leader during the factory and farming days measured leadership from a physical standpoint more than today. Due to this change, some educational systems have not moved at a steady pace to match the current industry. For example, a student who learns to perform mathematical operations on a calculator instead of doing them with paper and pencil may be more likely to delve into advanced modes of scientific concepts.<sup>5</sup> This is the same opinion with leadership when every decision is made with the "click of a mouse" it does not allow the leader to form his/her own strategies in providing leadership rather the twenty-first century leader relies on solely on technology. Therefore, the teacher too should acknowledge a call on their life, as a leader teaching others how to lead. The human touch of bonding has

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5. Poplin, Michael, Bettie B. Youngs, and Jane M. Healy, *Helping Your Child Succeed in School.: A Guide for Parents of 4 to 14 Year Olds* (Atlanta, GA: Active Parenting Publishings, 1995), 192.

lessened for the leader servant because of technology. A child and parent must interact with the school physically and emotionally to stay connected.

According to the respondents of the survey, thirty-five percent of the respondents of the Questionnaire 15 stated that a leadership position was not held while they served as a volunteer.<sup>6</sup> Many factors may have played a role in the lack of participation of serving as a leader for an organization (i.e., time, money, lack of skills, personal). Good leadership must be taught. Some of the respondents wrote a response to Question 20 “Any thoughts about education?” A respondent aged twenty-three with a postgraduate degree wrote:

“[E]ducation is a partnership that requires school staff, teachers, and community members to work together and advocate for what is right for kids and will help them achieve their greatest potential.”

Respondent age 49 with a high school diploma wrote:

“Everyone should seek higher education.”

Respondent age 51 no level of education indicated on survey wrote:

“Continue high education and teach some day.”

Respondent age 64 with a college degree wrote:

“Education is absolutely necessary in the today’s time in order to succeed at anything; high School diplomas are not enough anymore.”

Respondent age 70 with a high school diploma wrote:

“The higher your education –the higher your possibilities in life.”

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6. See Appendix A for full questionnaire.

These respondents all had the word “education” in common. Church leadership is effective with education. Perhaps to gain a better prospective of the respondents career/job background a sub-question to Question 20 could have been asked to investigate the industry they were employed. The respondents regarded education as a priority for success.

Just like people in the church pews are pursuing theological training, the pastor must be educated, God-fearing, and love the people to be an effective leader. When the parent volunteer offers their services but the teacher and/or administrator avoids parents, it is difficult for the parent and child to achieve the knowledge of becoming a leader with such a poor example before them. Even if the parent faces obstacles in gaining access to the school, a parent must let his or her child know that the parent supports their education.

When the schools have an open door policy, parents and children can feel the support and care from the staff of the school. Professional parents who have the skills and talents to offer sometimes find themselves giving up. Sometimes professional parents get frustrated and leave organizations due to different reasons. This may have others at levels that show a lack of potential of developing leaders for the future. Schools should make a practice of encouraging organizations of the schools to offer more programs to develop students to become leaders as well as parents.

Another area that needs to be improved in the school system to develop leaders is increasing the education business partnerships. Though the survey did not ask specially about business partnership, experience has shown that education business partnerships have played a

key role in developing leaders.<sup>7</sup> Programs such as Junior Achievement and others in the past have served as a foundation to encourage leadership and entrepreneurship. With governmental budget cuts, cuts are made oftentimes school districts do not make futuristic goals that hinder budget items that support students' lives as they become productive adults.

While eighty-percent responded "Yes" to Question 19, "Has your child(ren) done volunteer activity?"<sup>8</sup> The activity noted did not give a strong indication of the type of role in leadership in which the respondent's child was involved. Part of parental involvement is directing the children to grasp the leadership pathway in volunteering. Many times children are taught to be leaders and not followers but more than not they fall in a trap of being a follower. However, this usually pertains to peer pressure. Some families have not had the opportunity to hold a leadership position. To perfect the proficiencies of parent leadership involvement, the parent should reassess the methods or ways he or she was raised as a child.

Therefore, the church must improve in the area of cultivating an environment for children to seeking to find a purpose in life. According to Bettye J. Allen in *The Church Class Leader System*, "Long before the popular book came out- 'The Purpose Driven Life' - I knew what God had a purpose from my life: not only a purpose but a divine purpose. Each of us in our "calling" has a divine purpose. We seek ways to be fulfilling. In our search we possess open minds."<sup>9</sup> When a child is taught to seek purpose, leadership skills will emerge because of personal

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7. Jim Leatherwood, "Facing the Future Together-Learn How to Form Successful School Business Partnerships," <http://www.successfulschoolbusiness.com/site-content/site-content/about-the-book.html> (accessed 05/05/12).

8. See Appendix A for full questionnaire.

9. Bettye J. Allen, *The Church Class Leader System: The "UnderShepherd" Ministry* (Nashville, TN: AMEC Sunday School Union, 2010), vi.

satisfaction.

### **More Financial Education**

Even though the respondents indicated that all had a checking account before the age of twenty-five, a weakness is that very few showed having an account before the age of sixteen. Parent involvement is educating a child about finances as well. In today's society credit card companies target young people that are new to college, and exposing them to frivolous spending habits. Although the respondents responded to having a checking account at a particular age, the discussion of the credit card plays a role to the early financial burdens for children. When both the schools and parents are working together financial literacy can be achieved.

Thirty-three percent of the respondents agreed all three academic disciplines has the most impact on education, only thirteen percent understood math had the most impact on education? This point is being made again in this section to compare the math foundation of education in financial education. According to the William R. Young:

According to Christ, our attitudes toward finances are indicators of our desire for true discipleship. Children also need to understand the verse, "No household slave can be the slave of two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You can't be slaves to both God and money" (Luke 16:13). Without intentional teaching about stewardship, children do not understand biblical financial principles. Therefore, if we teach children "God's way of handling finances, they'll learn His principles and be better equipped to govern their whole lives according to those principles."<sup>10</sup>

In addition, parental involvement may cause the parent to explain to the child that budgets will need to make to meet the financial demands for the week, month or quarter for the year. The conception of the measurement of time such as weekly, monthly, and quarterly will be

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10. William R. Yount, *The Teaching Ministry of the Church* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), 310.

a significant factor for younger children but it still can be explained. Understanding finances in the simplest terms can help the child with discipline. If a child knows that he or she has a desired to have a particular thing then it takes sacrifice to purchase it. Then the child must understand what he or she is willing to sacrifice to have his or her desires met.

When desires over exceed needs, the child may be faced with unnecessary debt later in life. When a parent establishes a proper handling of finances early in a child's life, he or she will be disciplined, allowing the child to gain possible financial stability in the future. Parents should teach money management because it may help deter a child from seeking possessions that can cause harm to others.

Additionally, when the child is included in church life, those things that are lacking at the school level can be absorbed through church. Every denomination has accountability to the finances of the church. For example, according to the Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church states,

There shall be a Chief Financial Officer of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, theretofore known as the Treasurer. The Chief Financial Officer shall keep an account of all funds remitted to the Finance Department by the Annual Conferences, administrative committees and interest accrued; and, shall disburse the same as authorized by the General Conference and directed by the General Board. He or she shall pay the salaries of all General Officers.<sup>11</sup>

Exposing finances to a child early in life will be a great benefit in the future. Organized youth groups are present in most mainline denominations to encourage these groups to teach about finances. When schools make planned trips to the bank, Federal Reserve, automobile plants, and bakeries, it can help a child's understanding of finances. Perhaps these types of trips may exist,

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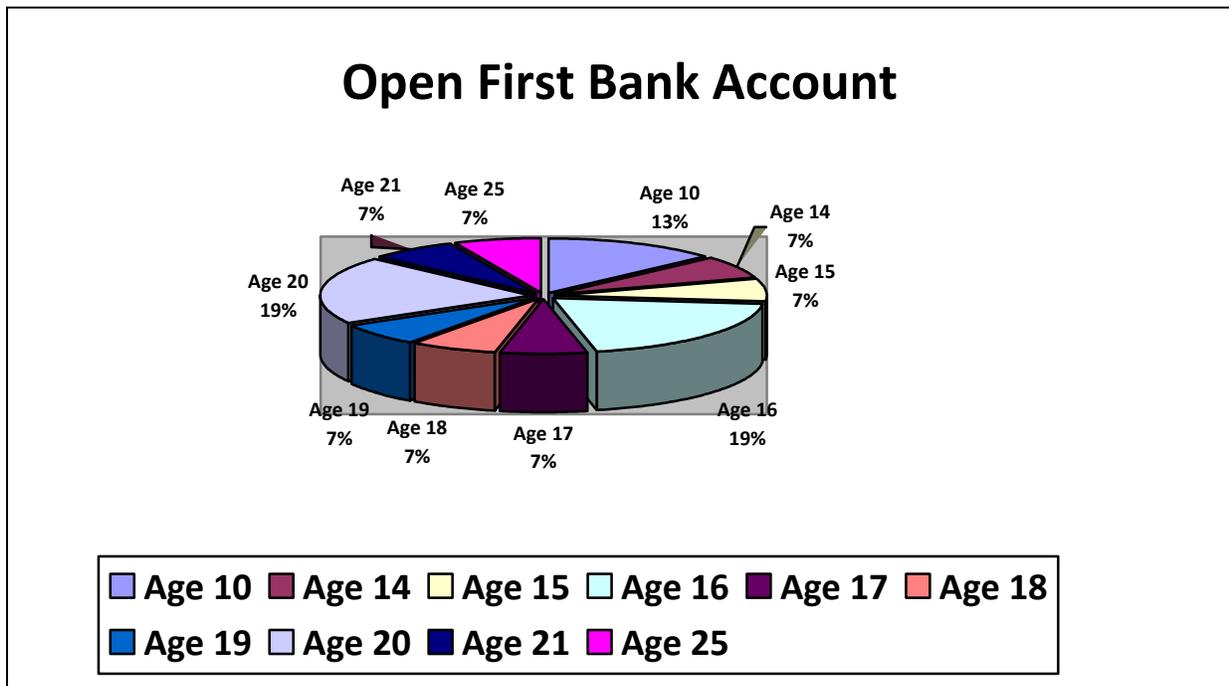
11. Johnny Barbour, Jr., *The Book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, 48th ed. (Nashville, TN: The A.M.E. Church, Sunday School Union, 2009), 148-49.

but are not reported within this study. The child retains these experiences subconsciously.

Ultimately, a child’s understanding finances helps him or her to stay out of debt. When a child reaches his or her teen years, a checking account can be opened.

Though few checks are written and more electronic banking is used for purchases, a child should still have a working knowledge of managing finances. In low-income communities, many parents use money orders and/or pay cash for business transactions. Though a parent may accomplish meeting financial obligations in this manner, a child may follow this same pattern of spending behavior that can hamper his or her financial management in the future. Listed below are the variations of respondent’s ages when a checking account was opened:

**Table 4. Open First Bank Account**



This data indicates that financial education should be introduced at an age earlier than ten years.

However, there would be limits as to what transaction a child can perform with his or her bank

account. Helping children with financial education in their early years may enhance math skills to aid in a scientific field in future years. When there is relevance, many are able to see the direct correlation of the subject at hand. Though not many questions on the survey covered financial education, the respondents did not indicate any opinion on finances of the open-ended question of: “Any thoughts about education?”<sup>12</sup>

### **Personal Reflections and Recommendations**

Serving as a parent volunteer and a seasonal employee of the school system and being involved as a parent, and now a Pastor, much can impact one’s ministry. As a parent acquires skills and knowledge on volunteerism and parental involvement there are many areas that he or she can be resourceful for others. It is through gaining knowledge of the involvement with the school system that can help the parent be an effective parent. The parent is effective because of the interaction that the parent has had with the school staff, administrator and other parents.

While attending six elementary schools by the age of nine, it was discovered that most of the volunteers had a more solid background and culture. In other words, living in the inner city caused me not to engage in the community as much. For example, trash and debris would line the street, and would be walked past for someone else to pick it up. This mindset could have been due to immaturity or just simply a lack interest for the environment. Years of being an involved parent in the early years of children’s education allowed a different view to be had for the school system and community. Not only was it a challenge to move from the inner city to the suburbs, but life was becoming disconnected culturally. Though everything seemed better, the culture as an African American was being challenged personally because of the new life as a

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12. See Appendix A for full questionnaire.

suburb parent and volunteer. While working in Corporate America and setting a goal to raise productive children, others in the old neighborhoods were commending that the family was changing. After all, the choice was to make life better for the family and daughters, and future generations.

Second, a basic fact to be an effective parent in a child's education is to identify the child's proficiencies and develop them early as well as their deficiencies to provide support to help rectify the matter. Children must know that they are not perfect and getting extra help will make them stronger students and citizens in the future. Encourage children to give back to the community and church by doing volunteer work and participant in extracurricular activities at school. These activities will build character, form relationships, and develop unseen skills and talents while sharpening others.

Third, one should empower others who may be unskilled as a volunteer. Serving as a President of a school's PTO (Parents' Teacher Organization). For years the school went without basketball goals; as President of the organization two basketball goals and sitting benches installed were purchased and installed from a successful fundraiser. Also while serving as President, many housewives served and made a good team. For years, teachers controlled the PTOs and PTAs of the local school, and the proceeds were not used as the parent organization had planned. This misuse of funds caused parents not to want to be supportive of or involved with this particular school. The new leadership brought insight to the changing times of parental involvement. Others were encouraged to work with different organizations but to have a balance to avoid burnout. When people overextend in their occupation, they can eventually reach burnout. "Burnout is often experienced by those in the helping professions, such as clergy,

doctors, teachers, police officers, social workers, and others who work extensively with people. It is thought to result from the excessive demands that others place on their energy, time, and resources.”<sup>13</sup> Many organizations have lost volunteers due to the stress of working in the schools and community.

Fourth, make sure that your involvement matches your moral values and interest. Share often the experiences as a volunteer and/or parent with the church. By sharing with others in the church may increase participation from the church. In addition, the pastor may gain knowledge of the programs offered at the school that congregates may find of interest. The knowledge of certain school programs has helped me be creative in my ministry for the last twenty years.

Fifth, recognize and celebrate teachers, school staff and administration by sending a note of thanks of appreciation. All too often complaints are made against what schools are not doing; therefore, a compliment will brighten the day in such a demanding field. Many dedicated teachers, school staff and administrators work hard but are never recognized for their good works.

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13. Tim Clinton, and Ron Hawkins, Drs., *The Quick-Reference Guide To Biblical Counseling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), 55.

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## APPENDIX A

### Survey Questionnaire

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Highest level of education earned (circle one) elementary, middle school, high school, college, postgraduate Did you graduate? Yes or No

1. Were you raised in a rural or urban/suburban community? ( Circle one)
2. Were you active in school? Yes or No If yes, which did you participant in? Sports Debate Pep Club Music Religious Group
3. What is the most important area of education? (Circle all that apply) Reading Writing Math
4. When did you receive your first car, what age \_\_\_\_\_?
5. When did you get your first bank account, what age \_\_\_\_\_?
6. Do you have a library card? Yes or No
7. What is your favorite hobby or past time activity? Sports Crafts Reading Watching a movie or Other \_\_\_\_\_.
8. How many elementary schools did you attend while growing up? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who had the most impact on your education? (Circle one) Teacher Parent Mentor Friend Relative
10. How many children do you have \_\_\_\_\_ ? If no children, *Skip questions 11, 13,18 and 19*
11. Did you have a happy pregnancy \_\_\_\_ Yes or \_\_\_\_ No? If no why? Describe with one word. Hurt \_\_\_\_\_ Betrayed \_\_\_\_\_ Shocked \_\_\_\_\_ Confused \_\_\_\_\_
12. Were your parents involved in your education? Yes or No
13. Have you ever lost a child? No or Yes If yes, how? Check all that apply  
\_\_\_\_ Still born \_\_\_\_ Miscarriage \_\_\_\_ Violence \_\_\_\_ Runaway \_\_\_\_ Court system \_\_\_\_ Other
14. What type of household were you raised in? (Circle One) Married Single Divorced Separated Widow Widower
15. Have you ever held a volunteered leadership position in the school? Yes or No
16. Were you raised in the church? Yes or No
17. Do you attend Church School? Yes or No

18. Does your child(ren) know how to plan, organize and execute a program? Yes or No

19. Has your child(ren) done volunteer activity? Yes or No If yes,  
what? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Any thoughts about  
education \_\_\_\_\_

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

## **Appendix B**

### Cover Letter

Eraina M. Ross-Aseme, M. DIV  
[street address]  
[City, State, Zipcode]  
emaseme@liberty.edu  
[phone number]

January 2012

First and Last Name  
Address  
City & State, Zipcode

Dear Ms., Mrs., or Mr.:

I am writing you to seek to do a survey for my Thesis project. I attend Liberty Baptist Theologian Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia. I wish to gain valuable information about the effectiveness of parental involvement in a child's education.

In advance thank you for the utmost consideration to be interviewed for my Thesis project.

Sincerely,

Eraina M. Ross-Aseme

## **Appendix C**

### **Parental Involvement Questionnaire**

1. Why should a parent be involved in a child's education?
2. From the building administrator perspective what are the benefits of having a parent volunteer?
3. How do you suppose the volunteers/partnerships programs benefit the child?

## VITA

### PERSONAL

Born: May 5, 1959  
Married: Patrick C. Aseme, May 26, 1984  
Children: Pamela Ifunanya, born June 26, 1986  
Dayna Ngozi, born January 26, 1990

### EDUCATIONAL

B.A., Webster University, 1987. Completed some coursework at U.M.K.C.  
M.Div., Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009. Completed some coursework at Saint Paul School of Theology.

### MINISTERIAL

Accepted Call To Preach: September 1991  
License: February 5, 1992. Christ Our Redeemer, South Kansas City, MO  
Ordination as Deacon: September 1994  
Ordination of Itinerant: September 1996; 1997 joined Gregg Tabernacle AMEC  
Kansas City, MO

### PASTORAL CHARGES

Cain Grant A.M.E. Church – KCMO	2011-Present
St. Mark's A.M.E. Church –Topeka KS	February 14, 2010-September 25, 2011
St. John A.M.E. Church-KCMO	November 14, 2004-August 25, 2009
St. Luke A.M.E. Church-KCMO	November 2003-September 2004
St. Luke A.M.E. Church-Salisbury, MO	1997-2003
Zion A.M.E. Church-Brunswick, MO	1995-1997
Campbell Chapel-Glasgow, MO	1996-1997; 2000-2002