



# Involving Families: Lessons Learned from the Families and Schools Together (F&ST) PRO Regional Grant

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# Why engage parents?


When parents are involved students have:

- increased motivation , better self esteem
- better school attendance
- higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates
- decreased use of drugs and alcohol






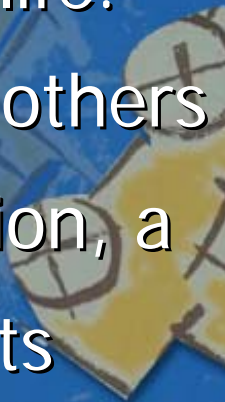
# Why engage whole communities?

- higher student achievement
  - provides families with services and supports
  - skill and leadership opportunities for parents
  - connects families with others in the school and community
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# Key Benefit

. . . to create partnerships that will help all youngsters succeed in school and later life. When parents, teachers, students, and others view one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and begins its work.






*Joyce Epstein*  
*Center on Families, Communities,  
Schools and Children's Learning*  
*John Hopkins University*








# Families and Schools Together PRO Regional Grant

F&ST aims to:

- reduce family stress
  - promote children's success in school, home and community
  - strengthens parent connection to school and other parents
  - connect families to the larger community
  - lessen social isolation
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# The F&ST program

- Hello, family sing-along, design a family flag
  - Family meal time & communication and feeling identification exercises
  - Parent support group and kid's time
  - Special Play – parent-child one-on-one time
  - Door Prize / Closing tradition
  - **Parent partner**
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# F&ST Benefits

F&ST Canada Evaluation Report  
Michael Cranny Public School

- Families rate the program 8 out of 10
- Parents note their children's school functioning increases by 46%
- Teachers note student's intrapersonal strength improves by 25%
- more parents volunteer in the school
- Parents involvement in child's education is increased










# Lessons learned from F&ST Parent Partners

- Not always easy to engage parents
- Need a different approach for every school
- Know your school community
- Know your networks
- Face-to-face marketing very effective
- Acknowledge extended family





# Lessons learned from F&ST Parent Partners

- Find out what parents want
  - Value different ways of contributing
  - Understand who your hard-to-reach parents are
  - Make it easy for parents to be engaged
  - Use your Community Resource Team member as a resource
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# F&ST focus group asks:

Are you opening a door so a parent can see right away that they have something to contribute?

