

District Record

Project in Grand Blanc, Michigan Provides Valuable Resource to Parents

The Resource and Referral Booklet project was submitted to the National Network's collection of *Promising Partnership Practices—2000* by District Facilitator Martha Weiss, of Grand Blanc Community Schools. The goal of the project was to create a parent-friendly information booklet that identified current, accurate, and relevant referral resources in the community for the district's families. With this information, more parents would be able to find appropriate services to support their families and children.

A district level team of social workers, psychologists, and mental health professionals met to determine the most common needs and requests of families in the district. Similar meetings were held with directors of programs such as Parents as Partners, Children's Garden, and Family Service Centers. Social workers and

psychologists were asked to designate the professionals and agencies from the Resource Book that they would recommend based on past experience.

Many Local Services

Based on information gained from these professionals, the Resource and Referral Booklet contains listings for clothing assistance, counseling assistance, education support services, food assistance, hotlines, legal assistance, parenting information and services, support groups, and other referral sources. A strong effort was made to list resources that were geographically close to families in the Grand Blanc Community School District. This made the district Resource and Referrals Booklet more user-friendly than references for services at great distances from across the county.

The Resource and Referral

Booklet listed the names of the professionals and agencies, their addresses and phone numbers, and a brief description of the services provided. A final phone call was made to each of the contact persons to check for accuracy before the booklet was printed.

Widespread Distribution

Copies of the Resource and Referral Booklet were distributed to the home-school liaisons in all elementary schools, the counselors in all middle and high schools, and the social workers and directors of programs within the school district. All of these leaders make the booklet available to families as needed.

Adapted from: *Promising Partnership Practices—2000* of the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University.

Evaluations Help Districts and Schools Improve Partnership Programs

(Continued from page 1)

The researchers explained, "Evaluations not only are conducted in high quality programs, but also help to improve the quality of partnership programs over time." The two studies suggest that when districts and schools take their work on school, family, and community partnerships seriously enough to conduct evaluations, they are likely to use the results to improve their plans and activities for the next school year.

At this time of year, *all* schools, districts, states, and organizations in the National Network of Partnership Schools are expected to conduct two short, but powerful evaluations. First,

schools should use the End-of-Year Evaluation* (see *Handbook*, p. 137-143) to reflect on how well they succeeded in implementing their One-Year Action Plans. Districts and states should review their annual Leadership Plans for Partnerships, and assess their progress, successes, and needed improvements.

Second, schools, districts, states, and organizations in the Network should use the *2001 UPDATE* survey, which will be sent in early April, to reflect on this year's program quality, support, funding, actions, and outreach. *UPDATE* must be returned to the Network to renew membership for 2001-2002, but before sending it

in, members should use *UPDATE* as a tool to discuss key features and needs of their programs.

All members of the Network should use the results of these two assessments to write more focused, goal-oriented plans for partnerships for 2001-2002. These three steps—evaluate, write better plans, and implement the planned activities—ensure that the quality of family and community involvement will improve from year to year.

*Members may contact the Network for an alternative End-of-Year Evaluation form to assess goal-oriented partnership programs. E-mail nmps@csos.jhu.edu and ask for the End-of-Year Evaluation Form B.