

Appendix I

AYPF Compendia Methodology

The evaluations included in *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices* (1997); *MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth* (1999); *Raising Academic Achievement* (2000) and *Raising Minority Academic Achievement* (2001) were selected through a multiphase process:

- A. *Collection of evaluations:* The searches involved (1) reviews of national databases, such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Sociological Abstracts and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS); (2) Internet searches; (3) direct contact with program coordinators, policymakers, funding officers and researchers; (4) distribution of flyers requesting evaluations during forums, conferences and similar events; and (5) a request for evaluations posted at the AYPF web site (<http://www.aypf.org>). Collectively, we reviewed more than 600 evaluations of youth programs and initiatives.
- B. *Initial selection:* The evaluations collected were then reviewed for (1) program characteristics—programs and practices had to target school-aged children and older youth; (2) research quality—evaluation sample, design and methodology had to follow accepted research standards; and (3) program results/outcomes—the evaluations had to include quantitative data indicating the initiative resulted in positive effects on participants, such as improved academic achievement, increased graduation rates, decreased rate of risky behaviors, and others. Additionally, evaluations for *Raising Minority Academic Achievement* had to show data disaggregated by race/ethnicity.
- C. *Internal review:* The evaluations that met the criteria above were summarized and reviewed by an internal committee. Summaries approved in this initial review were then sent to evaluators and program staff members to clarify questions, provide more recent data when available, and ensure each summary's accuracy.
- D. *External review:* An external reviewer read all the selected summaries from the three reports to assess once more the quality of the original research and the summaries. An advisory board also contributed to and reviewed *Raising Minority Academic Achievement*.

Evaluations which met the criteria for inclusion were summarized in three to five pages including information on the population, study methodology, findings, key program components, factors contributing to the outcomes of the program, and contact information.

Appendix II

Limitations

There are some built-in limitations to using the AYPF compendia for an analysis of family involvement:

- (1) The program evaluators were usually focused on youth outcomes and did not explicitly seek to measure the amount of family involvement or the direct relationship of this involvement to youth outcomes. The family involvement strategies used are, therefore, not necessarily “state of the art;” they simply provide a real picture of what is being used by these school and youth programs.
- (2) The number of programs with family involvement components may be underestimated, as the evaluations focused on program outcomes and not on the strategies used. To minimize this potential source of error, a survey was mailed to all programs included in the first two compendia with questions about specific activities, such as having families on advisory boards or conducting home visits. Responses were obtained for over half of the programs in the first two compendia (49) and results were integrated into the analysis.
- (3) As the evaluations focused on outcomes, rather than process, even when the evaluators identified program components, their descriptions were succinct. Therefore, types of activities related to family involvement usually were not discussed in depth. Whenever available, the program literature was consulted to complement descriptions. (While not within the scope of this project, telephone interviews and site visits to the 27 focus programs could have enhanced information on the strategies used.)
- (4) The programs cover a vast range of youth-related interventions, but leave out a few major initiatives that require family involvement, particularly those related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Evaluations of IDEA-funded programs that met our research criteria were not found during the production of each compendium.

Finally, we note that of the universe of 100 compendia programs documenting positive outcomes for youth, the majority achieved positive youth outcomes without engaging families to any significant extent. Additionally, the programs selected for inclusion in this report each used multiple strategies to achieve results, so successful outcomes cannot be attributed solely to family involvement, but only to a combination of strategies.

Appendix III

Organizations with Additional Information on Family Involvement

A number of associations provide information and support to families to enhance their participation in youth-related activities:

- ◆ *Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)*, www.acorn.org, is the nation's largest community organization of low- and moderate-income families, with over 120,000 member families organized into 600 neighborhood chapters in 45 cities across the country. Their priorities include better public schools. Their strategies include direct action, negotiation, legislation, and voter participation.
- ◆ *Center for Law and Education (CLE)*, www.cleweb.org, is a national support center with expertise in ensuring the rights of all students to quality education; in enabling communities to address their own public education problems effectively; and in assisting students, parents, and educators to ensure proper implementation of federal, state and local policies to strengthen parent and community involvement. CLE created *Community Action for Public Schools (CAPS)*, a national network of parents, educators, and advocates linked together to improve their capacity to work for the rights of all children.
- ◆ *Coalition for Community Schools*, www.communityschools.org, works toward improving education and helping students learn and grow while supporting and strengthening their families and communities. Community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities — before, during and after school, seven days a week.
- ◆ *The Education Trust*, www.edtrust.org, is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to make schools and colleges work for all of the young people they serve. As part of its work, the Ed Trust helps K-16 councils—whose members include education leaders, policymakers, parent, community and business representatives—ensure high academic achievement of all students at all levels, kindergarten through college. The actions of K-16 councils are public, based on actual data about how students are doing, and reported regularly to the public at large.
- ◆ *Gamaliel Foundation*, www.gamaliel.org, is a network of grassroots, interfaith, interracial, multi-issue organizations working together to create a more just and democratic society. The organizations of the Gamaliel Network are vehicles that allow ordinary people to effectively participate in the political, environmental, social and economic decisions affecting their lives. The network helps create and sustain such organizations and is the vehicle for these organizations to act on a national and international level.
- ◆ *Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)*, www.infnw.com, builds non-partisan civilian power to transform civil sector institutions and their cultures so that America's politics, economics and culture can be sustainable and democratic.

- ◆ *National Coalition for Parental Involvement in Schools (NCPPIE)*, <http://www.ncpie.org>, is a coalition of families, educators and community organizations dedicated to developing effective family/school partnerships.
- ◆ *National Coalition of Title I/Chapter 1 Parents* promotes conferences and activities for parents in Title I schools (202-547-9286).
- ◆ *National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)*, www.nichcy.org, is a national information and referral center providing information on disability-related issues for families, educators and other professionals, with a special focus on children and youth.
- ◆ *National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI)*, www.fatherhood.org. NFI's mission is to improve the well being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers. NFI's services include: educating and inspiring all Americans, especially fathers, through public awareness campaigns, research, and other resources; equipping and developing leaders of national, state, and community fatherhood initiatives through curricula, training, and technical assistance; engaging every sector of society through strategic alliances and partnerships.
- ◆ *National Parent Information Network (NPIN)*, <http://npin.org>, is an initiative of the ERIC system, administered by the National Library of Education (U.S. Department of Education) and includes a virtual library, an electronic discussion list, and other resources for parents of public school students.
- ◆ *National Parent Teachers Association*, www.pta.org, is a nonprofit association of parents, educators, students, and other citizens active in their schools and communities. Its mission includes supporting and speaking on behalf of children and youth, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children; assisting parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and encouraging parent and public involvement in the public schools.
- ◆ *National Network of Partnership Schools* at John Hopkins University, www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000, brings together schools, districts and states that are committed to developing and maintaining comprehensive programs of school-family-community partnerships.
- ◆ *Pacific Institute for Community Organizing (PICO)*, www.piconetwork.org, assists in the building of community organizations with the power to improve the quality of life of families and neighborhoods. PICO carries out its mission through leadership training seminars; the recruitment of and development of professional community organizers; and on-going consultation and technical assistance. Through the PICO network, people learn to participate in and influence our political system and democratic institutions.
- ◆ *Parent Information Centers (PIC)* provide information and support for families of children with disabilities. They are supported with funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Most states have PICs that can be reached through the internet. The Alliance is a project that provides technical assistance for establishing, developing, and coordinating Parent Training and Information Projects and Community Parent Resource Centers, www.taalliance.org.
- ◆ *Parents for Public Schools (PPS)*, www.parents4publicschools.com, is a national organization of grassroots chapters dedicated to improving public schools; involving parents in meaningful roles as decision makers and **recruiting** families to stay in or come back to public schools.

- ◆ *Partnership for Family Involvement in Education (PFIE)*, <http://pfie.ed.gov>, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, offers resources and funding to promote family participation in their children's learning. PFIE focuses on the role of community organizations, employers, families and schools to develop family-friendly policies at schools and the workplace, before- and after-school programs, tutoring and mentoring initiatives, and donations of facilities and technologies.
- ◆ *Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence*, www.prichardcommittee.org, is a non-partisan, non-profit, independent citizens advocacy group of volunteer parents and citizens from around Kentucky, which works to improve education in Kentucky at all levels. The Committee has created a new consulting unit to expand the use of its successful parent leadership program beyond Kentucky's borders. Parent Leadership Associates (PLA) is described as a "mission-based" consulting unit that will focus on improving student achievement by increasing the meaningful involvement of parents in public schools.
- ◆ *Public Education Network (PEN)*, www.pen.org, is a national association of local education funds (LEFs) advancing school reform in low-income communities across the country. PEN's mission includes involving parents, individual citizens and whole communities in improving public school systems.
- ◆ *U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), Educational Partnerships and Family Involvement*, www.ed.gov, provides a parents and families page on their website and numerous publications for families at www.ed.gov/pubs/parents.