

***Laboratories to Living Rooms:
Strategies for Effective Family Practica Experiences***

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Objectives:

- Establish the importance of family practica in preservice preparation
- Provide a spectrum of options for developing family practica experiences
- Outline the key considerations to ensure a successful practicum
- Exchange information and resources about how to implement and evaluate family practica
- Share examples of family recruitment strategies, support and mentorship activities and compensation ideas

I. Philosophical and conceptual foundations for family practica

- The concept of family as community faculty
- The value and benefit of integrating families as community faculty

II. The Spectrum of options

- One time home visit
- Multiple time visit
- Semester or academic year experience
 - LEND 2003-2004 Family-Practica Project/Assignment **[HANDOUT]**
- For other examples, look at the Syllabi in the Natural Allies Petting Zoo, especially #5, 6 , 8, 11, 32, 34, 37, 38 and 42

III. New Mexico: Considerations for implementing family practica

- A. Involving families at every step of the way (planning, implementation, evaluation)
- Central role of parent groups and organizations
- B. Tips for recruiting host family faculty
- Do You Have a Child with Special Needs? **[HANDOUT]**
 - Highlights (Blaylock, Ahmann, & Johnson, 2002, pgs. 67-68) **[HANDOUT]**

- C. Supporting and mentoring families as hosts
 - Family as Faculty Curriculum **[HANDOUT]**
 - Orientation letter– **see curriculum page 17**
 - Family as Faculty Etiquette **see curriculum page 21**
 - Compensation for host family faculty on a shoe string budget (bartering, library, computer, internet privileges, access to University facilities, tuition waivers etc.)

 - D. Preparing for and supporting student involvement
 - Developing a student packet **see curriculum pages 30 - 47**
 - Orientation to the model
 - Guidelines and student expectations for visit(s)
 - The participant observer role (Kottuk, 1982) **[HANDOUT]**

 - E. Follow-up and Evaluation
 - Sample letters and feedback forms **[HANDOUT]**
 - Importance of follow-up/wrap up sessions
 - Measurement and evaluation methods
- IV. University of New Mexico School of Education: Family experiences for all students**
- A. Overview
 - Required for early childhood and early childhood special education students; orientation + one visit (1.5 – 4.5 hours) + debriefing
 - 100% of students identified as positive experience; families felt students gained a better understanding of how the educational system does or does not work for children with special needs.

 - B. State funding opportunities
 - C. Replication of model to other schools of higher education with diverse rural New Mexico communities
 - D. Future goals for the project
 - E. Evaluations and publication of the model
 - F. Replication to additional disciplines
- V. Variables to consider [HANDOUT]**
- VI. Discussion questions?**
- A. About context
 - What frequency and duration of student-family contact will yield the strongest impact?
 - How can family practica experiences mirror and/or reinforce a continuum of learning experiences (e.g., at awareness, knowledge, skill, attitudes/values levels)?

- B. About families
- Why do families choose to participate? Or not?
 - What do families get out of the experience?
 - Are some families better able to volunteer to be involved in preservice education? Why?
 - Are there mechanisms for supporting a broader group of families to participate?
 - Should certain safeguards be in place before exposing families to practical experiences?
- C. About students
- How does the impact of a family practicum experience differ when the ratio is one student per family vs. more than one student per family?
 - Which has the greatest student impact: a focused experience with one family? Experiences with more than one family?
 - What kind of supervision is available? Provided?
- D. About evaluation
- What knowledge, skill and abilities are enhanced through family practical experiences? What would be effective ways to measure these changes?

VII. Resources (NOTE: Shaded items are available in the Petting Zoo and Resource Guide)

Anthropology and contemporary social problems: New directions in applied anthropology. (1982). (3rd. ed.) In C.P. Kottuk, *Anthropology: The exploration of human diversity*. New York: Random House.

Blaylock, B., Ahmann, E. & Johnson, B.H. (2002). *Creating patient and family faculty programs*. Bethesda, MD: Institute for Family-Centered Care.

Capone, A., Hull, K.M. & Divenere, N.J. (1997). Parent-professional partnerships in preservice and inservice education.

www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/pdfs/Reforming/17-433_452.pdf

Capone, A.M., & Divenere, N. (1996). The evolution of a personnel preparation program: Preparation of family-centered practitioners. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 20(3), 222-231.

Parents Reaching Out (PRO). (n.d.) *The Families as Faculty Project: A training guide to a family centered approach curriculum for education students*. Los Lunas, NM: PRO.

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Perrin, K.R., Whitman, B. & Knudson-Buresh, A. (2002, September). Family mentoring: A life experience. *Journal of Allied Health*, 31, 171-176.

Whitehead, A, Ulanski, B., Swedeen, B., Sprague, R., Yellen-Shiring, G., Fruchtman, A., Pomije, C., & Rosin, P. (1998). *By design: Family-centered, interdisciplinary preservice training in early intervention*. Madison, WI: Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin.

Variables to consider in designing family practica experiences

<p>Context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where does the experience fit into the educational program? Part of a course? Practicum? Seminar? Required? Optional? • What is the purpose? Anticipated outcomes? Nature of the experience? • Duration of the experience? One visit? Multiple visits? • What kinds of resources (fiscal and human) will support the experience?
<p>Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number involved • Characteristics (Age of children? Types of disabilities? Cultural and linguistic diversity? Representing which communities?) • Finding and recruiting families • Incentives for family participation • Family expectations • Preparation for experience (Materials? Curriculum? Methods?) • Ongoing, structured support
<p>Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number involved • Characteristics (Graduate? Undergraduate? Disciplines? Level of previous experience with families?) • Preparation for experience (Materials? Curriculum? Methods?) Should students have supervised contact with families before having unsupervised contact? • Student expectations • Ongoing, structured support (Small group brainstorming? Individual consultation? Feedback on reflections?) • Strategies for individualizing the experience based on students' needs, background or discipline
<p>Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family opportunities to provide feedback on the experience? On the students? • Impact on students? Families? Other impact? • Strengths and weaknesses of the experience? Priority for repeating the experience? • Advice or "lessons learned"