

## Connecting with Students' Families

Promising Practices 25

### Program Puzzler

Many of the students in your English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program have children or grandchildren. You would like to provide some activities for your students that include these younger family members—but you are not quite sure where to start.

### Peer Perspective

- Take ESOL students and their families to a garage sale. Students can practice their speaking, listening, and math. They can also experience an American custom.
- If your students and their children depend on public transportation, discuss schedules, routes, and stops. Then, have students and their children plan trips to various parts of the city.
- Teach your students songs that they can sing to their children.
- Invite students and their children to attend a holiday parade, for example a Halloween parade. Students can learn about the reason for the parade before they attend.

### Timely Tips

Talk to the elementary teachers who have your students' children in their classes. If they are interested in family literacy, plan activities together for your students and their children.

Survey your students to see what their interests and their children's interests are or what areas their children are struggling with in school. Build activities around those topics that will also address the ESOL standards.

### Added Insights

Research shows that adult students stay in programs longer when the program address the needs of their children as well as their own needs.

Research on the effectiveness of family literacy can be found in the publication *Family Literacy: Who Benefits* at <http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/Pubs/WhoBenefits2003.pdf>

Resources for family activities can be found in the Family Literacy Resource Collection at <http://literacy.kent.edu/familyliteracy/>

Aspire programs who have engaged ESOL students in family literacy activities include the following:

- Fostoria—Anitha Thomas (419-436-4100)
- Kettering—Katie Miller (937-499-1450)
- Middletown—Rose Marie Stiehl (513-420-4520)

Literature mentioned in the Added Insights of this document is drawn from reviews, reports and papers housed on the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) website. Refer to <http://www.ncsall.net/> for more information. In addition, the reference below, also found at the NCSALL site, is more directly cited in this document.

Taylor, J., Smith, C., & Bingman, B. (December 2005). *Program Administrators' Sourcebook: A Resource on NCSALL's Research for Adult Education Program Administrators*. Cambridge, MA.  
<http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/PASourcebook.pdf>