

Home Visiting
Educateurs sans Frontières
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Lumin's guiding principles:

Start young,
Involve parents
Use Montessori principles

Parents as Teachers

Parents as Teachers is a home visiting model that works with families with children from pregnancy to age 5. It operates in the US and 6 other countries.

Evidence-Based Practices

Emphasizes parenting and child development.
Engages parent and child together.
Supports parent warmth, responsiveness, encouragement and conversation.
Collaborates with parents.
Involves other family members.
Builds on family activities.

Role of the Parent Educator

There is a 1-week training for parent educators, training people how to access and use the resources for home visits, which are extensive. The parent educators are trained to:

Partnering: Based on strength-based family support, the parent educator creates an environment of mutual respect, trust, acceptance, open communication, and support.

Maintain confidentiality
Acknowledge and accept the family roles.
Respond flexibly to the family's needs and routines.
Recognize personal resources and support systems.
Work collaboratively to set and achieve goals

Facilitating: The parent educator affirms what parents are doing well, communicates ways to encourage development, helps them notice their child's cues, and coaches them to try new strategies. She does this by:

Communicating:
Active listening

Sharing information

Observing, listening, and learning:

Gaining parents' perspectives

Interpreting behavior

Coaching:

Motivating

Encouraging

Affirming

Sharing ideas

Connecting:

Parent behavior with child development/behavior

Experiences with information

Family culture with parenting

Rhythm of Facilitation:

Remain quiet with open and accepting body language

Prompt an observation

Share an observation

Affirm the parent to sustain the interaction

Share information

Connect the experience to the information

Prompt reflection on the interaction

Reflecting: The parent educator uses reflective processes (questioning, role play visualizing) to motivate parents, identify barriers, and develop problem-solving skills.

Increase awareness of assumptions and perspectives

Motivate a commitment to change

Integrate new learning into decision-making

Explore reasons for behavior

By taking the time to reflect with parents, parent educators can model coping, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills.

Cultural Competence

Reflect on beliefs

Identify personal culture

Recognize the origins of my knowledge and beliefs about:

Safety

Courtesy

Respect for adults
Treatment and discipline of children
Money
Family time
Holidays
Religion/spirituality
Friendship
Dating and courtship
Marriage
Death

Components of the Program

Components of the Home Visit

Weekly Home Visits

The families receive weekly visits in their home from a trained parent educator who is knowledgeable about their culture. The parent educator provides information about child development, ways of talking and playing with the child; periodic developmental screenings; and links to community resources they may need (health, dental, food bank, etc.).

[photos from home visit] Angie, at a visit with Olivia, the mother of Daniela, who was 14-months old. The topic was: language development. Angie talked with Olivia about the importance to talking to Daniela, giving her the names of objects, like these little farm animals. Olivia said she was grateful to get this information, because in her family it was not the custom for the adults to talk to the very young children. She said that her two older children had not begun talking until age 3 or later.

The moms learn how to make simple toys for their children out of things they have in their homes. **[photo of chips in a can, stacking yogurt cups]**

Books are always a part of the visit, and the parent educators model how to look at a book together, how to turn the pages, how to talk about the pictures. **[photos of child reading, mom and child with book]**

Montessori Mentoring Program

When parent educators have backgrounds in traditional ECE or Head Start we can give them some basic training in Montessori principles and how to incorporate them into the home visits. This mentoring program was developed and presented by Charo, an A to I trained guide who is now the director of one of the Lumin schools.

Objectives:

1. Familiarize parent educators with the Montessori philosophy and how to implement it during home visits.
2. Create a common ground in our understanding of child development and the way we present information to parents.
3. Create a clear and well defined protocol for home visits to be used by every PE.

Program Content:

- (1) Classroom observations
- (2) Assigned reading (*Understanding the Human Being* by Dr. Montanaro) with weekly group discussions of the Montessori philosophy, and
- (3) Before-and-after home visit videos for self-evaluation.

Syllabus for Mentoring Program (handout)

Procedures for the Montessori Home Visit (handout)

We use **4 basic Montessori concepts** in the presentation of materials from the PAT curriculum:

- 1) Predictable Routine
- 2) Freedom of Choice
- 3) Possibility of Repetition
- 4) Beauty and Order

Toddler Visit Bag

Toddler Activity

Toddler Visit Set Up

Set Up in the Home

Using a Tray to Organize Materials

Uninterrupted Work

Involving the Parent

Involving Siblings

Independence in Eating – example of a home visit topic

Results: Parent educators report:

- Children and parents showed more interest in following predictable routines
- Children were choosing work independently and remained engaged with the work through the entire visit
- Children were mastering the use of materials. PEs –and parents- were able to track the process of mastery
- Parents were more engaged in the process and actively participated on presenting materials and redirecting their child using the same kind, loving, and firm approach modeled by the PEs
- Most parents took the initiative to make modifications to their homes to provide a prepared environment where their children could work independently. Some of the parents went as far as to *make* child size furniture for their children.
- Planning, preparing, and conducting a Montessori home visit was an easier and more relaxed experience for the PEs
- Reading the book and participating in book discussions prepared them to give a more effective delivery of the PAT handouts during home visits

Fatherhood Program

National Fatherhood Initiative

This is an excellent resource for programs to engage fathers. They also have free resources like brochures, posters, on-line webinars.

<http://www.fatherhood.org/why-fatherhood-matters>

Fatherhood Group Meeting

We now have two male parent educators working with the fatherhood program. The group meets once a week for support and parent education. The parent educators present information about child development and parenting, but geared to the fathers. Example of the video about the child developing in the womb.

They also have participated in community projects together and have attended sporting events downtown (when we get free basketball game tickets).

Some of the fathers participate in the weekly home-visitation sessions but most cannot due to their work schedules.

Many have said that their participation helped their relationships with spouse and children and made them more attentive fathers.

Certificate of attendance is important.

Lessons Learned

- Follow the community – listen to what the community says it needs and respect what you hear
- Collaborate with community partners
- Plan carefully – training is critical
- Nurture leadership within the community
- Go slowly – financial stability is essential for sustainability
- Assessment is needed for accountability
- Be open to opportunity

Above all, don't be afraid to think big! Be bold!

Lumin East Dallas Community School – 1978 -- parent education program P-3; public Montessori charter school 3-9; 2 Primary classrooms; 2 Lower Elementary classrooms. Originally funded 100% by private fundraising, it is now a public charter school. It receives funding from the State of Texas, supplemented by continuing private fundraising.

This was the original school founded by Terry Ford. I was the director at this school for 9 years. This school is located in a low income, Hispanic neighborhood in Dallas. The public high school in this neighborhood had a very low graduation rate – the high school dropout rate was over 50% when our school came to the neighborhood. We have tracked the children who went through this program through the third grade. Our data shows that the children who completed our Montessori program graduated from high school at the rate of 95%, and 89% of those children went on to college. Based on the outcomes at this campus, our friends and donors in the community urged Terry to expand and serve more children, so the next school that was opened was --

Lumin Lindsley Park Community School – 1999 -- parent education program P-3; public Montessori charter school 3-9; 4 Primary classrooms; 3 Lower Elementary classrooms. LPCS was founded as a public charter school. Funded by State funds supplemented by private donations.

Lumin Bachman Lake Community School – 2009 -- This is the program I'm going to talk about today. It offers parent education program/home visiting P-5/Montessori toddler classrooms. It is an Early Head Start Center that receives Federal funds. 80% Federal funds/20% private donations.

Lumin Wesley-Rankin Community School – 2014 – This is the newest campus. It offers parent education program P-3; Montessori toddler community and Primary classroom. This is a partnership with a Methodist Community Center. It is funded by the Methodist Community Center, and all programs are run by Lumin.