

Open Doors

Chapter 7: Elements of a Socialization Experience It

L. Coombs: I wanted to say more about the teamwork, because each month, the home visitors put on two socializations a month where all the families come together or have the opportunity to come together, and we have very large meetings, lots of attendance. A meal is served and activities provided, so, it's like a family outing, and they'll bring their extended family, neighbors. They bring additional people because it's fun.

And it's a lot of work and so the home visitors have to support each other with providing that and each taking some aspect of the work and getting it completed and they have to really trust each other, that they'll get it done and that person will follow through with whatever their task is for that particular meeting. And, even though it's difficult to pull off; it's like a party, you know, every other week.

There's lots to do, and cooking and those kinds of things, because they do the whole meeting. They see the benefit. It's a struggle, to fit it all in with all the other tasks, but they see the benefit, because families really enjoy it and you can tell that they do, by who comes and they're bringing additional people.

And one of the special things about that is we have the Spanish-speaking families integrated with the English speakers, and you know, we have the luxury of a large room with round tables; so it's a pretty social environment and they're not segregating themselves, so, there's some really nice things going with that. And if we have a speaker, then we have our bilingual home visitor does the interpreting and so you've got that; they get that sort of rhythm going of the speaker will say something and then she'll translate.

So, we've had a lot of success and, you know, they feel successful. You can tell that, but they truly are relying on each other.