

**Southern New Mexico ENLACE  
Parent University Program**

**Parent Survey Summary Report  
2002-2003 School Year**

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**Introduction**

The Parent survey was designed to collect information from parents who participated in the ENLACE funded Parent University program during the 2002-2003 academic school year. The information requested focused on the parent's feelings and perceptions about the program and their overall experience. The data collected in this research effort is not only to find ways in which to improve the program, but also for program sustainability and further program development. This report provides a summary of the responses from the completed surveys received. Also included in this report are a methods section, findings, discussion, and a conclusion.

**Description of the Program**

The goals for the Parent University program are to empower families and initiate change within the community and to give parents knowledge of their rights and responsibilities in relation to their children's education. The program also works to provide information and educational resources to foster academic success for Latino/a youth. The program is reserved for 30 families of those students receiving ENLACE tutoring services through the Leyendo Por Vida program and the Weed N' Seed program. The program offers weekly modules designed to teach parents about decision-making, college preparation and other issues related to their child's education.

**Methods**

The Parent survey is a self-administered questionnaire created by ISR staff. The survey was originally created in English and later translated into Spanish. The 32-question survey includes primarily close-ended questions that focus on the goals and objectives of the program. The program logic model was used as the basis for creating the survey questions. The logic model was created by ISR staff and considered the "plan of action", as it outlines the goals, objectives and activities of a program. A few open-ended questions were included and provided the opportunity to discuss changes that parents have initiated in the community and how they would like to continue staying involved in the program once they graduate. Parents were also asked to provide recommendations for the program based on their overall experience.

The survey was administered at the end of the school year on May 15, 2002. Both ISR staff and Parent University program staff decided that the best time to administer the survey would be during the last program module. By this time, participants had been involved in the program for approximately ten months. The survey was administered

with the assistance of the parent trainer who interpreted when necessary for Spanish speaking parents. A total of eight parents attended the final program module and all eight chose to complete the survey packet. However, one parent did not complete the required consent form, therefore, that survey could not be included in this evaluation. Only one of the seven surveys was completed in English.

Limitations to this evaluation include the cohort of parents that were sampled. According to the program roster, there were a total of 30 parents or “families” involved in the program. Fifteen of these individuals were considered “active” by the program staff, but as mentioned earlier, only eight attended the last program module and completed the survey. The seven surveys that were included represent the most active participants of the program. The experiences and opinions of inactive or not as active participants have been excluded from this evaluation. A more comprehensive evaluation in the future may consider an alternative method of survey administration. Perhaps in addition to having the parent complete the survey on site, survey packets should be mailed to those who were not present. Also to encourage parents to complete and return the survey, incentives may be considered. Another limitation to the survey was that it did not address the issue of referrals to the Adult Basic Education Program. Considering that “increasing literacy and academic achievement through Adult Basic Education, is one of the objectives, this area should not have been overlooked when creating the survey questions. According to the logic model, this is one of the four objectives outlined by the program, in order to provide parents “an opportunity for parents to increase literacy and academic achievement.”

## **Analysis**

The parents who participated in this evaluation were primarily female, with the exception of one male. The education level of all seven parents varied, three had attended middle school, two attended high school and one obtained a college degree. Six of the seven respondents participated in the program last year. Six of the parents stated that their children were involved in the Leyendo Por Vida program at Picacho Middle School, Mayfield High School or both.

Four specific objectives were outlined for the Parent University program and used as the basis for creating the survey questions. The objectives are listed as:

- To offer parents a way to meet and network with other parents in the community
- To build leadership skills in parents and families.
- To increase parent involvement by developing advocacy skills in parent so they can effectively advocate for their children and others within the community.
- Provide an opportunity for parent to increase literacy and academic achievement through Adult Basic Education.

Below Table 1 provides an average score of the responses to the questions that focused primarily on building leadership and advocacy skills. These questions also addressed program activities and personal expectations of the program. The responses are scored by a Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree). The responses are scored with values one to five, with one representing strongly agree and so forth.

**Table 1**

<b>Parent Survey Questions</b>	<b>Average Score (N=7)</b>
Parent University helped me gain the skills I need to advocate for my children	1.00
I feel more confident in my abilities to positively impact my children's education due to my involvement with Parent University.	1.00
Parent University helped me obtain information needed to help my child prepare for college in the future.	1.40
Implementing the MALDEF curriculum in the leadership component of the program was a positive change.	1.43
The academic support classes were helpful <i>*Two respondents did not answer this question.</i>	1.20
My personal expectations of the program were met this year.	2.00
Overall, Parent University helped me develop and improve my leadership skills.	1.29

*Strongly Agree = 1, Agree = 2, Not Sure = 3, Disagree = 4, Strongly Disagree = 5*

Based on the table above, it is clear that participants of the program felt that their leadership skills had increased due to their participation in the program. Most participants either agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of participating in Parent University, leadership skills had been developed and improved. One respondent did state they were unsure if Parent University had affected their leadership skills.

In regards to the confidence levels, all respondents felt that they had more confidence enabling them to impact their child's education as a result of participating in the Parent University program. In addition, parents either agreed or strongly agreed that Parent University helped them gain the information needed to help their child prepare for college.

When asked about the MALDEF curriculum and whether or not it was a positive change for the program, most of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was. Only one parent stated uncertainty regarding the change.

Five of the seven respondents answered the question that asked if they felt that the academic classes were helpful. All five either agreed or strongly agreed that the classes

were in fact helpful. In terms of their personal expectations, all seven respondents answered the question and most agreed that their expectations were met. However, two respondents stated they were not sure their personal expectations were met.

As stated above, another objective of the program was to increase parental involvement so parents could more effectively advocate for their children's educational rights. A few questions focused on parental involvement this past year and how many times parents met with teachers and counselors. Overall, 100% of the parents stated they visited their child's school 2 or more times last year. The respondents also stated they attended 2 or more parent-teacher conferences last year. 86% of these parents stated they communicated with their child's teacher outside of parent teacher conferences at least 2 or more times last year and they met with their child's counselor at least 2 or more times last year.

Parents also agreed the Parent University helped them increase the amount of communication they have with other parents in the community regarding education. When asked if the program has helped them increase their understanding of the current status of the Hispanic community, all either agreed or strongly agreed it did.

Parents were asked to explain how they felt they had initiated change within the community as a result of their involvement with the program. In the open-ended questions, the respondents were not able to provide specific examples of how such change has been initiated; instead, they explained how they now felt more capable of being able to create change.

In final, the survey addressed the parents' basic understanding of not only the program goals but also the overall goals of the ENLACE project. Most stated the goals of the Parent University program were made clear to them when they joined ENLACE. They also stated they understood their role in the overall ENLACE project. Despite these responses, one respondent admitted they were not aware of other programs that currently exist in Southern New Mexico.

## **Discussion**

Based on these findings, the results of this survey are generally positive. The majority of the respondents felt the program had a positive impact on their lives. In addition, most feel they had improved or at least developed the skills needed to accomplish the goals of the program. As stated in the findings, some participants felt unsure about certain aspects of the program, for example, when asked about personal expectations of the program, at least one parent felt uncertain about whether or not their expectations were met. This could be seen as a reflection of other attitudes that were not included in this study and should not be overlooked by the program. In final, it is important to report the intentions of those active parents as they have graduated from the program. Overall, the parents stated they wished to remain involved. Most mentioned that they would like to become "leaders" in order to help other parents like themselves. They hoped to be able to promote ENLACE and encourage parents to join the program. Most importantly they wanted to communicate to others the importance of education and that their children too, can graduate from college.

## **Conclusion**

As the Parent University heads into their third year of implementation, it was decided that the program format would change. For this reason, recommendations based on the findings will not be presented in this report. However, it will include a few recommendations suggested by the program participants. These recommendations are as listed:

- In order to reach more parents, the program should expand to include the Elementary level.
- The program should be promoted in order to reach those parents that for some reason or another are not becoming involved.
- In the beginning of the year, a meeting should be held so that parents, student and tutors can meet and become familiar with one another.
- At conferences, interpreters should be present so that parents can benefit as much as possible from the experience.
- “There should be more involvement with students enrolled in ENLACE.”