

How does a school start a parent involvement project?

Beginning a parent involvement program can be as simple as including mathematics activities with the class or school newsletters that are already being sent home. A more extensive program can provide a Family Mathematics Night and mathematics lending kits. All of these activities can occur without creating a significant additional burden on the school staff, while still engaging families in mathematical investigations.

Parents Helping Students Learn Mathematics

While many parents would like to assist their children with homework in mathematics, bringing these parents into the learning process for mathematics has some unique problems.

Parents are often uncomfortable with mathematics. This discomfort comes from:

- past lack of success in school and particularly with mathematics
- lack of confidence with mathematics related activities
- lack of familiarity with the content of the mathematics curriculum.

This uneasiness contributes to hesitation in assisting with their children's learning of mathematics.

How Involvement In Mathematics Learning Happens

A variety of strategies are used by teachers to effectively involve parents in mathematics education, so that all students see the importance placed on mathematics education by their parents.

Parental involvement comes from:

- newsletters promoting mathematics activities in the home (pages 9-40)
- mathematics activities that provide motivation in learning facts and strategies (pages 41-67)
- homework help that identifies strategies for parents in structuring a productive work environment and assisting their children (pages 94-95)
- a *Family Mathematics Night* (pages 70-74)
- Parent Mathematics Workshops* (pages 75-85)
- Mathematics Lending Library* kits which can be created in school classrooms and then loaned out to families (pages 68-69).