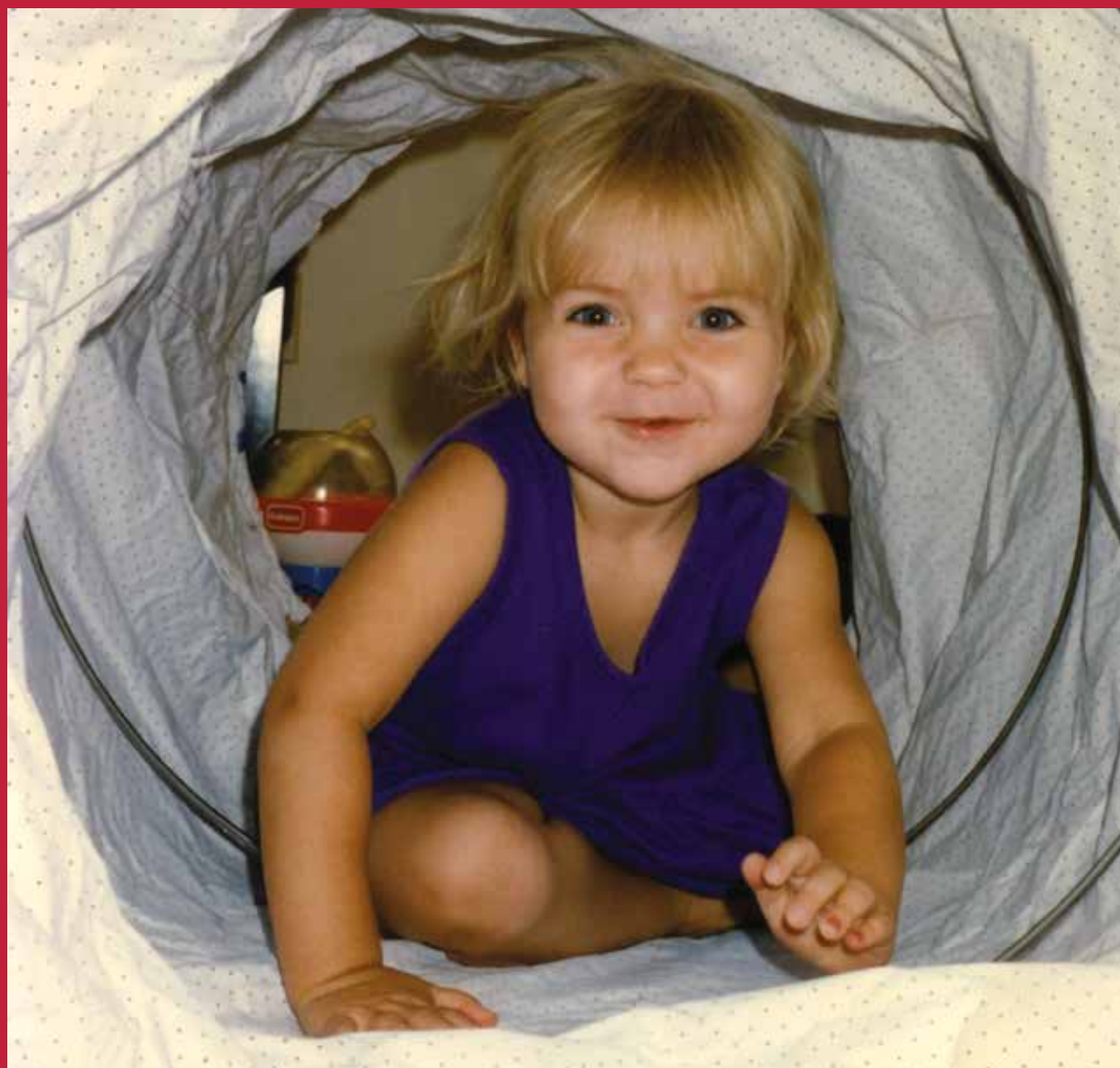


Family Development Program

A Center for Excellence in Early Learning • Founded in 1985

25 Years Celebrating Families and Children



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW MEXICO

The Family Development Program is Committed to:

Focus on family and children's strengths

We promote the importance of building a strong foundation for early learning that begins by honoring each family's home culture and first language, recognizing the strengths every child and family bring to lifelong learning and educational success.

Cultivate shared understanding of child development

The Family Development Program integrates learning opportunities for teachers and parents, along with others who care about children. We work to build a common language of how young children learn that is well-informed by research in child development. We value family stories from their rich cultural heritage that nurture who children are.

Advocate for playful learning

We celebrate the importance of play in early education, seeing children's natural delight in learning and their tenacity to discover, explore, experiment and figure things out as a solid foundation for educational success.

Build partnerships - strengthen communities

Our work focuses on relationships. We believe that partnerships which are earnestly built between families, early learning programs, schools, and community resources create the kinds of neighborhoods and support networks that assure our youngest children will grow, learn and thrive.



Connecting Our Heritage to Our Future

Reflections from our Director

Lois Vermilya, 2003 – Present

"We believe that when an engaged community – a community of parents, educators, health providers and the public at large – comes together with shared dreams for their youngest children, there is a force that pulls everyone forward to create the kind of future where all children thrive."

Lois Vermilya

At the heart of the Family Development Program's work is an image of a child who is powerful, curious and infinitely competent as an active, dynamic learner. We want to do everything in our power to keep this remarkable spark of learning alive. At core, we believe that quality education for every child defines one of our greatest challenges as a society and as a citizenry. It also stands for equity as every child's unalienable right.

Since our earliest beginning, the Family Development Program has promoted a philosophy of child-centered learning, where teachers and parents are collaborators in supporting children's natural joy and passion for creative discovery. Our approach is rooted in a deep, enduring respect for the cultural and family heritage that our youngest children know and love dearly. Those strengths are really what we all value and call "our home."

We believe that our children need to be surrounded by *circles of support* that actively engage their families as full partners with early learning programs and schools. We need strong and trusted relationships with families to tackle this complex and very tough job of education. It's a huge responsibility to instill a lifelong love of learning – learning that nourishes and builds our citizenship, our communities, and quality of life that is shared by all.



Lois Vermilya

I am proud to give leadership to this powerful set of ideas that have informed all aspects of our approach to education, representing practices that the Family Development Program has sought to understand and nurture since our beginning 25 years ago. I think as you read through this special edition anniversary journal, you will see glimmers of how these values have endured. They define *family development* and also challenge us to stretch ourselves to be continuously learning within community and with parents firmly at our side.

In the Beginning

You mustn't tell me it can't be done.

Bernard van Leer

The Family Development Program (FDP) was founded in 1985 through a grant from the Bernard van Leer Foundation based in the Netherlands. The Foundation operates internationally, concentrating its resources on early childhood development. Its focus is to enhance opportunities for children growing up in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage to optimally develop their innate potential. Van Leer funded the Family Development Program's direct services based in the South Broadway neighborhood for an unprecedented nine years. Based on the success of Escuelita Alegre (a nationally accredited, bilingual, multicultural preschool) and FDP's family support services, the Bernard van Leer Foundation encouraged the Family Development Program to disseminate our educational model statewide.



In the Beginning

Reflections from a Program Founder

Dr. Maria Chavez, Director 1985 – 1996

We as educators do not have the right to teach children without their parents by our side – which implies reciprocity, that is, working together with the best interests of all, children, parents, teachers and community.

Dr. Maria Chavez

The Family Development Program's (FDP) mission centered on creating nurturing environments for families where they could “recognize their strengths, set their own agendas, and sensitively make constructive changes in their lives.” The program’s work thus focused on life processes, struggles, conflicts and a constant search for a better way in a disenfranchised community. FDP was successful in nurturing low-income families who in turn nurtured their children. The program’s applied research demonstrated marvelous talents and skills in people and staff benefited from the information. Especially revealing was the great longing by community residents to improve the quality of their lives.

Community development is a challenging and electrifying adventure. Through it, one can touch the throbbing fiber of life and experience the budding of personal relationships that connect people onto a higher order of quality existence. The notion that one has had a small part in helping others and that a community “took up the cause” and modeled this behavior is a very positive emotion to savor. The cause resulted in several bilingual preschools, a home visitation program and family support services that encouraged a participatory program design – one in which all families were involved in shaping the decisions that helped to mold the program. I look back on The Family Development Program with great satisfaction as the most rewarding work accomplished by all.

The saying ‘no man is an island’ conjures thoughts of the broad support given by families, community, teachers, and other programs in the development of the Family Development Program. It was exciting for staff to observe marginalized families positively change as they gained new skills in an empowering environment.



Dr. Maria Chavez

Families found their voices, moved into leadership roles and guided the program in meeting individual, family and community’s physical and emotional needs and expectations.

Programs develop and programs change, and they should. Everyone contributing to a program impacts its evolution and concomitantly the program’s trajectory changes as it focuses on the current needs of the families that are being served. New personnel and families bring varied experiences, intelligence, ideas and strengths to the table. Together they meld new directions, focus, and cultural sensitivity as a program expands. Subsequently, FDP continues casting a greater net and producing quality work in many communities throughout the state and nation.

In the Beginning

The Neighborhood

The Family Development Program is a process of empowerment. It's giving back to people who have been disenfranchised for so many years the ability to know that their opinions are valued, that each is a valued person, that we believe in them, and that we very much care about their children. Family development is the process that we use to engage people in a dialogue and to determine what they want in terms of their destiny.

Dr. Maria Chavez

Friends helping friends...living next to friends...helping each other.

Amelia Lucero, parent

A Neighborhood Rich in Strengths

In the beginning, Dr. Maria Chavez entered the community by knocking on doors. Her goal was to meet with families – those who best knew the needs of the community – and to work with them toward action and change. She first made home visits with a public health nurse, someone who had already established trust in the South Broadway community. She talked to parents about their role as their children's teacher and the love they had for their children. Soon families were getting together to determine what was most essential for their children and their neighborhood. They decided that a preschool was their highest priority; Escuelita Alegre was born. The bilingual preschool provided a multicultural experience that grew from the families in the neighborhood.



Maria Chavez and a parent in 1985

In the Beginning

The Preschool

The educational objective is to raise healthy children and healthy families. The preschool's goal is to provide an environment that is stimulating, that creates initiation amongst the children—where children take charge of their own learning and parents are part of that process. The school draws on parents' strengths to show that they can play vital roles in education.

Roberta Marquez, Preschool Coordinator

It began with one preschool and twenty families. Parents helped to shape their preschool by participating in parent committees where they learned skills such as budgeting, fund raising, advocating and leadership development. They made decisions on curriculum and materials used in the classroom. Each family donated two days a month in the classroom working side by side with the teachers.

Moms and dads taught songs and how to make musical instruments; they made play dough and engaged in all aspects of the classroom environment. They developed a deeper understanding that their involvement supported their children's learning and development in school, as well as at home.



In the Beginning

When parents volunteer...

We see the impact on our children and we take care of all the children as if they were our own.

Rosario Flores, Escuelita Alegre parent

When parents worked side-by-side in the classroom with their child's teacher, the children saw that their parents valued education very much. It also helped parents to develop friendships with each other and learn together best practices that supported their children's development.



Rosario Flores and son Pablo.

(Still photo taken from the Family Development Program video, 1993)

In the Beginning

Revolutionizing a Community:

A Process of Empowerment Where Opinions are Valued

The Family Development Program operates on the assumption that everyone has leadership qualities. We helped cultivate those abilities and worked to create opportunities for community members to share responsibility for their children's future. This brought stability to the neighborhood.

Families and community members marched in solidarity against drugs, crime and gangs. By coming together with a unified voice they found their power as they bravely posted signs in their windows that read "WE WILL REPORT YOU IF WE SEE YOU SELLING DRUGS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD." It was the beginning of taking back their neighborhood.



(Still photo taken from the Family Development Program video, 1993)

In the Beginning

Family Support Projects

A key element for the Family Development Program is the process used to work with families...asking the question "how can we help?" People come up with their own solutions. They come up with their own decisions.

Interagency Team

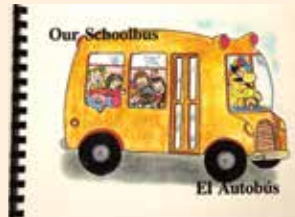
Consisted of social service programs, civic and community organizations, city and county leaders, parents and Family Development Program staff who met on a monthly basis to have an open dialogue about the needs and services in the community and how they were being met.

Parent Organization

Provided opportunities for parent education, leadership development, and decision-making for all project components that included:

- *Parenting Classes*
- *Parents as Teacher*
- *Fundraisers*
- *Parents as Authors*

This program evolved from a parent committee concerned about the preschool curriculum. Its primary purpose became the development of stories for, about, and relevant to the children of Escuelita Alegre.



Baby Amigo/Community Sisters

Provided home visits to new families by staff, social workers and community volunteers.

My True Colors After-School Program

Developed positive role models and behavioral alternatives for children at risk.

Workshops on Early Childhood and Family Development

- *Bernalillo County Training*
The Family Development Program training began by providing workshops for five Bernalillo County Community Center sites on an array of early childhood topics and developmentally appropriate practices.
- *Demonstration and Training Program*
Escuelita Alegre Preschool provided a center for family involvement in a low-income community. The program served as a demonstration and laboratory school to develop innovative ways to strengthen families and train preschool teachers, administrators and parent representatives in the application of its proven principals.
- *Statewide Training or Workshops on Early Childhood Education*
The Family Development Program began to provide professional development in New Mexico's rural and urban communities through yearlong training that was co-designed with partners to meet their unique needs.

A New Era – Going the Distance

Reflections of a Past Director

**Dr. Mary Dudley, Acting Director, 1993-1995,
Director of Training 1995-2000, Director 2000-2003**

The Family Development Program has always aimed for internal integrity; that is, we've wanted to "walk our talk."

Dr. Mary Dudley

In my years as acting director and director of the Family Development Program, I took great pleasure in bringing to light our journal, Family Development, and in helping to establish and open the doors of the Wemagination Center. I loved writing and publishing our three friendly guides to early childhood development, The Baby, Toddler and Preschooler Love Books and seeing them distributed to young parents all over New Mexico.

The Program has always aimed for internal integrity; that is, we've wanted to "walk our talk." And so it was an enormous pleasure to help staff develop their own professional interests and to see them enroll in fulfilling coursework at UNM. Some finished their masters' degrees in social work; one completed law school while serving in the administration of our preschool! Others took undergraduate courses in early childhood education. And two pursued their doctorates while working with our program. I was honored to receive the Staff as Students award for my part in promoting our staff's pursuit of their own education and professional development. I'm also very proud that when personnel needed flex-time and/or family leave to support their own families, we made that available.

The Program is noted for its creativity and excellence in the service it provides others in our state. And, I believe, the support it has always extended to its own staff is equally note worthy. We are truly the Family Development Program – not just for others but for our own families, as well.



Dr. Mary Dudley and child

A New Era – Going the Distance

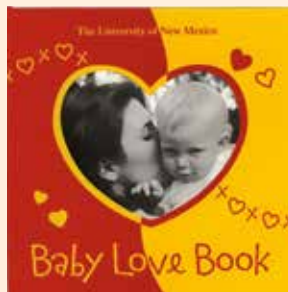
Publications

The Love Book Series promotes the development of healthy children. The books also give suggestions for interaction and activities. The books are published in English and Spanish.

Baby Love Book

The Baby Love Book is designed to give parents information on the importance of relationships in their baby's development in the first year of life. The reverse side of every page gives a little more information about the concept presented by the image.

Activities are suggested for parents to do with their baby. Space is provided for parents to jot notes about their baby's response to the image and activity.



Toddler Love Book

The Toddler Love Book features information about toddler behavior and development in the primary years of life. The book is loaded with photos of beautiful toddlers doing toddler things. It is designed for parents to read with their toddlers. It has chapters on being big, exploring, eating, sleeping, toileting, tantrums, weaning, reading, discipline and setting boundaries.



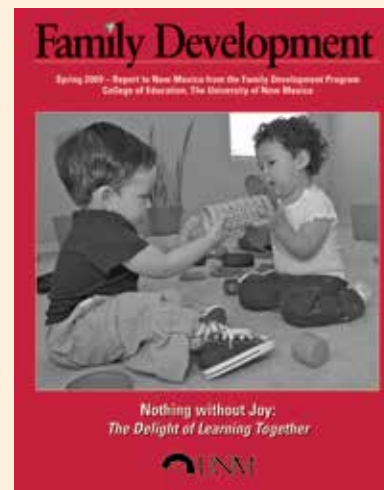
Preschooler Love Book

Young children learn from every interaction with their parents. They learn from everything that happens. The Preschooler Love Book was written to give parents ideas of things to do with their child who is between the ages of three and five years. It is designed for parents and a preschooler to read and play together. Chapters in the book focus on helping young children to think well of themselves now so they grow into someone who can be successful in school later.



The Family Development Journal

Published semi-annually and distributed to 11,000 parents, grandparents, pediatricians and early childhood educators in New Mexico.



A New Era – Going the Distance

Wemagination Center

Promoting the Importance of Play

We Imagine Together

Opened in 1997, the Wemagination center is an educational resource center that provides high quality recycled materials as part of a play-based curriculum for early mathematics, science, reading, language development and art. The center adds value to FDP's distinct approach to training by developing strong

teams of teachers and parents working together with a shared understanding of how children's curiosity and critical thinking are core principles of engaged learning.

The center features a showroom full of safe, recycled items, often factory extras that would have otherwise ended up in the landfill. Varying from the one-of-a-kind to the ordinary, the collection includes foam punch-outs, caps from perfume bottles, beads, paper, and an array of other items in every imaginable color and shape, perfect for inspiring any child (or adult) to play.



Our Present and Our Future

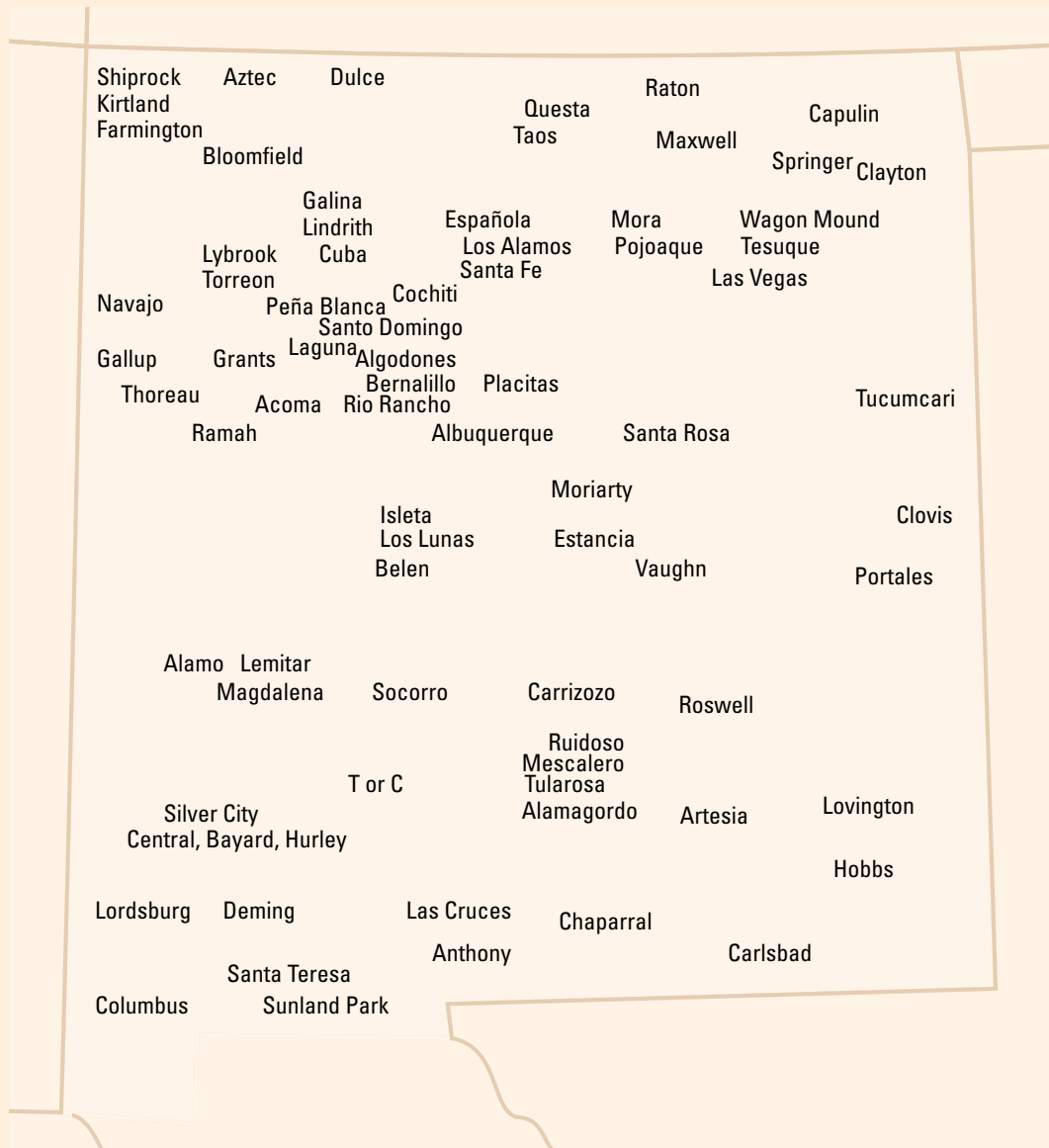
Statewide Training

Going the Distance for Early Education

Since 1992, the State of New Mexico has invested in the Family Development Program to provide statewide outreach. Initially, Representative Raymond Sanchez, former Speaker of the House, sponsored legislation to expand the Train the Trainer program in Bernalillo County. Word quickly spread about FDP's

hands-on training approach for building partnerships between schools and families, resulting in statewide requests for professional development. Through the support of many legislators, we are able to provide educational workshops to communities throughout the state.

Community partners throughout the years.



Our Present and Our Future

Watch Me Play, Watch Me Learn *Latest Publication*

This book is full of beautiful photos of children at play. Their play tells the story of learning. The authors gave the children beautiful, colorful and interesting open-ended materials, then sat back and watched their curiosity take over as they played. The text is written to inform the reader about the child's critical learning that is taking place during play and

additional ideas for how adults can extend children's learning. The children range in age from 9 months to five years old, with attention given to diversity, gender and special needs. *Watch Me Play, Watch Me Learn* is also available in Spanish.

Coming Soon...Watch Me Play, Watch Me Learn in Nature

This book will highlight children in nature, playing, wondering, exploring and learning.



Our Present and Our Future

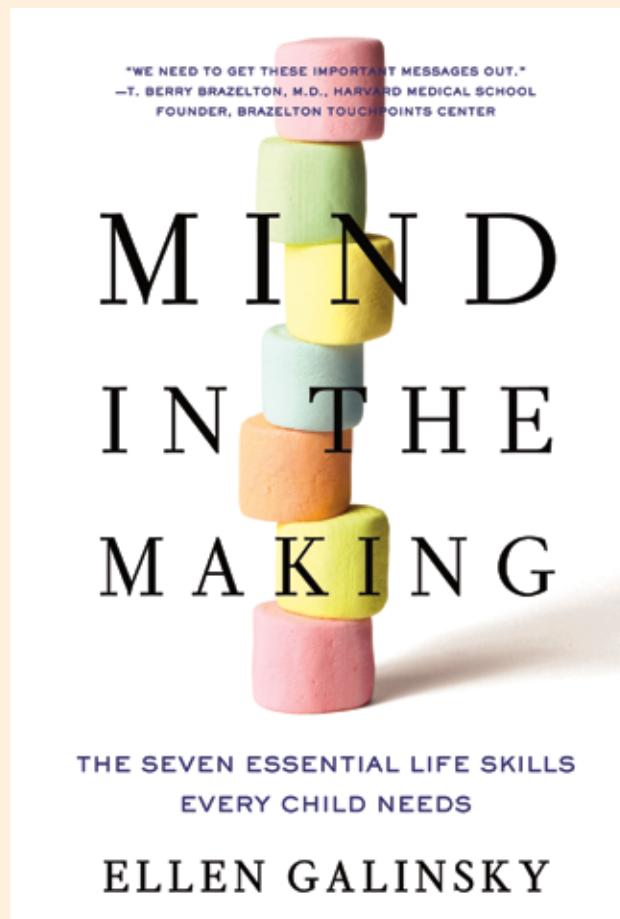
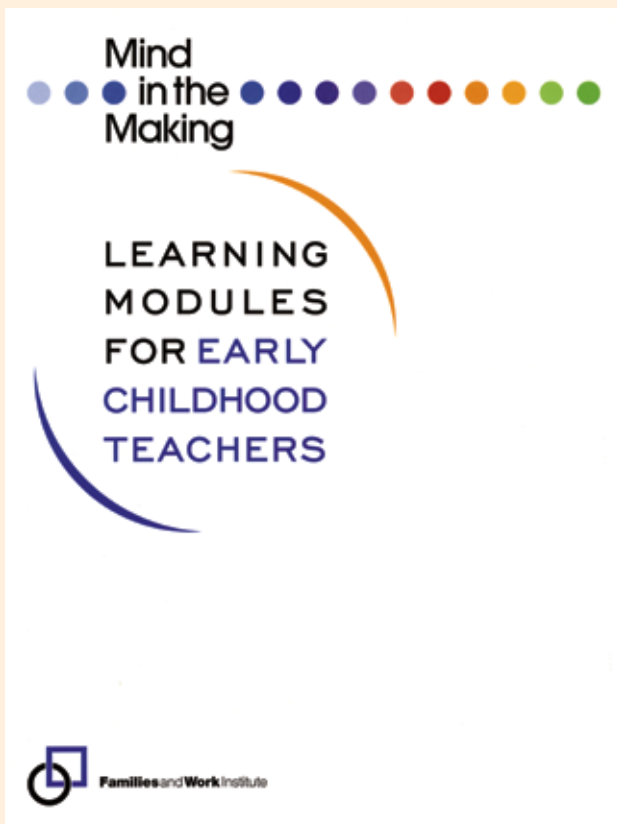
Mind in the Making

The Family Development Program seized a national opportunity for New Mexico to be the first state to launch Mind in the Making, a groundbreaking initiative on brain development and current research about how young children learn. We are in collaboration with Ellen Galinsky (Families and Work Institute) to serve as a national leader for this comprehensive program on the science of early learning.

Mind in the Making: Learning Modules for Early Childhood Teachers is offered throughout New

Mexico. We also provide Mind in the Making Learning Facilitator Institutes. We currently have 70 licensed Mind in the Making facilitators working with early childhood educators and parents in their communities.

The Family Development Program has adapted the publication, *Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs*, into a series of workshops that help families and teachers guide children in developing capacities for lifelong learning and success.



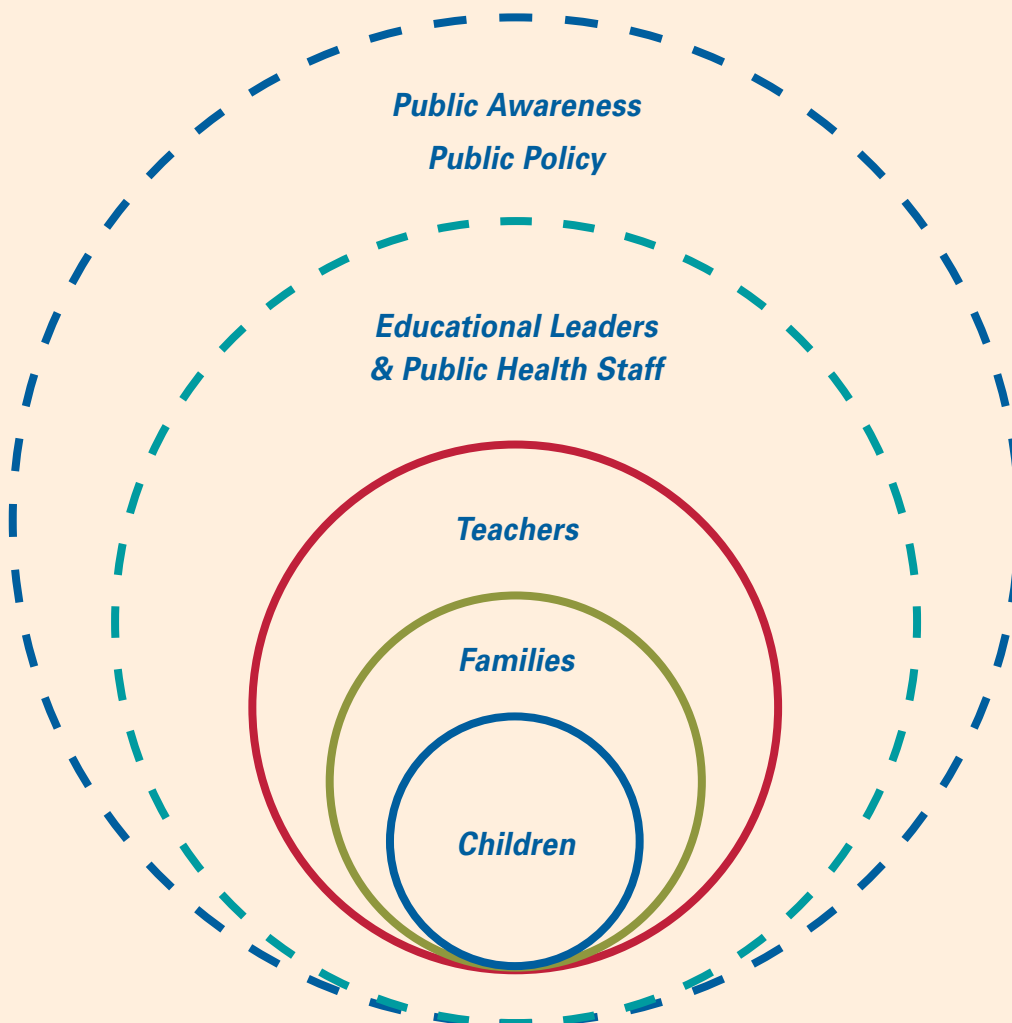
Our Present and Our Future

Circles Of Support

Building a Strong Foundation for Early Learning

Circles of Support, a joint venture with the Albuquerque Public Schools Early Childhood Collaborative and ABC Community Schools Partnership, is the Family Development Program's newest initiative generously funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. The project involves parents and teachers as full partners in their deep responsibility for assuring that every child's innate love of learning is nourished. Public health and educational leaders, as well as the community at large, are engaged to increase understanding of the role each has in

providing ready schools and ready communities committed to the best early childhood development. The initiative nurtures relationships throughout the community that engender a shared knowledge of the science of early learning with understanding how to assure quality transitions between early learning programs and the public school system. Through integration of Mind in the Making and Wemagination Center resources, the Family Development Program is collaborating with others to build a strong foundation for early learning.



Our Present and Our Future

Strong Starts for Children

In March 2010, FDP in collaboration with the Decade of the Child, was awarded the Strong Starts for Children grant to host a series of dialogues throughout Albuquerque. This process reflects our tradition and core values, while supporting our future work.

During this powerful process, participants move from dialogue to action to change. The overall goal is to bring early childhood issues to the forefront of our community to create a culture in which the child is at the center of all our decisions.

Launching the Decade of the Child

Strong Starts for Children was launched as a celebration of wonder in Albuquerque's Old Town Plaza. A family play experience honored children's joy and captured their delight in learning. During the event, Governor Bill Richardson and Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish proclaimed 2010 through 2020 to be the Decade of the Child with a proclamation read by Claire Dudley, Youth and Policy Advisor to Lieutenant Governor Denish. The initiative will conclude with a Policy Forum of Actions at the State Roundhouse in January 2011.



- *In 10 years this baby will be entering middle school.*
- *In 10 years the young girl will be entering adulthood.*
- *What are we doing in the next 10 years to carry children forward?*

Our Present and Our Future



STATE OF NEW MEXICO EXECUTIVE OFFICE SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Proclamation

WHEREAS, we are committed to making early childhood development a priority for all New Mexicans; and

WHEREAS, we celebrate our youngest children – babies, toddlers, preschoolers, school age children – as strong, competent and capable learners who deserve to be guided and nurtured by a community of caring adults, including their families; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that New Mexico has a rich heritage of cultural, community and family strengths that defines the unique character of our state; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of New Mexico will center their public will and civic investments on the rights of all children and their families to a just, healthy and economically secure life; and

WHEREAS, our state's Children's Cabinet have set forth goals and expected outcomes for the well-being of every child; and

WHEREAS, we collectively must take action to assure lasting social change toward the economic and cultural well being of the state; and

WHEREAS, all local, regional and state policy and funding decisions will be made only after having considered the impact these decisions will have on the well-being of children, families and the state;

NOW, THEREFORE I, Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico, do hereby proclaim the 28th day of August, 2010 as "Celebration of Wonder" day for children and their families honoring all the efforts throughout our state that place children at the heart of our civic agenda; and proclaim that in New Mexico 2010 -2020 will hereafter be recognized as:

"Decade of the Child"

throughout the State of New Mexico.

Attest:


Mary Herrera
Secretary of State

Done at the Executive Office this
3rd day of August, 2010.

Witness my hand and the Great Seal
of the Great State of New Mexico


Bill Richardson
Governor



Our Present and Our Future

Reflections of a Staff Member

Diana Montoya, 1992 – Present

Author of this special edition, 25th anniversary journal

Working on this commemorative journal was truly a labor of love. There is so much to say about the Family Development Program. What do you put in... what do you leave out? That was my challenge.

Being the program historian, I spent many hours searching through archives and piecing together stories of families, communities, projects and change. I've witnessed a program's evolution and had to evolve with it. I've seen firsthand the impact of what can happen when you believe in families and community that have typically been disenfranchised. I've watched what happens when people's opinions are valued and when they are seen as a valued person. I've seen young children thrive in a preschool where their parents have true ownership. I've watched a program use a process to engage people in dialogue that helps them recognize their strengths and set their own agendas. It is the same process used in later years when we took lessons learned from working with families in the South Broadway community throughout New Mexico. Our professional development philosophy is rooted in building relationships and co-designing with sites around the state, always asking the questions: "What do you need and how can we help?"

This also gave me the opportunity to reflect on my own life, my own changes and how this program has contributed to who I am today. I've had the honor of working for this remarkable program the past 18

years and I can still say everyday "I love my job." Leadership has everything to do with that statement. At the helm...three strong women, three visionary program directors who created a work-life environment that supported me as a person. They became my mentors as well as my supervisors. I learned an incredible amount from them. Their vision made the Family Development Program a state and national leader for its approach to working with families and advancing high quality professional development that is grounded in research and the science of early learning. That same vision helped to develop highly skilled leaders within our staff. With the advancement and recognition the program garnered, so did the staff advance. I know that I certainly did. Today, I'm not that same person who walked into Oñate Hall at the University of New Mexico so many years ago. The Family Development Program's story is my story as well.



Diana Montoya

Our Present and Our Future

The Family Development Program would like to thank the following for their support throughout the years

Bernard van Leer Foundation
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New Mexico State Legislature
City of Albuquerque
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PNM Foundation
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Intel Corporation
General Mills
Seidman Family Foundation
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Everyday Democracy
New Mexico Children, Youth and Family
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Special thanks to the Family Development Program staff for their assistance in the development of this journal and to Jana Fothergill, Senior Designer, University Communication and Marketing, for a beautiful design.



Our Present and Our Future

Connecting Our Past to Our Future

*Where we have been
and where we want to go
are one in the same*

*Focusing on family strengths
Understanding of child development
Quality teaching and learning
Playful learning
Partnerships*

Coming Full Circle



What Others Have to Say About Our Program

The Family Development Program has become famous around the country for its success in training parents, teachers and providers.

T. Berry Brazelton, M.D., Author, Pediatrician

FDP is nationally recognized as being exemplary, and is a model for family support programs across the country.

Bernice Weissbourd, Founder, Family Focus

FDP creates a climate for parental empowerment...for families to become more responsible citizens and become more involved with their children.

Ruth Massinga, Former CEO, The Casey Family Foundation

Parents and their kids have learned to forge iron-clad safety nets for themselves...with the help of the UNM Family Development Program... Bouquets to UNM, parents and children for setting a national example.

*Jack Ehn, Editorial Page Editor, "Bouquets and Brickbats,"
Albuquerque Tribune, October 24, 1995*

I highly recommend this team. The UNM Family Development Program makes teachers' lives easier.

*Roger Sowder, Past Executive Director,
N. M. Association of Elementary School Principals*

You help to close that gap between "Teacher and Parent."

Julie Tisone, Teacher, Emerson Elementary, Albuquerque

I wish you were still coming to us. We miss you. I still use everything you taught us and the materials you shared.

Lourdes from Chaparral, Pre-K Teacher

The staff at the Family Development Program are among the most thoughtful, creative, committed, and productive individuals I know. They are breaking new ground, making life better for children and families in New Mexico and beyond.

*Ellen Galinsky, President, Families and Work Institute
Author, Mind in the Making*

FDP provided essential guidance in helping us think about the many factors that affect the well being of our nation's youngest children.

Everyday Democracy

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THE UNIVERSITY *of*
NEW MEXICO