Families as Partners in Education
Dedicated with cariño (affection) to all families who are separated by different circumstances. May kindness and humanness be granted.

—Mari Riojas-Cortez
About the Authors

MARÍ RIOJAS-CORTEZ became interested in family engagement when she was a bilingual teacher working with young children in San Antonio, Texas. She learned early in her career that families play a very important role in children’s development, and she developed strong relationships by welcoming families to her classroom and inviting them to participate in different aspects of their children’s education. Mari understood the challenges that many Latino families faced because her own parents faced the same cultural and linguistic barriers when they arrived in the United States from Mexico. After completing a master’s degree in educational leadership, Mari’s interests in early childhood education and bilingual education led her to The University of Texas at Austin, where she received a doctorate in curriculum and instruction with a concentration in early childhood education and bilingual education in 1998. Currently, she is Professor of Early Childhood Education at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), where she continues to collaborate with local school districts and early childhood agencies in various capacities. Additionally, Mari’s work has been published in a variety of journals including Journal of Early Childhood Research, International Journal of Early Childhood Education, Young Children, Early Child Development and Care, Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, Language Arts, and the Bilingual Research Journal, among others. Mari Riojas-Cortez also serves as Editor for Dimensions of Early Childhood (a journal published by the Southern Early Childhood Association).

EUGENIA HEPWORTH BERGER became interested in parent involvement when she and her husband, Glen, became the parents of three children who attended public schools. A professional in early childhood education, sociology, family life education, and parent education for more than 35 years, she has two master’s degrees and a Ph.D. in sociological foundations of education. Eugenia has been active in many professional organizations, including the Association for Childhood Education International, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (life member), and the National Council for the Social Studies. She served on the board for the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators, the Colorado Association for Childhood Education, the Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children, and was president of the Rocky Mountain Council on Family Relations. After finishing her doctorate at the University of Denver, she became a faculty member at Metropolitan State College. She retired in December 1997 and is now professor emerita of education.
Preface

This edition of Families as Partners in Education: Families and Schools Working Together highlights the changes in U.S. society and effective ways for teachers and other professionals to understand and work with families. For the last 30 years, we have seen major changes in families. In particular, we have seen an increase in the number of diverse families. The beauty of this change reminds us of the diversity of our nation. Learning to work with diverse families, including those with diverse family structures, requires an understanding of who we are as individuals and educators, and that we acknowledge the values and beliefs that our own families have taught us.

Among other themes, this edition still emphasizes the importance of funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) for children’s development and for effective partnerships with families. We have also acknowledged the concept of “funds of identity” as a catalyst for educators to understand their own identity which will in turn help understand and work with others. It is not only important for educators to understand and know child development theories, but also how children develop within the context of their families.

Creating strong partnerships involves the understanding and willingness to work with all families, including families that are different than our own. Once educators understand the value of families for healthy development, they can begin to create strong partnerships to assist children in successful educational experiences. This edition continues to highlight important parent involvement programs and that such programs are often successful because of an asset-based view of families, particularly of those that are diverse, as well as those with children with special abilities.

New to this Edition

This edition includes updated material and additional coverage of many subjects. Of particular interest are

- Updated measurable learning outcomes (every chapter) on which to focus.
- Updated tables and figures.
- Real voices of families.
- Description of family theories (Chapter 1).
- Expanded explanation regarding diversity of families (Chapter 3).
- Inclusive historical overview of families (Chapter 4).
- Expanded section on school climate in order to create positive partnerships with families (Chapter 5).
- Focus on leadership for teachers working with families (Chapter 7).
- Updated information regarding school- and home-based family engagement programs (Chapter 8).
- Updated information regarding child abuse and domestic violence (Chapter 11), as well as newer photos.
- Revised chapter on advocacy based on the concept of social justice (Chapter 12).

Guidelines and Strategies for Working with Families

The tried-and-true how-to ideas and means to help parents and educators join together include:

- Communication, an essential element in providing an environment where learning and caring coexist.
- An understanding of diversity in different contexts.
- Ideas to help build a partnership of home, teacher, and school.
- Ways to set up an environment that is respectful to cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity where learning can take place.
- Historical development of views on children and how those views affect family life.
- Activities and programs to enrich parent–school collaboration.
- Awareness of the needs of special abilities or special needs for families.
- Methods needed to welcome families in the schools.
- Practices to develop working relationships with diverse families.
Orientation to the Text

Interdisciplinary Approach. The text studies family engagement from an interdisciplinary approach and looks at home–school partnerships from educational, anthropological, sociological, and psychological perspectives. In this edition, there is a strong effort to view families from a diverse perspective.

Theory and Research. Theory and research underpin each chapter of the text. New research emphasizes the need for home–school partnerships, particularly as they relate to culturally and linguistically diverse families.

Practical Application. A parent, student, teacher, or administrator can pick up this book and find suggestions and descriptions of specific programs that will enable collaboration between families and schools.

Readability. Reviewers and students have commented on the readability of the text in its comprehensive coverage. An easy-to-read style makes it convenient to share ideas from the book directly with parents who are not professional educators.

Figures and Tables. Numerous helpful figures and tables are included in the text to help illustrate content.

Photos. Many new photographs that depict culturally and linguistically diverse children, families, and teachers, as well as families with children with special needs, enrich the content of the book.

Special Features

Situational Vignettes. Vignettes bring alive situations that typically occur in parent–school relationships. Co-author Mari Riojas-Cortez has woven some personal vignettes throughout the book based on her experience from her professional work with children and families as well as her personal experience. Other examples are also highlighted to demonstrate inclusion and diversity.

Diverse Families. Suggestions and activities about how to work with diverse families, including a special focus on families affected by autism, are given.

Immigrant Families. Descriptions and explanations of situations that affect immigrant families are provided, including suggestions on how best to develop partnerships.

Advocacy. Preparation and suggestions on advocating for children give families and educators the knowledge they need to encourage them to be actively involved in advocacy issues.

Historical Outline. A historical outline highlights education and parent education milestones, and succinctly illustrates family engagement throughout different eras in the U.S.

Instructor’s Resources

The following ancillaries are available for download to adopting professors via www.pearson-higheired.com from the Educators screen. Contact your Pearson sales representative for additional information.

Instructor’s Resource Manual. This manual contains activity ideas to enhance chapter concepts.

Test Bank. The test bank includes a variety of test items, arranged by chapter.

PowerPoint Slides. PowerPoint slides highlight key concepts and strategies in each chapter and enhance lectures and discussions.

A Note About Census Data

Although every effort was made to include up-to-date information in this 10th edition, we strongly suggest that readers check the American Fact Finder on the U.S. Census website for the latest data.

Acknowledgments

Eugenia Hepworth Berger had a vision when she developed Families as Partners in Education: Families and Schools Working Together. Her vision carried this book through seven editions—30 years of sharing ideas with educators and administrators on how to enhance parental involvement to strengthen home–school partnerships. I hope to expand her vision in this tenth edition where we further our understanding of collaborating with diverse families, and I offer my sincere gratitude for her trusting me again with her book.

I want to thank all of the previous contributors to the book as well as my university students who provide me with opportunities to stay informed regarding the realities of many families.

I want to thank the staff of Pearson for their guidance, patience, and support, and in particular: Aileen Pogran, Executive Portfolio Manager, for her trust, patience, guidance, and encouragement although we just met for this edition; Krista McMurray for providing guidance and feedback on chapter content although she was herself starting a family, and congratulations on
her baby; and Mirasol Dante, project manager at SPI Global, Inc., as well as the amazing copyeditors for the production services.

I also want to thank all the reviewers who took the time to read and provide feedback for this edition. Their diverse insights and expertise have strengthened it: Gwen Walter, Forsyth Technical Community College, Retired; Robin Fox, University of Wisconsin, Whitewater; and Tisha Rivera, California State University, Fullerton.

Finally, I want to acknowledge my husband, Armando Cortez, and our three extraordinary children Marisol, Rodrigo, and Miguel for their love, patience, and understanding while this project was completed, they are my inspiration.

—Mari Riojas-Cortez
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