

Interview Results from Parents who did not complete the Family Survey 2003

Mandy Moler

Lewis Center for Educational Research

May 2004

## **Interview Results from Parents who did not complete the Family Survey 2003**

The Research Department at the Lewis Center for Educational Research conducted phone interviews with a group of parents who did not take the Family Survey in 2003. The goal of these interviews was to find out why the survey was not taken and to find out about the level of parental involvement these families exhibited.

The results from these phone interviews were then compared with similar questions on the Family Survey 2003. A comparison was made between two groups, those who took the Family Survey and those who did not, to see which group was more involved in their student's education. These groups were then compared in the area of student discipline to discover whether or not those who took the Family Survey were more likely to have children with discipline problems than those who did not take the survey.

The following are a select group of significant statistics and interesting results from the study.

- § Of the 90 individuals interviewed over the phone, 32.2% stated that they simply forgot to do the Family Survey when asked why it was not completed. Approximately 18.9% said they didn't have time and 21.1% stated that they didn't know about the survey.
- § Of those interviewed, 65.9% stated that they talk with their children about school-related topics on a daily basis.
- § Approximately 71% of those interviewed said that they did not ever attend PTA, PTO, or PTC and were not politically active with a school at all.
- § When asked if they would like to be more involved in their child's education, 4.8% said no, 63.9% said yes, and 31.3% felt that they were already adequately involved.
- § It was found that families who were interviewed over the phone and did not take the Family Survey received a score that indicated a significantly higher level of involvement in 4 areas. Those who did not take the survey scored higher in the areas of attending parent classes, talking to their children's teachers, participating

in educational activities outside of the home, and talking to their children about school-related topics.

When correlated with the number of disciplinary incidents students had, significant results were found in 3 areas.

- The more families volunteer at school, the less discipline incidents their children have.
- Families that talk the most to school staff about their children have kids with a higher rate of discipline problems.
- Higher rates of discipline problems are also found in children whose parents check the Internet to examine their student's progress frequently.
- There can be several explanations for these results. Perhaps parents who contact school staff the most are contacting them because of discipline problems their children are having. Parents may also check the Internet more frequently if they feel their child is struggling. It is highly unlikely that being more involved in any area will cause more discipline problems. However, the already existing discipline problems are the reason for increased involvement.