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**EBS 403 SCHOOL, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

LECTURE 1

- UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

1. The Concepts of Education, School and Schooling as applied to ECE
2. The Concept of Community
3. The Concept of School-Community Relations
4. The Concept of School -Community Participation/partnership in Education
5. Importance of School-Community Relations/Participation in ECE
6. Socio-cultural, political, economic, religious, and technological forces that impact on education
7. The Role of the School in its Social Setting
8. NAEYC Principles underlying Early Childhood Educators' Responsibilities to Families, Colleagues, Communities, and Society
9. Statement of Commitment

Introduction

- It is generally agreed that the school on one hand and parents and community on the other hand have a major role to play in bringing up the child to fit into the society. Community collaboration with the school complements and reinforces values, cultures and the learning opportunities that the school can provide for their students. Since the school is an integral part of the community, its administration should involve both the people within the school and other citizens outside the school—the external environment or the community.
- Bringing up a child is a voyage and as a parent, you are the navigator of your child's growth. His/her development is set primarily at home and at school, and when these two environments are attuned to each other, children benefit the most.

- The effective education and schooling of children is fundamentally a collaboration between the family and the school (Wang et al, 1993). Indeed, a Ghanaian child spends only few hours of his/her time in school each year and considerable informal learning occurs in the home. The family is also critical in developing positive attitudes to learning during a child's early years which in turn inform overall levels of attainment (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003).
- Within the school setting, however, the provision of a child's education is essentially a collaborative effort as she passes from one class to another and possibly from one school to another during her formative years. With the educational reforms of 1987, schools are being called upon to work in partnership with parents since partnership/collaboration/participation is critical to promoting student well-being and increasing the efficacy of school's operations in general.

1.1: The Concept of Education

- Education is considered as the process of facilitating, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs and habits. It is the process of gaining knowledge. It is the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning, and judgement and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life. It is also considered as the act or process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills as for a profession. Education deals with the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties are trained and different skills are developed. Education seeks to develop the inherent capacities of a child in a social environment. It seeks to develop individuality to the full and attain social efficiency and dynamism.
- Education is a cumulative process of development of intellectual abilities, skills, competencies and attitudes, all of which form our various outlooks and dispositions to action in life generally. It is a life long process involving all the experiences, knowledge and wisdom that an individual acquires at different stages of one's life through different channels (i.e., formally, informally, and incidentally).

- **Aristotle** defines *Education* as the process of training man to fulfil his aim by exercising all the faculties to the fullest extent as a member of society.
- **Socrates** states that *Education* means the bringing out of the ideas of universal validity which are latent in the minds of everyman.
- Through the process of education, the knowledge of society, country and of the world is passed on from generation to generation.
- Educational methods include teaching, training, storytelling, discussion and directed research.
- One can be educated without formal arrangements by reading books, and learning from experience or self-education (without formal education).
- Education is a dynamic instrument of change. Education is expected to affect or condition the social behaviour of the person being educated.

1.2: The Concept of School

- A school is an educational institution designed to provide learning spaces and learning environments for the teaching of students (or pupils) under the direction of teachers. School means any institution established for the purpose of offering instruction to pupils in programs for pre-school children, programs for children at kindergarten, or any combination of grades one through twelve (primary one to senior high school). It is a place for the possession of skills, knowledge and insights necessary for responsible, and productive participation in society. A place to realise the potentials, critical thinking, and the emotional and social well-being of the child.
- It is a place for intercourse and instruction, an institution for learning, an educational establishment, a place for acquiring knowledge and mental training, an establishment for instruction of children. Such a place could be a primary school, kindergarten, or grammar school. It is an educational environment where people, particularly young children go to learn about topics such as reading, writing and mathematics from a teacher. Most of the students' time will be spent in a classroom, a place where usually 10 -30 pupils sit in to engage in educational discussion.

- The school system seeks to assure a productive, enlightened and competent citizenry. It also seeks to promote knowledge and the acquisition of the right attitudes among its members. The school seeks to develop active citizens, helping children develop their own capacity for personal achievement and contributing to society as an active citizen for democracy. The main purpose of school is to provide for the fullest possible development of each learner for living morally, creatively and productively in a democratic society.
- John Dewey states that schools are not just places where we learn facts and numbers, but also places where we learn how to live. In other words, the point is not just to learn a certain set of skills (though that helps as well) but rather to realise one's full potential, and use what you have learned for the greater good. In his eyes, the purpose of education should not revolve around the acquisition of a pre-determined set of skills, but rather the realisation of one's full potential and the ability to use those skills for the greater good.
- The school draws its raw materials (students/pupils) from the community

1.3: The Concept of Schooling

- Schooling is a formal way of educating children in pre-schools, schools and higher education. Schooling usually involves teachers instructing students in a formal curriculum or syllabus comprised of distinct subjects. Schooling means education received at school. It is instruction, education, or training especially when being received in a school.
- The process of being taught in a school. It is the act of teaching/educating someone in an institution of learning. Example: He was born into poverty and received no formal schooling. The schooling you receive is absolutely crucial to your success in life.

1.4: What a Community is

Community can be considered as a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. It is generally referred to as a geographical location occupied by people of the same culture, beliefs, traditions, aspirations and goals in life as well as socio-economic activities. It is a social unit (a group of living things) with commonality such as norms, values, interests, passions, beliefs, customs, or identity. Communities may share a sense of place situated in a given geographical area (e. g. a country, village, town, or neighbourhood) or virtual space through communication platform.

- It also refers to a group of people that may or may not be spatially connected, but who share common interests, concerns or identities.

- Peck (1987) states that community is a social group of organisms sharing an environment typically with shared interest. Gardener (1991) describes a community as a place where independent individuals influence one another within a learning process. Aristotle (n.d.) defines community as a group established by men having shared values. It is believed that Aristotle was the first person to define the word “community”.
- Essentially, community is a group of people that interact and support each other, and are bounded by shared experiences or characteristics, a sense of belonging, and often by their physical proximity
- A community is a build-up of some people sharing some common goals and working together to achieve some general interest. For example, they may meet together to discuss issues affecting the progress of the community or participate in a project. We need a community where we live to support ourselves.

1.5: The Concept of School-Community Relations ?

- School-community relations may be defined as the mutual co-existence and interactions between the school and its host community, to ensure its promotion and sustenance as well as achievement of each other's' goals. In other words, it is the relationship that must ideally exist between the school as a social system and its immediate and larger communities or its external environment.
- Triandis (1993) states that school-community relationship is a two-way symbiotic relationship through which the school and the community cooperate with each other for the realization of goals of the community and the school. It is the degree of understanding and goodwill which exists between the school and the community. In collectivist culture, the goals of the group have priority over individual goals.

- Kindred (1997) perceives school- community relationship as “a process of communication between the school and the community for the purpose of increasing citizens’ understanding of educational needs and practices and encouraging intelligent citizens’ interest and co-operation in the work of improving the school” (p.16).
- Landers & Myers (1977) state that school community relations denote the two-way interpretive process between the society and its instrument, the public institution, the school. It refers to genuine co-operation in planning and working for good schools, with the public giving as well as receiving ideas.

- Atanda and Lameed (2006) conceptualized school-community relations as a meaningful interaction between the school system and its immediate environment. They contend that such relationship involves maintaining healthy links between the school personnel (students, teachers and administrators) and people within immediate and larger community, such as community leaders, local associations, government officials, old students' association (Alumni) philanthropists, and other stake-holders in the education service.
- The school and the community are expected to work together if the educational goals of the school must be achieved for the benefit of all the stakeholders---the students, parents, the labour market, and the society generally.

- School-community relations is therefore an outreach programme geared towards empowering schools and communities in identifying and solving problems that affect the quality of education through effective partnership and progressive co-operation. In other words, “school-community relations” deals with the process through which the schools, private enterprises, community leadership and non- governmental organisations or other bodies are empowered to forge meaningful and lasting inter-relationships and interdependence in order to participate effectively in a decentralized and enhanced school system for the mutual benefit for all teachers, parents and community.
- A great school-community relationship creates a sense of belonging among students, teachers, and parents. It increases student learning opportunities while creating an inclusive learning environment. It also creates a great sense of responsibility for all stakeholders.

1.6: The Concept of Community Participation/Partnership in Education

- The responsibility for raising a well-educated and civic-minded generation of children cannot rest solely with schools. As the old African proverb says ‘it takes a village to raise a child’, one could imagine then that it would take a community to raise a school. When families, community groups, and schools business groups band together to support learning, young people achieve more, stay in school longer, attend school regularly and there is improved discipline. To lift up and raise our schools to a place that suits all 21st century learners, help needs to come from many parts of the community. If we respect each other, and acknowledge our unique contribution, we can move forward quickly in a positive environment where we can all be teachers and learners.

- Family-school-community partnerships are shared responsibility and reciprocal process whereby schools and other community agencies and organizations engage families in meaningful and culturally appropriate ways, and families take initiative to actively support their children's development and learning. Schools and community organizations also make efforts to listen to parents, support them, and ensure that they have the tools to be active partners in their children's school experience.
- Partnerships are essential for helping students achieve at their maximum potential and while parent and community involvement has always been a cornerstone for public schools, greater recognition and support of these collaborative efforts is needed.
- High quality schools have demonstrated track records connecting with community resources and family to improve student outcomes in all domains of development

- Community Participation in education implies the extent of community involvement in decision-making process, management, activities or running of schools, that is the level to which parents and other identifiable community groups contribute towards creating an environment conducive for efficient and effective teaching and learning. In other words, it refers to involvement by community in educational programs. Community participation refers to people's engagement in activities within the educational system. It plays an essential and long-standing role in promoting quality of life (Putman, 2000).

- Bedu and Agyeman (2002) have stated that community participation is the contribution members of the community make to facilitate educational programs within the framework of national development agenda. This implies that the provision of basic/early childhood education should be a joint venture between the government and community. After all, the school and community exist for each other's wellbeing, so whatever happens in one has repercussions on the other.
- Sanders (2017) defines community-school partnership as the connections that are forged between schools and community individuals, organizations, and businesses to directly or indirectly promote students' social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. The community within this definition of school-community partnership is not constrained by the geographic boundaries of neighbourhood but refers more to the social interaction that can occur within or outside these boundaries.

- Epstein (1995) defines parental involvement/partnership as families and communities who take an active role in creating a caring educational environment. She further asserted that parents who are involved with their children's education are those who consistently demonstrate good 1. parenting skill, 2. communicate with school staff, 3. volunteer their time in the school, 4. help their children learn at home, 5. play an active role in school-related decision-making, and 6. who regularly collaborate with the school community.
- Robinson and Harris(2014) describe parent involvement as practices that entail parent communication with their children about education, behaviours in which parents engage with the exclusive aim of increasing academic outcomes; and parental engagement with schools and teachers. Partners can provide academic enrichment activities, tutoring and behaviour support, health and social services, and family engagement

- Parents involvement can broadly be defined as the ways in which parents support their children's education in word and deed. E.g. attending PTA Meetings, attending teacher-parent meetings, supervising field trip, volunteering in the classroom, supervising the child's homework, controlling time for viewing television, reading to children, discussing school, and general academic aspiration with the children.
- Foundation for academic success begins in Early Childhood and are further developed during elementary school years. Conversely, patterns of failure and disengagement also begins early. For example, struggling readers are likely to continue to experience ongoing difficulties in secondary school if they are not supported early in their development. Continuity with family engagement strategies and partnerships with community programs from pre-kindergarten to primary/ junior high school can greatly help support academic achievement throughout students school years.

- Sound and constructive school, family, and community partnership is achieved through a process of exchanging information, ideas, and viewpoints out of which mutual understandings are developed and decisions made concerning essential improvements in the educational program and adjustments made to the climate of social change.
- An administrator may provide excellent leadership for the schools' instructional program and have the expertise in financial management, but if he/she fails to communicate with School Management Committee, Parent Teacher Association, a concerned tax payers' group, opinion leaders in the community, the probability is that achievement of school goals may elude him. Knowing the publics and being able to work in partnership with them are major requirements for today's successful administrator

- The 1987 Educational Reforms in Ghana lay emphasis in the following areas of community participation:
- Participation in management of the school through representation of School Management Committee (SMC).
- Participation of communities, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and religious bodies
- Participation in actual teaching as a resource person on culture related themes.
- Participation in the protection and maintenance of school property
- Supervision and monitoring of pupils' attendance at school
- Involvement in enrolment drives to increase pupils' access (some chiefs trying to compel parents to send their children to school).
- Participation in the form of offering motivation to teachers to improve their performance
- Participation in the supervision of pupils' studies at home

- Dewey (1960) reported that the community members have natural, legal, intellectual, emotional right to be involved in children's education and can call for a change in the type of education given to the child if found to be unsatisfactory. What Dewey is saying is that, the community has every right to challenge any form of education being given to their children if they feel such education will not benefit the society. They have the right to call for a change of that type of education or training for a suitable and desirable one for their children. By so doing, the lackadaisical attitude of most communities towards the education of their children will be removed to give way to a supportive attitude from them.

1.7: Importance of School-Community Relations/Participation in ECE

1. Schools enjoy support of families and community members. Parents may give financial support, be resource persons and volunteers to guide the pupils during field trip. The community can provide labour towards the construction of classroom buildings, library or ICT centre.
2. Families experience many opportunities to contribute to their children's education and communities look forward to educated, responsible workforce.
3. Communities can provide an environment that can complement and re-enforce the values, culture, and learning the school provides for the students.

4. Rural communities searching for opportunities to revitalize themselves in a technologically sophisticated society can discover ways to bring themselves into information age by intertwining school and community improvement initiatives.

5. It helps develop community understanding of all aspects of school operation; it ascertains community attitudes and issues. It helps discover the community's aspirations for the education of their children.

6. School and community partnerships can provide students of today with a better education and help with the demands put on the schools to meet expectations set by the mandate of the nation. In a world that is changing every moment and with so much pressure being put on teachers/headteachers to make sure students meet high standards of excellence, the community should be ready to help.

1.8: Socio-cultural, political, economic, religious, and technological forces that impact on education

- A critical study of the educational system of any society shows a lot about the people, their needs, their culture, their hopes and their aspirations. This is because the school exists in an environment and reflects that particular society and the way it is structured to help control and guide the behavior of its members. Each society sets up social institutions that render specific services to the members. The school is one of such institutions. It is set up to help control through the manipulation of the environment, the development of the young towards ends that are regarded as desirable by the society.
- The main purpose of education is to allow pupils to gradually discover their comparative skills and their true interests, and to give them the opportunity to further develop their individual creative potential to the greatest possible extent.

- Since society places tremendous values on education, it is imperative that there exists cordial relationship between the school and the community.
- The school as a social institution is affected by various forces within the society. These forces can be socio-cultural, politico-economic, religious or technological. These forces act collectively to determine the quality and quantity of the output from the school. One of the most potent of these forces is the culture of the society.

1.8.1: Socio-Cultural Forces

- Culture is defined as the way of life of a particular group. It is the totality of the way people do their own things. It includes a wide range of material and non-material aspects of their life-their artifacts like tools, houses, clothing and ornaments as well as their beliefs, values, norms, mores, customs and attitudes. Culture is learned and shared by the group for organizing and perpetuating themselves. It is handed down from one generation to another through the process of education or interaction with other members of the society who act as socializing agents. In formal education, the school is the environment for socialization and the teachers are the major socializing agents who have the responsibility for imparting the required skills, knowledge and attitude to the learners.
- Culture is not static, it is dynamic. It is continually being modified throughout the history of the society. It is therefore imperative that the skills, knowledge, and attitude required to be transmitted through education at any particular time be affected by the society's current philosophy and values.

- Philosophy as part of culture provides a conception of the ideal life for the society and so prescribes what values, attitudes and skills the school should aim at. These will then give prescription for the objectives the school will set for the learner, the content of school work as well as the learning experiences to be provided for the learner.
- The content of school work will therefore include elements of the culture and other knowledge and skills that are consistent with the philosophy of the society.
- The school takes cognizance of the cultural elements (universality of specialty) when planning its curriculum else its programs may be found to be neither relevant to either the learner or the society; nor valid for socializing the youth into the adult society. This leads to alienation and can destabilize the society economically.

- Parental aspirations for their children may often be in conflict with what teachers may advise for their students; but the realization that the parent has a right to know and influence the education of their children makes it imperative that teachers should involve parents in planning and executing certain aspects of school work. Areas in which parents can actively influence decisions include discipline, facilities and community relations. The fact that teachers are accountable to parents about the progress of the learners also leads to practice of periodic reports to parents so that they can monitor school work

1.8.2: Politico- Economic Forces

- Politics concerns itself with the power to take decisions that do affect the entire community. Whoever has the political power in any society---power to rule and govern, power to make top level policies, power to legislate -- is in a position to take decisions that affect both the economy and the education of that society. The political ideology of the leaders determines what they do with education. It also determines the goals they will pursue through education and how they will organize education to achieve the stated goals.
- It is observed that for any political or social ideal to survive requires an educational system through which it will be marketed, so political leaders who hold the reins of power usually find it difficult to give up their control of education.
- They control education either directly or indirectly and use it to advance their own interest and to maintain their own position.

- Both socialist and capitalist countries use the schools for teaching their own ideals. Grant (1964) argues that “the major function of education in the USSR now Russia is that of being a political tool. It is used for shaping the attitudes of the students in such a way that their materialistic tendencies are reduced and so they get prepared for social service to their state” (p.23).
- The United States of America (USA) which believes in freedom of expression, promotion of intelligent criticism and individual development encourages each to develop his own potentials and so democratizes education in such a way that one strives out in his own way to develop potentials that will help him live in a society that uphold free enterprise.
- A study of the educational programs in all the countries in the world clearly shows that politics affects the schools through policy formulation. Policy-making had never been the responsibility of administrators. Their job is to interpret policies and plan for their implementation.

- Educational policies with regards to administrative and curriculum matters are made at the system level by political leaders who also exercise some form of control over the schools to ensure conformity to their demands.
- Either to centralize or decentralize educational administration is a function of the political stance of the leaders.
- The wealth of the community as well as its availability for education is a factor that affects education in any country. It requires both financial capacity and a positive attitude towards school's financial support to provide quality education.
- In countries/communities where the social demand for education is high due to a full appreciation of its values, people are most likely to support the school to the best of their ability without much fuss. In countries or communities where the government has to campaign for schooling and also provides incentives for people to go to school, the school is most unlikely to be well provided for. When there is inadequate flow of cash to the school, facilities are likely to be in short supply, teachers are likely to be inadequately paid or even paid on regular basis. As a result, the quality of educational services will be poor.

1.8.3: The Impact of Religion

- Religion is a discipline that emphasizes the spiritual development of the individual and as such, a country with an established religion will not have much problem incorporating such ideals in the school system. Since the church and the state will have the same ideals emphasized in education, no conflict of standards will arise. However, in countries where various religious beliefs exist and people are free to worship their God in their own way, the church cannot wade directly into education as this will cause a conflict in the system.
- The school will of a necessity teach comparative religion without developing the dogma of any religious group.
- In such a situation, the churches, in the interest of tranquility and stability of the nation, have to operate within the framework of whatever amount of religion is provided by the state and then supplement with their own efforts in the various churches.
- In Ghana, there is freedom of religious worship, schools are not expected to force any child into any religious denomination. Religious knowledge is taught as an academic discipline while the various denominations have a chance to teach their own religious doctrines to their own followers/adherents.

1.8.4: Impact of Social and Technological Change

- The society is in a state of continual change with one change leading to another or even generating another. As a result of this, the old learning quickly gets antiquated, outdated, obsolete, irrelevant or inadequate. As the environment changes, the people adjust or adapt to it in an attempt to achieve equilibrium. There are new skills, new methods, new attitudes, new belief, new materials and equipment that the students must be exposed to. Thus, these changes in the society force the school to make curricula changes accordingly. The changes can be social or technological.
- Goslin (1965) defines technology of a society as that aspect of its culture that is primarily concerned with the capacity of the members of the society to adapt to their environment.
- This implies that every society possesses technology but the level of development of this varies from society to society.

- As the society grows and gets more sophisticated, its ability to adapt to the environment increases. This change is accelerated by new knowledge, skills, procedures and attitudes that keep coming into the society. The school also effects technological change through research and teaching while the change that comes from other institutions affects the school. The school cannot help but change itself in the light of these ever-changing technological innovations and changes.
- Definitely, new knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs are required of the younger generation and these must reflect in the content of education provided them. Schools also provide opportunities for retraining the older generation through re-fresher courses, workshops, fellowship and publications.
- Apart from the need for curriculum changes to increase the ability of the members of the society to adapt to and keep pace with the changes in their technological base, is the need for schools to adapt to other social changes in the society such as urbanization.
- The effect of working mothers have their own effect on the school system.

- As the number of working mothers increases, there is a greater pressure on the schools to take on the job of babysitting. The educational system is forced to recognize its role in this regard and as such provision is made in various countries including Ghana to establish nursery/kindergarten schools to provide pre-school education for the kids and solve the social problem caused by the necessity for mothers to go to work, especially in the urban areas.
- Schools in the urban areas also need to adjust to the heterogeneity of the population as well as its high density.
- The population of children in the schools is high, especially at the primary school level making organization and administration to become problematic especially where facilities are few.
- Some schools have been forced to adjust to population explosion by having two different schools on one premises. One school runs a morning session while the other runs in the afternoon as a result of infrastructural deficits.
- The school cannot run away from these forces within the society. It has to be fully aware of them and adjust meaningfully to them in an attempt to perform its tasks.

1.9: The Role of the School in its Social Setting

- The school as a social institution, set up by the society/community is expected to play certain roles and perform certain functions for the community. The most basic of these is the transmission of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, belief, mores and norms that are culturally relevant or current to the learner.
- This role is important as family which used to perform most of the educative functions has become ineffectual. Formal education is therefore gradually acquiring more and more responsibility for preserving and transmitting the cultural heritage of the group. Presently, the school is charged with the responsibility of preparing the youth for active and intelligent participation in activities in the society by equipping them with relevant attitudes, skills, values, norms and knowledge.

- This is to supplement the efforts of the family, home where the child spends a greater part of the day internalizing a lot of beliefs, values and attitude from members of his family. It must be noted that the children of the common man depend more and more on the school to acquaint them with new knowledge that gets into our culture. From the school they also get acquainted with new skills, values and attitudes. For example, students are exposed to learning skills, acquisition and storage of information, family size and attitudes toward some social norms. In most cases the school does this by presenting the child with many significant others who act as role model and make a lot of impact on his behavior.

2. The school also performs the role of allocating people to positions in the society. Each cultural group is structured into positions that carry with them varying degrees of responsibility. These responsibilities require different levels of skill, risk and rewards, and thus are accorded different amounts of prestige or status. Inherited characteristics are used in many traditional societies to ascribe status and prestige to people, e.g. sex, family background and order of birth. In more recent times, the various positions and their associated prestige are more open to competition based on individual abilities. Education and for that matter the school has positions in the society. The school system provides skills, abilities and knowledge needed for various positions in the community. It also provides opportunities for people to identify their own interests and abilities. By reinforcing these interests and developing the abilities and skills in the various individuals, the school virtually puts them into the various positions in the society.

- Some people who have become dissatisfied with their positions in life, have to go back to formal education to acquire further knowledge and skills that would enhance their positions in life. Thus, schools of various types provide pre-vocational and vocational education needed for occupying various positions in the community.

- 3. The use of school rules, penalties, rewards and sanctions help to control the behavior of the youth and reinforce socially acceptable behavior. The community entrusts its children to the school hoping that the children will as a result of school experiences, manifest their ideal behavior or conduct. The efforts of the school to develop in the youth the habit of behaving in ways generally accepted by the society as ideal is a key function of the school. The child should be developed to 'fit' into the society.
- This brings into focus the subject 'discipline'. Discipline is a tendency to behave in a socially acceptable way without external pressures. It is a self-directed conformity to rules and regulations, respect for and submission to constituted authority, orderliness and efficiency. The school is expected to find ways of developing in the learner this self-directed discipline rather than a fearful conformity whenever a superior is around.

4. The schools are required by the community to instill into the minds of the youth, the need for hard work, diligence and dedicated service, as these are some of the prerequisites for economic growth. The school must teach the youth that there is dignity in labour and that there is pride in being an efficient worker. Economic growth goes hand in hand with industrialization and industrialization goes with efficiency of its products. If you do not instill in the children a sense of responsibility from an early stage, they will have a harder time in the future. The world needs children to be responsible more than ever before. Research has shown that children who grow up with strong positive values are happier and do better in school. They are also better able to balance their personal wants and needs against those of others and to make positive contributions to society.

Martin Luther King jr. once said “Intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character , that is the goal of true education”

- 5. The school, though recognized as an agency for socializing the youth into their own culture, thus transmitting the culture, is also expected to be an agent of change. Culture itself is not static. It changes from time to time and as it changes, the school cannot be kept aloof but also change else the school will find itself preparing the youth for a society that no longer exists. The schools are therefore expected to play a leading role in innovation and change.
- Change as defined by Morrish (1976) does not necessarily involve instability, and provided change is gradual and innovations are steadily tested and absorbed, the stability of society and all its institutions is not seriously affected.
- The school as a social institution should be perceptive enough to notice changing situation in the society, assess the change and meaningfully adjust to it. Change is a characteristic feature of all societies.

- The school is therefore expected to be an active agent of change rather than a passive follower. The school should be involved in the social life of the community and help to shape it by adopting the necessary changes.
- The school should not however drift with any change, but be selective about the type of change it will champion since not every change in the society is an index of progress. Some changes get into the society through the efforts of the school as it discovers and disseminate new knowledge.
- Colleges and universities emphasize the search for new knowledge and expect the academic to make some useful original contributions to knowledge through research. These research efforts bring about new and better ways of dealing with numerous problems of life.

- Change can be in the form of developing critical and analytical mind in the students; something that is needed for national reconstruction. The school can be instrumental in this type of change by encouraging the learner to critically examine the society and all its institutions.
- Nations have set of problems that point to the need for a change of attitude among the citizen. In Ghana, there is a degree of ethnocentrism in the country with associated dangers.
- This clearly shows that rather than thinking about a united country where all citizens find self-fulfillment, there are several ethnic groups struggling for supremacy, economic and political power. The school therefore has the task of inculcating the ideals of the nation and instilling in the minds of all generations the necessity for a united Ghana.

- As the society gets more and more complex, the demands of the society on man changes. New social, civic and moral values needed to be formed if man has to survive in the emergent society.
- The school is also expected to help integrate the society through its efforts at equalization of educational opportunities.
- The concept of equality of educational opportunities has a special meaning that relates to providing a free education, a common curriculum and attendance of the same school.
- The government of Ghana has launched Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in 1996 to address equalization of education opportunities in the country. Every parent or guardian is compelled by law to send his/her child to school on attaining the age of 6 years (now 4 years) and shall keep him/her until he/she completes the course in basic education.

- But can we say that free education means equal educational opportunity?
- Some families in Ghana cannot afford to send their children to school even when it is free of charge, because of the loss of revenue these children could have earned through trading, agriculture, fishing or otherwise.
- For the poor who needs the services of these children, the opportunity is not equal. Again, can we talk about equal opportunity in terms access to effective schools? When we compare rural and urban schools, we notice a marked difference in the quality and even quantity of teachers as well as the facilities that have been provided.
- These invariably affect the quality of education in the various schools. What about private and public schools? People consider products of private schools as being an advantaged class who's economic and social positions will be enhanced as a result of the rare opportunity offered them through school. This then makes a mockery of the concept of equal opportunities.

- It is however important to note that inequality does not lie only in these so-called advantaged schools.
- The identified sources of inequality include socio-economic background/status of the family (Phowden, 1967; Coleman, 1968) geographical conditions (Roger, Race, Coleman, 1968) and even cultural factors that introduce inequality of opportunities among the sexes.
- Even, when education is free, children from the richer families have an advantage over the others. Their parents can afford to pay for extra lessons at home, purchase extra books for supplementary reading and create a more conducive home environment for private studies.
- Foster (1971) indicated in his studies that in Ghana, wide gap exists between the education of the children of the masses and those of the elites who are over-represented in selective institutions.

1.10: NAEYC Principles underlying Early Childhood Educator's Responsibilities to Children, Families, Colleagues, Communities and Society

NAEYC recognizes that many daily decisions required of those who work with young children are of a moral and ethical nature. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving the principal ethical dilemmas encountered in early childhood education. The primary focus is on daily practice with children and their families in programs for children from birth to 8 years of age: preschools, childcare centers, family daycare homes, kindergartens, and primary classrooms. Many of the provisions also apply to specialists who do not work directly with children, including program administrators, parent educators, college professors, and child care licensing specialists.

- Standards of ethical behavior in early childhood education are based on commitment to core values that are deeply rooted in the history of ECE

Principles underlying ECE responsibilities to Children

- Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive settings for children. We are committed to supporting children's development by cherishing individual differences, by helping them learn to live and work cooperatively, and by promoting their self-esteem

- **Principles**

- We shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, psychologically damaging, or physically harmful to children. *This principle has precedence over all other in this code.*
- We shall not participate in practices that discriminate against children by denying benefits, giving special advantages, or excluding them from programme or activities on the basis of their race, religion, sex, national origin, or the status, behaviour, or beliefs of their parents. (This principle does not apply to programmes that have a lawful mandate to provide services to a particular population of children.)
- We shall involve all of those with relevant knowledge (including staff and parents) in decisions concerning a child.

- When, after appropriate efforts have been made with a child and the family, the child still does not appear to be benefiting from a programme, we shall communicate our concern to the family in a positive way and offer them assistance in finding a more suitable setting.
- We shall be familiar with the symptoms of child abuse and neglect and know and follow community procedures and state laws that protect children against abuse and neglect.
- When we have evidence of child abuse or neglect, we shall report the evidence to the appropriate community agency and follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken. When possible, parents will be informed that the referral has been made.

- When another person tells us of their suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected but we lack evidence, we shall assist that person in taking appropriate action to protect the child.
- When a child protective agency fails to provide adequate protection for abused or neglected children, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to work toward improvement of these services.
- When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health or safety of children, but has not been previously known to do so, we have ethical responsibility to inform those who can remedy the situation and who can keep other children from being similarly endangered.

- **Principles underlying ECE responsibilities to Families**

- Families are of primary importance in children's development. (The term family may include others, besides parents, who are responsibly involved with the child). Because the family and the early childhood educator have a common interest in the child's welfare, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about collaboration between the home and the school in ways that enhance the child's development.

- **Principles**

- We shall not deny family members access to their child's classroom or programme setting.
- We shall inform families of programme philosophy, policies, and personnel qualifications, and explain why we teach as we do.
- We shall inform families of and, when appropriate, involve them in policy decisions.
- We shall inform families of and, when appropriate, involve them in significant decisions affecting their child.
- We shall inform family of accidents involving their child, of risks such as exposure to contagious disease that may result in infection, and of events that might result in psychological damage.

- We shall not permit or participate in research that could in any way hinder the education or development of the children in our programmes. Families shall be fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and shall have the opportunity to give or withhold consent.
- We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness in working with children.
- We shall develop written policies for the protection of confidentiality and the disclosure of children's records. The policy documents shall be made available to all programme personnel and families. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members, programme personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require familial consent (except in cases of abuse or neglect).

- We shall maintain confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we are concerned about a child's welfare, it is permissible to reveal confidential information to agencies and individuals who may be able to act in child's interest.
- In cases where family members are in conflict we shall work openly, sharing our observations of the child, to help all parties involved make informed decisions. We shall refrain from becoming an advocate for one party.
- We shall be familiar with and appropriately use community resources and professional services that support families. After a referral has been made, we shall follow up to ensure that services have been adequately provided.

- **Principles underlying ECE responsibilities to Colleagues**
- In a caring, cooperative work place human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are modeled. Our primary responsibility in this arena is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs.

- **Principles**

- When we have concern about the professional behaviour of a co-worker, we shall first let that person know of our concern and attempt to resolve the matter collegially.
- We shall exercise care in expressing view regarding the personal attributes or professional conduct of co-workers. Statements should be based on first-hand knowledge and relevant to the interests of children and programmes.

- **Principles underlying ECE responsibilities Community and Society**
- Early childhood programs operate within a context of an immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programs that meet its needs and to cooperate with agencies and professions that share responsibility for children. Because the larger society has a measure of responsibility for the welfare and protection of children, and because of our specialized expertise in child development, we acknowledge an obligation to serve as a voice for children everywhere.

- **6.4: Principles**

- We shall communicate openly and truthfully about the nature and extent of services that we provide.
- We shall not accept or continue to work in positions for which we are personally unsuited or professionally unqualified. We shall not offer services that we do not have the competence, qualifications, or resources to provide.
- We shall be objective and accurate in reporting the knowledge upon which we base our programme practices.
- We shall cooperate with other professionals who work with children and their families.
- We shall not hire or recommend for employment any person who is unsuited for a position with respect to competence, qualifications, or character.

- We shall report the unethical or incompetent behaviour of a colleague to a supervisor when informal resolution is not effective.
- We shall be familiar with laws and regulations that serve to protect the children in our programs.
- We shall not participate in practices that are in violation of laws and regulations that protect the children in our programmes.

- When we have evidence that an early childhood programme is violating laws or regulations protecting children, we shall report it to persons responsible for the programme. If compliance is not accomplished within a reasonable time, we will report the violation to appropriate authorities who can be expected to remedy the situation.
- When we have evidence that an agency or a professional charged with providing services to children, families, or teachers is failing to meet its obligations, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to report the problem to appropriate authorities or to the public.
- When a programme violates or requires its employees to violate this code it is permissible, after fair assessment of the evidence, to disclose the identity of that programme.

11: Statement of Commitment

- As an individual who works with young children, I commit myself to furthering the values of early childhood education as they are reflected in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- To the best of my ability, I will
- Ensure that programmes for young children are based on current knowledge of child development and early childhood education.
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children
- Respect colleagues in early childhood education and support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society.

- Maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- Recognize how personal values, opinions, and biases can affect professional judgement.
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
- Continue to learn, grow, and contribute as a professional.
- Honour the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- The statement of Commitment expresses those basic personal commitments that individuals must make in order to align themselves with the profession's responsibilities as set forth in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

LECTURE 2

UNIT 2: PARTNERSHIP PERSPECTIVES ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

1. What parental involvement /partnership is
2. Millennium Development Goals and ECE
3. Linkages between ECE and ECCD
4. Child Health, Nutrition and Safety through ECE
5. International and National Perspectives on the role of Families in ECE

What Parental Involvement/Partnership is

1.1: Definitions

- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of (2002) defines parental involvement as “the participation of parents in regular, two-way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities. Parents should be full partners in their child’s learning, and be encouraged to be actively involved at school.
- Parental involvement means seeing parents as active collaborators in their own children’s school lives and being clear about ways in which they can work with the school. Parental involvement could be largely defined as consisting of the following: volunteering at school, communicating with teachers and other school personnel, assisting in academic activities at home, parenting skills, and attending school events, meeting of Parent Teacher Association and parent conferences.

- Catron and Allen (1999) state that forming partnership with parents is a process of sharing information and establishing relationships; it is one of the foundations of the invisible curriculum and provides the bridge of consistency between children's worlds. Parents' involvement in the early childhood programme helps to meet the needs of children, families and the programme.
- Epstein (1995) defines parental involvement/partnership as families and communities who take an active role in creating a caring educational environment. She further asserted that parents who are involved with their children's education are those who consistently demonstrate good 1. parenting skill, 2. communicate with school staff, 3. volunteer their time in the school, 4. help their children learn at home, 5. play an active role in school-related decision-making, and 6. who regularly collaborate with the school community.

- When School-community partnership exists, it opens the lines of communication between what were once considered separate spheres of existence and merge them into an overlapping environment in which students receive similar types of reinforcement and uniform messages regarding expectations and performance in school.
- When schools create a positive school climate by reaching out to families and providing structure for them to become involved, the result is effective school-family partnership.
- Frequent and positive school to home communication (in the form of phone calls, progress reports, conference, personal notes, newsletters and home visits) helps parents feel more self – confident, more comfortable with the school and more likely to be involved (Epstein1995). Letting parents know that they are valued and acknowledging their time constraints and familial obligations are the key elements of school climate that are conducive to family involvement.

- The building of trusting, collaborative relationships between parents and staff allows them to share with and to learn from one another. Parents want what is the best for their children. This also applies to teachers. The more parents and teachers talk to each other, work with one another and remember that the child is the focus, the more successful that child will be. Although parent involvement is very important, it is not always easy for the teacher, the school or the parents to facilitate.

- Pressures on parents today are tremendous due to changing family structures, economic conditions and lack of support for the nuclear family. Many children live with single parents, in two-parent working families, or in blended families created by remarriages and many live with relatives other than their parents or with people who are not related to them.

- In addition to these pressures on the family, today's nuclear family does not have the support from the extended family that was available to past generation
- The 1987 Educational Reforms lay emphasis in the following areas of community participation:
 - Participation in management of the schools through representation of SMC
 - Participation of communities, PTAs and religious bodies in curriculum design
 - Participation in actual teaching as a resource person on culture related themes
 - Participation in the protection & maintenance of school property
 - Supervision and monitoring of pupils' attendance at school.
 - Involvement in enrolment drives to increase pupils' access (some chiefs trying to compel parents to send their children to school)
 - Participation in the form of offering motivation to teachers to improve their performance
 - Participation in the supervision of pupils' studies at home.

- The main purpose of education (formal or informal) is to produce a person who will be a useful member of the community/society.
- Dewey (1960) reported that the community members have natural, legal, intellectual, emotional right to be involved in children's education and can call for a change in the type of education given to the child if found to be unsatisfactory.
- What Dewey is saying is that, the community has every right to challenge any form of education being given to their children if they feel such education will not benefit the society. They have the right to call for a change of that type of education or training for a suitable and desirable one for their children. By so doing, the lackadaisical attitude of most communities towards the education of their children will be removed to give way to a supportive attitude from them.

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•In their research, Henderson and Berla (1994) found that when parents are involved in their children's schooling, children achieve:

- higher grades,
- have better school attendance,
- have more positive attitudes and behaviours,
- graduate from high school at a higher rate, and
- are more likely to enrol in higher education programmes.

•Henderson & Mapp (2002) also state that study after study had shown that the involvement of parents and families in the schooling of their children makes a significant difference.

•Regardless of income and background, students whose parents are involved in their academic career are more likely to earn;

- high grades of test scores
- enroll in higher level programs and be promoted.
- attend school regularly, show improved behaviour,
- adapt well to school, and
- have better social skills.

- There is no question that parents' involvement pays off in better educational outcomes for children. While virtually everyone agrees that involving parents in the educational process is critical, many teachers and schools struggle with ways in which this can be accomplished.

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Benefits to Teachers

- When teachers make the effort necessary to involve parents and community members, they find that other adults have a greater appreciation of the challenges of working with young children. Parents and community members come to value and respect teachers' efforts and are more likely to speak positively with others about early education (Gestwicki, 2000). With added assistance, teachers can also do a better job in their teaching (Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, & Lopez, 1997). While a parent or community member is busy with a small-group art project, for example, the teacher is freed up to work with other children in the classroom.
- Bringing in other adults with unique talents and abilities also adds to the excitement of the classroom and often leaves teachers feeling more satisfied with their work (Gestwicki, 2000). As teachers work to involve parents and community members, their relationships with children also tend to improve. With more time for each child, increased understanding, and a more exciting curriculum, children respond more positively to teachers. Precisely,

1. When schools have a high percentage of involved parents in and out of schools, teachers and headteachers are more likely to experience higher morale.
2. Teachers and headteachers often earn greater respect for their profession from their parents.
3. Consistent parent involvement leads to improved communication and relations between parents, teachers and administrators.
4. Teachers and headteachers acquire a better understanding of families' cultures and diversity, and they tend to form greater respect for parents' abilities and time.
5. Teachers and headteachers report an increase in job satisfaction.

6. Teachers gain additional information and insight about children in the broader context of their home and family environment. The total perspective enables teachers to be more sensitive to individual needs, stressors, concerns, and changes associated with the children's home environments and to effectively meet the needs of children and families through more responsive, comprehensive, child-centred planning. Parents have special knowledge and skills that can be very helpful to teachers.

7. It creates an opportunity for both parents and teachers to mesh their dreams, hopes and aspirations for children's development.

8. Parents and community members come to value and respect teachers' efforts and are more likely to speak positively with others about early education.

Parents can effectively contribute to your classroom activities in the following ways:

1. Read books to individual children or small groups.
2. Tell stories to pupils and teach rhymes.
3. Play an appropriate educational game with children.
4. Prepare and organise materials for an upcoming classroom activity.
5. Assist the teacher in a planned field trip into the local community.
6. Help an individual child who needs assistance in mathematics.
7. Spend time with children on the playground as they engage in activities in that setting.
8. Helps in fund raising activities.

Benefits to Parents and Families

- The difficult task of parenting is often a struggle for many adults. When parents are involved in the schools, they find opportunities for support that make this task a little more manageable (Powell, 1998). Just knowing that other parents are struggling with the same issues is reassuring to many. Talking through parenting challenges with others gives parents new ideas and renewed motivation to manage their struggles with children. Conversations with teachers and opportunities to see them deal with similar issues in the classroom also provide parents with good options to try with their children at home (Gestwicki, 2000). Parents who get involved also gain new insights into their own children's lives in a different setting.

All of these tend to strengthen their self-esteem and hone parenting skills. The Head Start program has many examples of parents who have gotten involved in school activities and gone on to improve their lives in a variety of ways ("Head Start Start," 1995). Precisely,

1. Parents increase their interactions and discussion with their children and are more responsive and sensitive to their children's social, emotional, and intellectual developmental needs.
2. Parents are more confident in their parenting and decision-making skills as they are offered help with child-rearing problems. Parenting styles can shift in positive ways, as a result of their involvement with schools when they are given specific opportunities.
3. As parents gain more knowledge of child development, there is more use of affection and positive reinforcement and less punishment on their children.

4. Parents have a better understanding of the teacher's job and school curriculum.
5. When parents are aware of what their children's are learning, they are more likely to help when they are requested by teachers to become more involved in their children's learning activities at home.
6. Parents' perceptions of the school are improved and there are stronger ties and commitment to the school.
7. Parents are more aware of, and become more active regarding policies that affect their children's education when parents are requested by the school to be part of the decision-making team.

Benefits to Children

- Children have the opportunity to interact with an expanded group of adults with diverse occupational interests, culture, grounds, and ideas. And when parents, community members, and teachers work together, children's lives are improved. Children who see a variety of concerned adults working to help them improve their school performance respond positively, leading to increased achievement (Fuller & Olsen, 1998). Researchers found specific positive impacts on reading, mathematics, language arts, literacy, art, science, and social studies. This involvement makes it clear to children that schooling is important, and as a result, their motivation to succeed is strengthened. Just as with parents, children also tend to have improved self-concepts when parents, community members, and teachers combine efforts on their behalf. It feels good to know so many important people care.
- Participation also benefits children by providing an enriched classroom environment (Gestwicki, 2000). When parents get involved in the classroom, more hands-on activities (which simply couldn't be managed without additional help) become possible. A trip to a local factory for example, to learn about an important community business wouldn't be possible without parents and others to assist along the way. Precisely,
- with

1. Children tend to achieve more, regardless of ethnic or racial background, socio-economic status or parents' educational level.
2. Children generally achieve better grades, test scores and attendance.
3. Children consistently complete their homework.
4. Children have better self-esteem, are more disciplined and show higher aspirations and motivation towards school.
5. Children have positive attitude towards the school system and this results in improved behaviour in school and less suspension for disciplinary reasons. There is intrinsic motivation, positive student-teacher and peer relationships, improved language, self-help, meaningful youth and adult relationships and strong peer and adult role models.

6. Bringing in other adults with unique talents and abilities adds to the excitement of the classroom.

7. Fewer children are placed in special education and remedial classes

8. Children from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to be better when parents and professionals work together to bridge the gap between the culture at home and the culture in school.

9. Students whose parents remain involved usually make better transitions and are less likely to drop out of school.

10. Barriers to learning such as physical and mental health problems can be alleviated as a result of family and community connections with school. Through connections, students and their families often have access to physical, services, social service and subsistence services that might not be able to access.
11. Creating networks of support: Years of research have shown that social networks within and between neighbourhoods can provide a web of support to parents and other adults that leads to greater learning opportunities for the youth and children. Researchers investigating resilience in children have found that socially coherent communities and stable neighbourhoods seems to be strongly correlated with positive developments and learning outcomes for the youth.
12. Children feel supported and secure in the classroom environment when parents are involved in a variety of the programme's activities.

Benefits to the School

1. Schools that actively involve parents and the community tend to establish better reputation in the community. There is improved school climate and more open school culture.
2. Schools also experience better community support. This can be in the form of ideas, as reform advocates, as full partners in reform efforts and as participants in the reforms.
3. School programmes that encourage and involve parents usually do better and have higher quality programmes than programmes that do not involve parents.
4. There is increased access to resources and knowledge – copying machines, computers, human resources in the form of teachers, trainers for teachers and management assistance.

Millennium Development Goals and Early Childhood Education (ECE)

What Millennium Development Goals are

- The Millennium Declaration was adopted in September 2000 by all 189 member states of the United Nations General Assembly as the world leaders agreed to a set of time bound and measurable goals and targets for combating extreme poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women (by the year 2015).
- The goals, which have been part of the global development objectives for a number of years as endorsed by member states of the United Nations, are called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These are a series of 8 goals and 18 targets along with 48 quantifiable indicators for monitoring the process of achievements of MDGs.

- Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger.
- Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education.
- Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women.
- Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality.
- Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

- The MDGs symbolize a focus on results at the country level, and the achievement of selected targets depends largely on the understanding of their qualitative and quantitative dimensions, their dynamics and inter dependence, and the set of policies, programmes and projects (PPPs) being implemented to reach those targets. Ghana's rights-based laws and flagship development programmes are significant steps in improving the lives of millions -- a life with access to adequate food and income; to basic education and health services; to clean water and sanitation; and to empower women

MDG and Education: The education goal was designed to ensure that every child in the world gets a primary school education.

- *What is MDG 2:* The second of the eight development goals launched at the turn of the century called for every child in the world, boys and girls alike, to receive a full course of primary school education by 2015. Progress towards this lone target has been measured by looking at *how many children enrol* in primary education, *how many complete the process*, and how many 15–24-year-olds are *able to read and write*.
- *Will the goal be met?* In 2012, the most recent year for which world-wide data is available, 58 million children aged between six and 11 were out of school. The problem was nowhere more acute than in Sub-Saharan Africa, where roughly *30 million children were affected*. So, while more children are registering for primary school than ever before-- in 2012 the global figure stood at 90%, up from 83% at the turn of the century---the ideal of universal enrolment remains elusive. Progress since the turn of the century *was made mostly before 2007*, with only an additional 2 million children making it to the classroom since then. Moreover, about a quarter of children world-wide ---half of them living in conflict-affected areas---drop out of primary school before their studies are complete,

- a statistic that has *remained unchanged* since the millennium development goals were introduced. And while there has been slight increase in literacy among 15–24-year-olds which went from 87% in 2000 to 89% in 2012, again there is a sting in the tail, *with 126 million young people* world-wide still unable to read and write.
- *How have girls fared?* The education goal called for ‘girls and boys alike’ to receive primary school education but it failed to acknowledge that the challenges they face are far from alike. In some poor countries, sons are still seen as the breadwinners of the future, and their education prioritised over daughters. This means they are more vulnerable to early or forced marriage and early pregnancy and are often left to shoulder a disproportionate share of the domestic workload. On the plus side, perhaps partly because of the emphasis on education in the gender equality goal, boys and girls are now enrolling for primary school in equal numbers. That, though means very little if they subsequently fall by the wayside, and the reality is that for every 100 boys out of primary school, there are 17 girls.

- *What still needs to be addressed?* Increasing primary school enrolment without making provision for improved access to secondary and higher education was a fundamentally flawed strategy. Government and donors –supported the education goal by building and equipping new primary schools, in the process creating burgeoning generation of young learners. But not enough provision was made for what would happen further down the line.
- The consequences of this approach are perhaps nowhere more apparent than in Sub-Saharan Africa, where more than half of children old enough to be in secondary school are no longer in education, even though the region has recorded the most significant increase in primary school enrolment since the turn of the century. In some cases, buildings and books were emphasized over the basic aim of improving literacy. Inadequate resources made it not to reduce class size, increase the number of qualified teachers, promote better teacher training or enhance academic curricula. Building more schools while neglecting to populate them with enough skilled teachers was a recipe for failure.

- *How MDG2 fits into existing education initiatives?* In April 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, 164 countries pledged to meet a set of six targets by 2015. The agenda called for expanded and improved early childhood care and education, and stipulated that school attendance for children should be compulsory, free of charge, and of good quality. It also promoted life-long learning, adult literacy, provision of learning opportunity for old and young, gender equality and all-round improvement in education quality.

•Role of Teacher Education

- In the light of the above emergent issues in the school education, there is need to develop a sense of higher levels of commitment and sincerity among the prospective teachers. Teacher Education should bring a conversion in their attitude towards teaching. It must make the prospective teachers convinced of their work as it benefits boys and girls which is significant for the society and ultimately contributes towards the economy of the nation. The National Policy on Education (1986) expects a lot from the teachers by putting a tremendous faith and responsibility on them, since it boldly opined, “No people can rise above the level of its teachers.”
- The National Policy further stated that the ‘Status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society’. It is further highlighted in the policy that the government and the community should endeavour to create conditions which will help to motivate and inspire teachers on constructive and creative lines. So, it is implied that the training of the teachers should be so appropriate as can fulfil the expectations listed in the national policy document.

- The NCTE in its curriculum framework for Quality Teacher Education, 1998, summarised the teacher education system as “Teacher Education is an integral component of the educational system. It is intimately connected with the society and is conditioned by the ethos, culture and character of a nation. The constitutional goals, the directive principles of the state policy, the socio-economic problems and the growth of knowledge, the emerging expectations and the changes operating in education etc., call for an appropriate response from a futuristic education system and provide the prospective within which the education system programmes need to be viewed”.

•**Suggestions:**

- Attitude to acquire adequate knowledge and to develop skills should be inculcated in teacher trainees.
- Sufficient number of schools along with adequately trained teachers for quality instruction and effective
- functioning of elementary education should be ensured. For this, programmes under Teacher Education should be redesigned.
- Programmes under fCUBE should be strengthened to ensure certain percent enrolment and retention.
- For quality teaching, pre-service and in-service programmes should be focused.
- Active participation for development of self confidence among pupil teachers should be emphasized.
- Dedication towards teaching profession.
- Values oriented Teacher education should be provided.

Early childhood education and sustainable development goals

•The Sustainable Development Goals only considered children with reference to child mortality and maternal mortality. While important, both indicators are insufficient to ensure the future well-being of children and families. Beyond survival, children have the right to thrive, to develop their full potential and to live in a sustainable world. Furthermore, we need to raise children's awareness of sustainable development, in order to make further progress in the coming decades. The Millennium Developmental Goals were up between 2000 and 2015, and are now replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals, as defined by the United Nations. This text aims to discuss the place of young children, and, specifically, early childhood education in these Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in two ways: How investment in early childhood education and the development and learning of young children translates into SDG; and, ii. What can be done in the educational context to raise awareness of the SDGs among future generations?

Sustainable Development and Early Childhood Education Goals. What relationship

- children should have access to quality early childhood education programmes before formal learning begins. More specifically, target 4.2 specifies two indicators. The proportion of children under the age of 5 who are developing as expected for their age in terms of health, learning and psychosocial well-being; 2. The percentage of children attending early childhood education programmes in the year before formal education.
- Based on the growing evidence for the benefits of early childhood education for children and societies, investments in early childhood education are considered to be an integral part of sustainable development. Ideally, this investment in early childhood education will translate into better educated, healthier children and a prosperous and peaceful future. Target 4.2, which is in goal 4 Ensuring quality inclusive and equitable education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all – states that by 2030 all children should have access to quality early childhood education programs before formal learning begins. More specifically, target 4.2 specifies two indicators: The proportion of children under the age of five who are developing as expected in terms of health, learning and psychosocial well-being.2. The percentage of children attending early childhood education programs in the year before formal education

- **Early Childhood Care and Education** is defined as a Holistic approach; survival, growth, development, and learning including health, nutrition and hygiene, culture, social, physical, and emotional development, active learning. Early Childhood Care and Education is Care and education of children from birth to primary school age (i.e., to age 6 or 8). It covers children's survival, growth, development and learning – including health, nutrition and hygiene, and cognitive, social, physical and emotional development- from birth to entry into primary school in formal, informal and non-formal settings.

- Early Childhood Care and Education covers very diverse arrangements, from parenting programs to community- based child care, centre-based provision and formal pre-primary education, often in school. Early Childhood Care and Education programs typically aim at two age groups: a) children under 3 years; and b) children from age 3 to primary school (usually by age 6, and always by age 8).

- Early childhood education is a term that refers to the period of time from a child's birth to age 8 years. It is an important time in children's lives because it is when they first learn how to interact with others, including peers, teachers and parents, and also begin to develop interests that will stay with them throughout their lives.

2.6: Importance of Early Childhood Care and Education

1. ECCE promotes brain development and has positive long-term economic benefits.
2. Developing 21st Century Skills in early learners helps prepare them for success in school and life.
3. ECCE can make a positive difference in the lives of young children.
4. Age-appropriate use of technology can enhance learning.

2.7: Challenges facing Early Childhood Care Education in Developing Countries

- Despite the growing importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE), there are a number of challenges that have continued to pull down its effective implementation. These include lack of adequate teaching and learning resources, socio-economic factors, high teacher-child ratio with poor remunerations, and financial constraints.

- **Socio-economic factors**

- Malnutrition and ill-health are an example of the factors associated with the socio-economic factors. These factors can significantly damage the cognitive processing ability of children. Children whose processing capacity is impacted by ill-health and malnutrition may require more hours of instruction to learn various skills. As such, implementation of early childhood education may prove critical especially in low-income countries (van de Linde, 2005). Regional disparities have significant role in facilitating access to early childhood care and education, where enrolment levels in rural and marginalized areas are low in comparison to those in the urban areas.
- Children from the marginalized communities in rural and marginalized developing countries suffer from lack of access to early childhood education. They are left at the mercy of the community. Regional disparities have significant role in facilitating access to early childhood care and education, where enrolment levels in rural and marginalized areas are low in comparison to those in the urban areas. Children from the marginalized communities in rural and marginalized developing countries suffer from lack of access to early childhood education. They are left at the mercy of the community

- **Inadequate teaching and learning resources**

Many ECE centres lack adequate teaching and learning resources and facilities suitable for ECE in their learning environment. These include lack of properly ventilated classrooms, furniture suitable for children, kitchen, safe clean water, playground, toilets and play material. This implies that teachers do not have adequate teaching and learning resources to enable them to implement effectively the ECDE Curriculum. This affects the implementation of ECE Curriculum negatively as creation of a sustainable learning environment helps deprived children to improve their academic performance (Offenheiser and Holcombe, 2003).

- **High Teacher-Child Ratio with Poor Remunerations**

- Teacher-child ratio has been a subject of much attention among researchers in relation to the factors facing teaching and learning process. Early Childhood Education has not been left out. Research shows that teacher child ratio has continued to grow. On average, teacher child ratio for both 3-5 years old children and 6-8 years olds still remains critical. Teachers are not comfortable with the increasing number of children in the classes they handle (Dodge and Colker, 1992). With high ratios, ECE teachers are poorly remunerated and under the mercy of parents (most of whom have little or nothing to give).

- **Financial Constraints**

- Financial constraints can lead to ineffective implementation of early childhood education. At macro level, a good number of developing countries have suffered from the heavy debt burden following their pursuit on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund fiscal policies such as the Structural Adjustment Programs. The result has been that families bear more responsibilities in the implementation of early childhood education programmes.

Linkages between Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)

3.1: Definition:

- **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)** can define as the holistic development of children including physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development from conception to age five (internationally eight). Early childhood is defined as the period of a child's life from conception to age five (internationally eight). There are two reasons for including this age range within a definition of ECCD. Care means something additional rather than education, such as children's health and nutrition, their evolving emotional and social abilities, as well as their minds, to move policy makers and program providers away from thinking exclusively in terms of pre-schooling. Development is defined as the process of change in which the child comes to master more and more complex levels of moving, thinking, feeling and interacting with people and objects in the environment. ECCD is to nurture the children for their physical and mental development and to prepare them for schooling with right attitudes and habits.

Importance of Early Childhood Care and Development

- ECCD is an opportunity to avoid or reduce developmental problems, thereby bringing lasting benefits to individuals and society
- Early years are crucial in the formation of intelligence, personality and social behaviour.
- Children are born with physical, social and psychological capacities which allow them to communicate, learn and develop. If these capacities are not recognized and supported, they will never be developed.
- Proper care at early age can do much to create an enabling environment that ensures protection and support for more broad-based issues such as children's health, nutrition, psycho-social and cognitive development.

- ECCD stress the importance of child-friendly, family-focused and community-based programs that not only serve to strengthen ongoing social service programs, but improve the physical and mental capacity of children.
- Investments in Early Childhood Development can further help to modify inequalities rooted in poverty as well as social, religious or gender discrimination.

3.3: Challenges facing Early Childhood Care and Development

• More than 200 million children under the age of five in the developing world are at risk of not reaching their full development potential because they suffer from the negative consequences of poverty, nutritional deficiencies and inadequate learning opportunities (Lancet 2007). In addition, 165 million children (one in four) are stunted, with 90 percent of those children living in Africa and Asia (UNICEF et al, 2012). And while some progress has been made globally, child malnutrition remains a serious public health problem with enormous human and economic costs. Child death is a tragedy. At 6 million deaths a year, far too many children perish before reaching the age of five, but the near certainty that 200 million children today will fall far below their development potential is no less a tragedy. Poverty, malnutrition, and lack of proper interaction in early childhood can exact large costs on individuals, their communities and society more generally. The effects are cumulative and the absence of appropriate childcare and education in the three to five age range can exacerbate further the poor outcomes expected for children who suffer from inadequate nurturing during the critical first 1,000 days.

Child Health, Safety and Nutrition in Early Childhood Education

- Child health, safety, and nutrition in Early Childhood Education are of utmost importance when it comes to operating a high-quality child-care centre. While health and safety might seem like basic elements of a good child care facility, these factors can often be overlooked or neglected. Whether you are a parent searching for the right child care centre for your toddler or are a day-care operator, health and safety should be the top priority.

4.1: Health and Safety Curriculum for Early Childhood

- Safety extends into nearly all aspects of a child care facility and its day-to-day operations. Safety should be at the forefront of your teacher's minds at all times. From the layout of the rooms and placement of desks to the materials used in craft making, safety should be a consideration. Creating a safe environment will prevent unnecessary mishaps. Another good way to maintain a clean classroom is to incorporate tidying into the daily routine with the kids. Budget some time to clean up after each activity. This will not only reduce the work that teachers have to do after class but also teach the kids good habits that will carry on into the future.

First Aid

- Unfortunately, kids getting hurt in the classroom is a very common thing. It goes without saying that all preschool teachers should have up to date first aid training. It is necessary that teachers have knowledge as regards administering first aid to children. A first aid kit should be accessible at all times in case of emergency. All kits should be checked for expired supplies and restocked frequently. On field trips, bring along a travel first aid kit. It is always better to be over prepared in this case.

Nutrition

- Ensuring that their children receive nutritious meals at their child's care centre is often a top concern for parents. During the early childhood years, it is very important that little ones get the right balance of nutrients for their growth and development. A healthy meal plan should be customized to the age group of the children in your care. It should also take personal allergies and nutritional requirements into account.

International and National Perspectives on the role of parents/families in Early Childhood Education

- Education and Care are frequently split into two different aspects of a child's routine. However modern developmental theory recognises that learning begins at birth, therefore splitting education and care settings ignores the fundamental nature of development. New Zealand was the first country to integrate responsibility for all early childhood services under education, and the notion of 'educare' integrating childcare and education, and recognising their indivisibility, is wholeheartedly accepted within New Zealand" (Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006).

- In many countries early childhood provision, pre-primary and childcare has been a rising concern. The ECEC provisions have recognised the importance of education and services to the contribution of a range of goals, such as social, economic and educational goal. In some countries Early Childhood Education and Care is provided because of social reasons, for example so parents can go back to work. Early Childhood Education and Care settings around the world are diverse, they all reflect their own histories, beliefs, culture and values. “International evidence allows cross-national sharing of experience and practice in areas of common interest, while allowing account to be taken of national similarities and differences” (Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006,).

5.1: Role of family in child development

- Humans rely heavily on learning for child development. Because we are not born knowing how to behave in society, we have to learn many of the behaviours from the environment around us growing up. For most of us, this learning starts with the family at home.
- Learning comes in many forms. Sometimes children learn by being told something directly. However, the most common way children learn is by observation of everyday life. A child's learning and socialization are most influenced by their family since the family is the child's *primary social group*.

- Child development happens physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually during this time. To make an analogy, if you were constructing a large building, you have to make sure that it has a solid foundation so that the rest of the building can stand tall and strong for many years to come. If the foundation is not strong, the building will have trouble standing on its own. Just like people, if our foundations are not solid, we find it more difficult to be successful in our relationships with others, work, health, and ourselves. So, it cannot be stressed enough how important the family is in development of a child. Ultimately, the family will be responsible for shaping a child and influencing their values, skills, socialization, and security during these *childhood* development stage.

- **Values**
- We generally understand values to mean an understanding between what is right and what is wrong. As a society, we have norms and values, and these function in conjunction with personal values and norms. A good way to teach your child values is to discuss with them the importance of healthy and unhealthy values. Even when your child is little, giving them some responsibilities, such as cleaning the table or helping to cheer up a friend or sibling when they're sick, will begin to teach them the importance of these values. Additionally, explaining the importance of values will help your child understand consequences. So, as the family, it is your job to teach your children about the values that they will use to guide their own lives. This requires a lot of work for you because not only do you have to directly teach these values to your children, such as through explaining and tasks as mentioned above, but your children will look to you as a role model. Your child will notice if you do behave in the same way that you expect of them. Your child watches your behaviours to gauge how to behave themselves. When something goes awry, having a level-headed response is very important.

- **Skills**

- Once your child is born, they start learning motor skills, language skills, cognitive skills, and emotional skills. Regarding motor skills, it is largely the family's responsibility for teaching these skills. Even if your child is in day-care, the work that parents put in at home to teach these skills is much more effective than in the few hours your child is under someone else's care. Your child will learn how to sit up, walk, run, climb, hold a spoon, and so on. These seem so natural to us as adults, but they are skills that have to be fine-tuned at a very young age, and they also reinforce your child's independence which is essential for their development. Language skills are another essential component of the role of family in child development. If you do not speak to your child and teach them your language, they will never learn. One infamous example of this occurring is with Genie, a child who was locked in a dark room with extremely little human contact until she was rescued at age 13.

- She was never able to develop language fluency because it was never taught to her. So, teaching your children language skills from a young age is also essential to child development. To bring this more to foundational building blocks, while your child is very young, something very helpful for family members to do is to teach children basic emotions. When a child is feeling a certain way, naming emotions and describing them are important ways for your child to understand how they are feeling. Once this foundation is set, children can learn how to respond to their feelings and move forward.

- **Socialization**
- When you bring your child home for the first time, your family will become their social group. Parents are the first teachers for children. What your child learns through the interactions between you and them is what they will carry for the rest of their life in regards to how to treat others. Through this socialization with family, your child will learn how *to trust, seek friendships* from others, and *find comfort* with others as well. Generally, we have to learn how to make and sustain relationships. These skills are started and strengthened with the family. Additionally, giving your child the tools for interpersonal development before they learn the skills of technology is vital. These skills can ultimately help your child avoid some of the common effects of technology on children.

- **Security**

- Your child gets their primary sense of security from their family. They rely on you to make sure their basic needs, such as shelter, food, and clothing, are met. More than that, there is emotional security at home that your child will not find in any other place. Once your child goes to school, they will learn more of public and social skills. But, when they are at home is when your child really learns how to be themselves and express themselves fully. [Creating a safe, open home environment](#) is vital so that they can grow. As a parent, giving your child consistency and structure helps them to develop feelings of security. This can be achieved through schedules. Your child will know that everyday around a certain time, they will eat, bathe, sleep, etc. Therefore, with a schedule, your child will be able to feel comfort knowing their needs will be met.

Role of Parents/families in Early Childhood Education

- Children have two main educators in their lives---their parents and their teachers. Parents are the prime educators until the child starts attending school and remain a major influence on their children's learning through school and beyond.
- Children's education starts from home. Parents are their first teachers and they have a key role in shaping up their character. A balance of education at home and school moulds a child's actual learning. Parents should show a helping hand in their educational journey and travel with them with true inspiration. Parental encouragement had played a crucial role in successful students. Their role is not limited to home but involvement in school activities too. A child's learning scale is highly related to how they are treated at home.

- Parent involvement in [early childhood education](#) can extend the experiences that a child has in the classroom to real-world activities that happen in the home. A parent who understands what their child is working on at preschool has a better sense of their child's competency and which areas they need to work on to improve confidence and ability. One of the most difficult challenges for early childhood educators is figuring out how to better engage parents in their child's learning. By establishing good lines of communication between your child care centre and parents, as well as making a strong effort to involve parents as an important partner in their child's education, you can make a positive impact on their learning ability

- Here are few ways which parents can adopt to help with their child's education especially at the early childhood level.
- **Be a role model:** Parents are their children's strongest role model and greatest influence. Children always adopt parent's values and types of behaviour. Children are normally inspired by what their parents do. So, it will be good to be a role model in their learning phase. Parents are kids' first teachers and so learn the first things together at home. Let them know how exciting and meaningful a school life can be if they give out their best. Inspire them to learn novel elements in and out of school with friendly reminders and guidance. If parents are a positive influence in their children's everyday lives and most importantly in their everyday education, the future will be more beautiful and more successful.

- **Read together:** Doing things together with parents give children a sense of support and confidence. Reading passages together is one of the best ways to be close with the child's learning at school. This, not only improves their vocabulary but invokes interest in them to read more. It is also a good idea to visit the library together and share quality books to help them get additional knowledge than only classroom lesson.
- **Oversee child's activity:** It is important to have an eye on the child's activities in school and home. Their general habits are closely linked to how they perform in their studies. Give them timely advice and correct any abnormal behaviour right from the childhood days and inspire them to be good citizens. Help them to be more organized with their daily routine and find enough time for their lessons.

- **No over scheduling:** It is not a good idea to over schedule children with learning activities at home. They spend about half of their day at school so help them schedule their extra learning and homework time at home without burdening them. Balancing the time between lessons, play time and rest is important to have a quality student life.
- **Provide pleasant atmosphere:** Parents should make sure that the kids are provided with a peaceful and pleasant atmosphere at home. Family problems should not be discussed in the presence of kids and don't create a mess at home with unnecessary quarrels. Both father and mother should consider the importance of the child's study life and give them adequate moral support.

- **Give constructive criticism:** If you notice that your kid is not performing well or giving less importance to studies, correct them at the beginning itself. Have patience and give only constructive criticism if you notice any downsides. Make **them for tests:** When it is time for their exams, don't leave them alone with them understand what is right or wrong rather than simply blaming them.
- **Help with home assignment:** Giving support to children in their studies at home would really lift their spirit for learning. Help them with home assignments or projects. It is not to do every lesson for them and let them play. Do it together and help them with some tips and guidance in doing the assignments better.
- **Prepare** their lessons. Help them to prepare for the tests and good guidance and support. Mini tests could be conducted to lessen their exam worries and tensions. You may give additional help with the lesson areas in which they are weak.

- **Reward them for results:** Giving motivation is important for a child to perform better with studies. Never hesitate to reward children if they come up with good results in tests. This also gives them the spirit to perform better always. However, keep a limit as it is not good to over shower them with gifts for an average performance.
- **Go for educational trips:** It is good idea to go for educational trip during the holidays. Include destination that have some relevance with what they are studying to help them have better understanding of the lessons. Occasional trips to museums and zoos would also help them to interact with nature and learn new things.
- **Maintain parent teacher relationship:** Do not skip parent-teacher meetings and interaction sessions. It is good to keep good relationship with your child's teacher. Learn from them about the child's activities in school and make sure to correct the child if something is wrong. Maintaining parent teacher relationship also shows your interest in your child's matters which gives them a good feeling.

- **Set aside time for children:** It is a fact that working parents would be busy with their tight schedules. However, set aside some time for your children and don't leave them lonely at home. Make a comfortable space for them at home by maintaining a good parent child relationship. Eat together and play with them during their free time and go for occasional trips to free up their mind.
- **Monitor their learning:** Some children will take up initiatives themselves to spend time learning at home. However, it is not the case for all and parents should make deliberate interventions for many children. Do proper monitoring of their learning at home and give friendly advices.
- **Prioritise child's learning:** Study life is an important phase of a child and parents should give enough importance to it when deciding on other matters. Do not do anything that will affect their study schedules. Make them understand the importance of daily class attendance.

- **Share your personal experience:** It is good to share some of your school life experiences with your kids in your free time. This may include both positive and negative experiences to help them understand the importance of learning. Inspire them with your success stories to teach them about the importance of hard work and how it pays you back.
- **Devise fun ways to learn:** Make learning a fun activity with some interesting ways. Perform quizzes, and friendly debates at home that cover their lessons or include flash card activities to revise their subjects with fun.
- **Talk with your kids:** Spend enough time everyday to talk to your children even if you have tight schedules. Learn from them about their concerns or doubts about any happenings in and out of school. Make sure that they are not worried about any thoughts or scary things and give them moral support for the problems facing them.

- **Encourage active leaning:** Active learning has a lot of benefits over the sedentary learning. It is the role of parents to encourage them for active learning at home which reflects in the way they perform in classroom. Taking initiative to help form a good friends circle with the neighbourhood children and organizing interesting activities is beneficial to the children.
- **Help children relax:** Make sure that they get proper rest at the end of the day. Help them to relax with a good night's sleep and proper food. Make effort to know your child's areas of interest and include them in the holiday time to give them a good relief from the stress of studies.

- **Be a good friend:** It is important to be a good friend to your children. Give them space to share anything that comes to their mind and express their true feelings. Give them assurance that you would offer a helping hand despite all that comes their way. This would boost their confidence level and help them excel and perform better in learning and other school activities. Besides school learning, parent's active role during their study life can help them to grow up with better social skills and improved behaviour

** Many studies and surveys have noted the importance of parent's involvement in the child's education. Students with good support from home have achieved better grades at school and grew up with a higher self-esteem.

LECTURE 3

UNIT 3: FAMILY PATTERNS AND INFLUENCES ON ECE

- a. Changing Family Structures: single parents; teenage parents; blended family, etc.
 - b. Parenting and Childcare Styles
 - c. Family-Centred Teaching.
 - d. Implications of Family Patterns for Early Childhood Professionals.
 - 1. Task Approach
 - 2. Process Approach
 - 3. Developmental Approach
 - 4. Comprehensive Approach
- A. 3.00 Changing Family Structures: single parents; teenage parents; blended family, etc**

Introduction

- I hope you will agree with me that the family plays an important role in the life of the individual. Family is the single most important influence in a child's life. From the first moments of life, children depend on parents and family to protect them and provide for their needs. They are a child's first teachers and act as role models in how to experience the world around them. Family is a valuable gift of life. The child can always count on the family, share problems with family, play with family and freshen up one's mood at any time.
- This Unit will take you through the definition of Family, what nuclear family is, the blended family, single parent family, and homelessness.

3.1: What family is.

- What is a family? This is a thorny question for many policy makers. Definitions of family abound but there is no consensus.
 1. Bierstedt (1995) talks of family as a more or less durable association of husband and wife, with or without child, or of a man or woman alone, with children.
 1. Nimkoff (1965) states that family is the biological social unit composed of husband, wife and children.
 2. Burgess and Locke (1945) state that family is a group of persons whose relations to one another are based upon consanguinity (blood relationship) and who are therefore kin to one another.
 3. The U.S. Census Bureau (2022) defines a family as a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together.
 4. Madder defined 'family' as a group defined by social relationship, sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children.

3.2: What nuclear Family is

- Nuclear family is group of people who are united by ties of partnership and parenthood and consisting of a pair of adults and their children. Nuclear family refers to the core members of a family, usually parents and children. In Ghana, nuclear family is described as family unit that includes two married parents of opposite gender and their children. It is a social unit of two parents and their children

- **3.3: Importance of nuclear family**

- Nuclear family plays an important role in the development of personality of individuals. Children are closer to the parents and can have discussion about their problems freely and frankly with their parents. This helps greatly in the development of their personality. Children thrive when parents are able to actively promote their growth and development. Ideally within a nuclear family there are shared values, responsibilities, unconditional love, healthy attachment patterns and an environment that supports growth and learning.

- The nuclear family unit provides a strong bonding experience for immediate family members. The successful nuclear family provides children with consistency in care-taking. Children who have both stability and consistency in their lives are more likely to exhibit positive behaviour, earn good grades in school, attend school regularly and become more involved in community and co-curricular activities.

3. 4: Extended family

- Extended family is simply a family unit that extends past the nuclear family, to include other relatives such as aunts, uncles, and grandparents. An extended family can also be called a complex family, joint family, or multi-generational family. The key characteristic of the extended family is that there are multiple adults in the family that are not parents of the children, though they may also have parent-like roles and share in the responsibilities for providing for the whole family, either by contributing financially or other ways.

3.5: Importance of extended family

- When parents separate, children often need their extended families more than ever. The grandparents and the extended families on both sides of the family can be a resource for the parents and the children. Maintaining positive relations between children and their extended family members should be encouraged and continued. Failure to do so can result in another loss for the children. The benefits for the children in keeping these relationships are;

1. Self-Esteem:

- Self –Esteem is a measure of how much a child likes the person they see themselves as. We get our sense of self partly from how others especially those closest to us, see us. During a separation, or divorce, children may question who they are and whether or not they are lovable and valuable. They may blame themselves for the loss. Parents, grandparents and extended family members can reassure children that they are lovable. Some ways of giving children this message are:
 - i. Continuing to include them in family events.
 - ii. Encouraging and facilitating communication between the child and their grandparents and other extended family members.

2. Cultural Identity

- Extended family members especially grandparents, can assist in passing on cultural teachings and traditions, including language. For example, grandparents can share stories, skills and teaching during their time with the grandchildren. This is also connected to the children's healthy self-esteem.

3. Sense of belonging

- After separation, children will wonder where they belong. They will need assurance that they still belong to both families, whatever the cause of the separation and even if one of the parents is not currently in the picture. Grandparents and other extended family members can help the parents by;
 1. Offering help without strings attached
 2. Listening to them without judgement or blame for either parent
 3. Asking them what they need and doing what you can to provide what you can to provide what is needed.
- Multi-generational families who share a home often experience emotional bonding throughout all the generations, which they may not be able to achieve if they live further apart.

Definition of Blended Family

A blended family or step family forms when you and your partner make a life together with the children from one or both of your previous relationships. The process of forming a new blended family can be both a rewarding and challenging experience. When the two families merge, there are many things that can be done to make sure the new family thrives. These are typically easy to implement and only require consistency to guarantee longevity. Blending two families together can be difficult and may take time to create the harmony that is implied by the same. Some challenges for families merging together might include,

- i. Differing parenting styles.
- ii. Discipline systems.
- iii. Social values and financial habits.

3.7: Advantages of Blended Family

About 65% of parents who get married again bring their children with them into the new household. That means the problems of a past family system can sometimes crossover into the new one. Every family experiences conflict of some type, but those that have blended features tend to have several unique challenges that most parents don't realise exist until they encounter them for the first time. Here are the critical blended family advantages;

1. It creates a foundation for better financial support:

- Single parents often struggle to make ends meet. Some work more than one job to make sure rent, food, and clothing are available for the family. Meeting someone who becomes part of the family can make financial life easier for everyone. Two parents might both work in a blended family, which means two incomes are available. If one parent earns enough to support everyone, then the other parent can stay at home.

2. Blended families can lead to higher levels of happiness: When parents are happier more consistently, then so are their children. That's why blended families' ways offer a chance to create successful outcomes. When kids see their parents have less anxiety and stress, then it makes them feel good. They work together with you to make the relationship work because they want the stability that friends in nuclear families receive.

3. It can lead to more problem solving skills

Kids that come from blended families tend to learn how to become more flexible. This advantage occurs because there tends to be more conflicts that require resolution. It is easier for them to adopt to new people and situations because of the changes that occur in their living arrangements. This process leads to the skill of finding compromise, solving problems, and becoming good role models for the rest of their family and their extended community

4. Can give children new role models in their lives: Another benefit of blended family is that children can also get new role models. Especially if your previous partner was not good role model at all, chances are that your children could greatly benefit from your new partner in this regard. Children learn quite a lot from their parents and it is therefore crucial that you bring good role models into the lives of your kids so that they can develop in a healthy manner.

5. Children may learn tolerance towards others: If you find a new partner, chances are that your children may be quite sceptical first. However, in the ongoing run, chances are that they will also learn higher level of tolerance towards your partner and also towards others in the long run. If your children realise that your new partner has good intentions, they may no longer be too critical towards him or her.

3.8: Disadvantages of Blended family

1. Children may not accept the new partner: Although the concept of blended families can have many important advantages, there are still some problems related to it. For instance, one disadvantage of blended families is that your children may simply not accept your new partner. In fact, this is quite common since your children will often be on the side of your ex-partner and will not consider your new partner as kind of a parent. This may lead to all sorts of problems and many blended families have not worked out in the past due to the fact that children sabotaged those relationships.

2. Your new partner may treat your children quite poorly: Another problem with blended families is that your new partner may treat your children quite poorly. In fact, especially if your new partner is rather dominant and you are the submissive part, you may lose control in the household and your children have to do on a regular basis. This, in order to protect your children, make sure that you choose a partner who is not too dominant and who will also treat your kids with respect.

3. Different parenting styles may lead to problems: blended families may also not be a good idea if you and your partner have quite different parenting styles. Sure, everybody is different and that is not a problem. However, if the differences in parenting between you and your partner become too big, chances are that you will have disputes on a regular basis and your step family will likely not work out due to that.

4. Jealousy can be a problem related to blended families: especially at beginning of your new relationship, your children may also be quite jealous regarding your new partner and don't want to share your attention with him or her. This can lead to serious problems since it can lead to all sorts of conflicts and can also decrease the quality of life of everybody in your household.

Single parent family

- Single-parent families are families with children under age 18 headed by a parent who is widowed or divorced and not remarried, or by a parent who has never married. Single parent families comprise a parent/caregiver and one or more dependent children without the presence and support of a spouse or adult partner who is sharing the responsibility of parenting. During the past several decades, the number of “traditional” two-parent families has decreased while the number of single parent families has increased.

3.10: Advantages of single parenting:

1. You make all the parenting decisions: As a single parent, the entire authority of making the decisions will rest on you. While this may seem a little intimidating in the beginning, you will soon realize what a boon it is when it comes to taking all the decisions that will affect your children. From the school your children will attend to the classes they will take, the type of food they eat, the friends they go out with, the places you visit, what you buy and where you buy, how you spend your weekends, what you do and do not do and other restrictions or freedom that your child will ever have will all come from you.

2. Managing the finances: As a single parent, you will also have the choice to decide how you spend your money on your children and you. You will always be in a better position to plan your finances and understand when you can splurge just a bit more and when you need to cut down. You will also be able to help your children understand finances and teach them to manage money better.

3. Undivided attention: As the child of a single parent, your little one will get all your undivided attention, without the worry of your love and attention getting divided between you and your spouse. As long as your child is with you, your entire love and attention will be towards your child. Similarly, whenever your child is with your ex, the entire love and attention of your ex will also be towards your child.

- No matter how things stand between you and your ex, your child will always have the chance to experience all the love and care without any of the negativity that could otherwise seep in when you and your ex do not see eye to eye.

3.11: **Disadvantages of single parent family**

- 1. Always short on money:** Spending all your time, attention and strength on focusing on the finances can take a toll on you, which can have a negative impact on the way you behave with your children. Until you have a proper plan where you can balance the income and the expenditure, it can get difficult for you to concentrate on anything else.
- 2. Disciplining your children can be a problem:** Often, even as you face the repercussion or loss of your relationship, your child too will have trouble in adjusting to the new status of being the child of a single parent. While you may be trying to do everything to make your child comfortable and feel safe and loved, there are moments that your child will feel abandoned or unloved, and may react in a rebellious or aggressive way. Such a situation can make it especially difficult for you to set boundaries for your child and discipline them.

- **Negativity in your child:** Every child is different, and the way your child may react to your single parent status may not be what you had anticipated earlier. It is important for you to remember that your child will find the sudden change very disturbing and confusing, and this may negatively affect his academic performance.

Homeless Family:

Homeless families are those that either lack shelter or have shelter that is so inadequate, temporary, or insecure that the situation threatens the social, psychological, or physical health of the family.

Homeless families are a departure from the classic homeless image of the single male, detached from society and disaffiliated from kin, friends, and work. Homeless families receive attention in large part because the presence of children among the homeless confronts society directly with its failure to guarantee a minimum standard of protection.

- The questions of who these families are, how they became homeless, and how their homelessness can be prevented and ameliorated carry an urgency that contrasts with more blaming attitudes towards the single homeless individual. Worldwide, the [United Nations](#) estimates that one billion people live in conditions of inadequate shelter or literal homelessness.
- Most of these people are families who are driven to living in squatter settlements due to rural-urban migration, severe unemployment and underemployment, and the existence of large numbers of refugees and victims of disasters ([United Nations](#) Centre for Human Settlement 1990; Glasser 1994; Bascom 1993).

In Ghana, the population of homeless youth and families is growing in cities such as Accra and Kumasi. The population of homeless families in Ghana is sketchy. The main reasons identified for this high rate of homelessness include poverty, disintegrated families and divorce, and the quest for freedom from parental control.

- Clearly, the stress levels of these families is high and interactions with the schools tend to be a low priority. In many instances, homeless children either do not attend school at all or participate only sporadically.

6.3: Effects of Homelessness on children's health and education

- 1. Health:** Sleeping rough and exposed to the elements can take a toll on someone's health. Plus, not eating regularly can weaken one's immune system. This is why homeless people are very much prone to diseases, especially in winter and during the flu season.
- 2. Children dropping out of school:** Children from such families hardly benefit from formal education. Many of them if not all drop out of school. Parents do not show interest in their children's education and hardly participate in school activities.

Parenting and Childcare Styles

- Parenting styles can affect everything from how much your child weighs to how she feels about herself. Its important to ensure your parenting style is supporting healthy growth and development because the way you interact with your child and how you discipline her will influence her for the rest of her life. Researchers have identified four types of parenting styles.

- **B1: Authoritarian Parenting**

- You believe that children should be seen and not heard.
- When it comes to rules, you believe its ‘my way or the highways.
- You don’t take your child’s feeling into consideration.
- *If any of these rings true, you might be an authoritarian parent. Authoritarian parents believe children should follow the rules without exception. They set rules and expect children to follow rules without asking questions. Authoritarian parents are not interested in negotiating and their focus is on obedience. They also don’t allow children to get involved in problem-solving challenge or obstacles. Instead, they make the rules and enforce the consequences with little regard for a child’s opinion.

- Authoritarian parents may use punishments instead of discipline. So rather than teach a child how to make better choices, they are interested in making children feel sorry for their mistakes. Children who grow up with strict authoritarian parents tend to follow rules much of the time. But their obedience comes at a price.
- Children of authoritarian parents are at a higher risk of developing self-esteem problems because their opinions are not valued. They may also become hostile or aggressive. Rather than think about how to do things better in the future, they often focus on the anger they feel toward their parents. Since authoritarian parents are often strict, their children may grow to become good liars in an effort to avoid punishment.

- Parents under this style of parenting, fail to explain the reasoning behind the rules they set for their children. They also use power assertive techniques of socialization (threats, command, physical force, and love withdrawal) and restrain children's self-expression, and independence. Children become obedient and proficient. However, they do not inculcate in their children happiness, social competence, and self-esteem. No power to question or negotiate the decisions of parents. This mostly affects the mutual capacity of the child to interrogate decisions of authority when he/she grows up.
- Hong (2012) noted that putting excessive pressure on students and having excessive interference with students lead to lower academic competence and consequently lower academic performance.

- **B2: Authoritative Parenting:**

- Putting a lot of effort into creating and maintaining a positive relationship with your child
- You explain the reasons behind your rules.
- You enforce rules and give consequences, but take your child's feelings into consideration

*If these statements sound familiar, you may be an authoritative parent. Authoritative parents have rules and they use consequences, but they also take their children's opinion into account. They validate their children's feelings while also making it clear that the adults are ultimately in charge.

- Parents who are authoritative tend to set limits and also explain why seeing discipline as teaching kids how to become mature and follow rules and make good choices rather than as punishment
- They give kids independence but make sure expectations about behaviour are clear and expect them to be followed. This type of restrictive but also warm parenting leads to the best parent-child communication and relationship.

- Authoritative parents invest time and energy into preventing behaviour problems before they start. They also use positive discipline strategies to reinforce good behaviour like praise and reward systems. Authoritative parents rely on positive reinforcement and infrequent use of punishment.
- Researchers have found children who have authoritative parents are most likely to become responsible adults who feel comfortable expressing their opinion. Children raised with authoritative disciplines tend to be happy and successful. They are also more likely to be good at making decisions and evaluating safety risks on their own.

- They are warm, accept the child's point of view, and encourage the child's participation in decision-making. Authoritative parenting style inculcates into children sense of happiness, creativity and discipline.
- When children perceive that their parents expect them to perform well in school, they are more likely to avoid social vices such a prostitution, alcoholism, drugs and bad behavior like absenteeism, and channel all resources into studies leading to higher academic performance.

- **B3: Permissive Parenting:**

- You set rules but rarely enforce them.
- You don't give out consequences very often.
- You think your child will learn best with little interference from you.
- *If these statements sound familiar, you might be a permissive parent.

Permissive parents are lenient and fail to set boundaries or give children consequences for bad behaviour. They often only step in when there is a serious problem. They are quite forgiving and they adopt an attitude of “children will always be children”.

When they do use consequences, they may not make those consequences stick. They might give privileges back if a child begs or they may allow a child to get out of time-out early if he promises to be good.

Permissive parents usually take a more of a friend's role rather than a parent role. They often encourage their children to talk with them about their problems, but they usually don't put much effort into discouraging poor choices or bad behaviour.

- Children who grow up with permissive parents are more likely to struggle academically
- They may exhibit more behavioural problems as they don't appreciate authority and rules. They often have low self-esteem and may report a lot of sadness. They are also at higher risk for health problems, like obesity, because permissive parents struggle to limit junk food intake. They may set the stage for children to become spoiled.

- Permissive parenting exposes an overly tolerant approach for socialization with responsive and undemanding behaviour. Parents are nurturing and accepting but at the same time they avoid imposing demands and controls over children's behaviour.
- Children from permissive homes do not perform better academically because parents fail to set academic targets or expectations for the children, and also fail to exercise required control and direction for the children.

- **B4: Uninvolved Parenting**

- You don't ask your child about school or homework.
- You rarely know where your child is or who she is with
- You don't spend much time with your child
- *If these statements sound familiar, you might be an uninvolved parent. Uninvolved parents tend to have little knowledge of what their children are doing. There tends to be few rules. Children may not receive much guidance, nurturing and parental attention.

- Uninvolved parents expect children to raise themselves. They don't devote much time or energy into meeting children's basic needs. Uninvolved parents may be neglectful but it is not always intentional. A parent with mental health issues or substance abuse problems for example, may not be able to care for a child's physical or emotional needs on a consistent basis
- At other times, uninvolved parents lack knowledge about child development. And sometimes they are simply overwhelmed with other problems like work and managing household.

- Children with uninvolved parents are likely to struggle with self-esteem issues. They tend to perform poorly in school. They also exhibit frequent behaviour problems and rank low in happiness. Neglecting or uninvolved parents don't keep track of where their kids are or what they are doing. With this style of parenting, there is little warmth, communication or involvement in kids' lives and there is inadequate discipline or supervision. This parenting style tends to lead to the worst outcome for kids'

- Ehnvall et al (2008) noted that parents, especially mothers who were once rejected or neglected by their parents during childhood days are more likely to adopt neglecting parenting style. They usually subject their children especially female children to social vices. Children from these homes lack proper ethics, social skills, social interactions; mostly anti-social, from the child's life. Students lack the love, affection, direction, care and are left to their own fate, thus having adverse psychological effects on their and have low self-confidence or self-esteem. They are generally detached studies.

- **General Comment:** Sometimes parents don't fit into just one category, so don't despair if there are times or areas where you tend to be permissive and other times when you are more authoritative. Studies are clear that Authoritative parenting is the best parenting style. With dedication and commitment to being the best parent you can be, you can maintain a positive relationship with your child while still establishing your authority in a healthy manner. And overtime your child will reap the benefits of your authoritative style.

****Students' Intelligence Quotient (IQ) has been found to influence students academic performance irrespective of the type of parenting style adopted. All other things being equal, a student with a high IQ would have high academic performance irrespective of the parenting style he/she enjoys from the home. On the other hand, a student with low IQ would have low academic performance not withstanding the parenting style he/she enjoys at home.

FAMILY CENTRED TEACHING

- **Introduction**

- Children learn in the context of their families and families are the primary influence on children's learning and development. Professionals too, play a role in advancing children's learning and development. Professionals engage in family-centred practice by respecting the pivotal role of families in children's lives. Early childhood professionals use families' understanding of their children to support shared decision-making about each child's learning and development, create a welcoming and culturally inclusive environment where all families are encouraged to participate in and contribute to children's learning and development experiences, actively engage families and children in planning children's learning and development, provide feedback to families on their children's learning and information.

- About how families can further advance children's learning and development at home and in the community. It is critical that families be included as partners in all aspects of the educational process inasmuch as parents and families provide the primary learning environment for children of all ages. The approach which includes families in educating the children is called family-centred teaching approach. It is a way of working in partnership with families to help them make their own decisions. This approach is based on the idea that all families are different. There's no one right way to do things. It helps create the best environment for children's health, development and wellbeing.

- **What is family-centred teaching?**

- A family-centred teaching approach is a way of working in partnership with families to better understand their unique circumstances and to help parents decide what strategies will best suit their families. This approach is increasingly recognised as an effective way to improve outcomes for families. And it works across a wide range of human services. It is a way of working with families, both formally and informally, across service systems to enhance their capacity to care for and protect their children.

- A family-centred teaching where teachers work closely with parents means that parents and teachers are equal partners in educating the child. It assumes that the parents know more about the child's mental aptitudes than the teacher does, and know what works for their learning style. Each student receives lessons tailored to their learning style and past experiences. However, since this is often individualistic, the socialization that comes from learning with other students must be found outside of school. Based on the way that the question is worded, it can be assumed that it is inquiring after your opinion. This notwithstanding, the description seems relatively straightforward. A family-centred approach implies a less standardized approach to education.

- Particular interest is taken to the student in question's family life. This approach operates heavily under the assumption that, in most situations, a family knows what is best for their child. As such, allowing parents to take point position in that child's education will make for an ideal learning situation. In these approaches, the teacher of an institution is often equal with or even secondary to parents in giving instruction to a student.
- National Resource Center for Family Centred Practice (2018)
Explains the concept of family-centred practice, which is based on the belief that the best way to meet a person's needs is within their families and that the most effective way to ensure safety, permanency, and well-being is to provide services that engage, involve, strengthen, and support families.

- **The role of the teacher in family-centred teaching**

- In the family-centred teaching, which is occasionally used in early education, parents and teachers work together to ensure that children receive the most effective help when growing up.

- The role of the teacher in the family-centred approach is significant. The teacher is usually the person who leads this process of education. The teacher plays the role of instructor as usual and must also be a communicator and facilitator of learning and communication between themselves and the family. In this method of teaching, there is a much higher level of partnership between parent and teacher, so they need to be on the same page about what the student is achieving.

- Key components of family-centred teaching include engaging with family members; working with the family to set up goals, strengthen capacity, and make decisions; and providing individualized, culturally responsive, and evidence-based interventions to each family.

- **Basic Principles of family-centred teaching**

- A family-centred approach has some basic principles:

- All families are different, and support works best when you understand each family's individual goals, expectations, values and everyday life.

- Parents always know their children and their family best.

- All families have strengths, and we learn and grow best when we use our strengths.

- Children's wellbeing and development depends on the wellbeing of all other family members and of the family as a whole.

- Family wellbeing depends on the quality of informal social supports and the availability of formal support services.
- When you use a family-centred approach, you're better equipped to develop strategies that are tailored to individual families. This means strategies are more likely to make family lives easier, to address particular family problems, and to create the best environment for children's health, development and wellbeing.

- **Importance of family- centred teaching**

- The extent of family's involvement in children's early childhood program makes a big difference in how well children adjust and how much they learn. When families take part in their young children's education programs, children do better in school, and the quality of their education can improve. The following are why family- centred teaching is important

- Family-centred teaching is a practice of educators and families working together formally and informally. Providing services to enhance care and protect their children.
- Focuses on children safety and needs that involves their families and communities and builds on their strengths to achieve the main outcome.
- A program where parents and teachers learn from each other many different ways on caring for their children.
- Helps build better partnerships as families and centres work together.

- **Benefits of Family-centred teaching**

- According to Wardell (2013), the following are the benefits of Family-centred teaching
- All parties (families, children and teachers) feel supported and valued.
- Parents and teachers share in the decision making
- It provides lots of two-way communication
- Culturally, continuity is acknowledged and respected

- **Why family involvement is important to children**
- Family is one of the factors that influences a child's attitudes and belief through their microsystem (Bojczyk, Shriner & Shriner, 2012).
- Children are more comfortable being away from their home environment when they know that their parents are involved in their education (Estes & Krogh, 2012).
- Because families are essential partners in the care and education of their children, they feel secure when they know that their parents are involved (Esters & Krogh, 2012).
- Children's social and emotional development is well balanced by good social modelling of teachers and parents interacting with each other (Estes & Krogh, 2012).

LECTURE 4

• UNIT 4: APPROACHES TO PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Task Approach
- Process Approach
- Developmental Approach
- Comprehensive Approach

Introduction

- Parental involvement provides an important opportunity for schools to enrich current school programmes by bringing parents into the educational process. Increased parental, families, and community involvement have been shown to result in increased student success, enhanced parent and teacher satisfaction, and improved school climate. To ensure effective parental involvement, schools can understand and adopt the approaches listed below;

- **Task Approach**

- To get this concept clearer, it should be noted that a task is a piece of work to be done or undertaken. Therefore, Task Approach is a way in which you are going to understand, plan and execute the tasks you have. It is about your manner to analyze and projecting your work, objectives, and priorities. The aim of this approach to involving parents, families, and the community is to help the child/young person and the school as a whole to improve their performance on a specific activity by teaching specific tasks step by step. The tasks selected by the school prior to the goals of the institution are geared towards the individual's level of learning. The aim is that the individual will achieve independence in a single task very quickly.

- There are different task approaches created by different theorists, time management gurus, and life coaches. In general, there is a set of commonly recognized components forming up to task approach, they are:

- Insight: the ability to visualize and intuit the sense and goals of a task you have to complete;
- Motivate: ability to find correct inner leverages that will encourage you to work at a task;
- Analyze: ability to study a task to determine its scope, risks, objectives, and constraints;
- Plan: ability to accurately estimate and reasonably set steps to achieve the specified goals;
- Work: ability to be concentrated at work, including useful skills, methods, and experience;
- Manage: ability to operate the available resources and resolve upcoming issues;

- Learn: ability to learn incoming information, master new working methods, and respond to changeable environmental conditions;
- Review: ability to re-examine and revise existing methods and plans to better suit ever-changing factors or conditions;
- This approach, therefore, helps engage the parents, families, and the community in the activities of the school.

- **Process Approach**

- Process is a series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve a particular end or a process is how something is carried out. Process is often neglected as a topic of conversation. But good processes are what make involvement effective.

- The process approach in education is oriented to regulate the educational process on the basis of assessing its condition according to specially defined quality criteria for all the components of the process itself, as well as the factors that influence the final result.

- Also, the process approach is a management strategy. When school managers use a process approach, it means that they manage and control the processes that make up their organizations, the interactions between these processes, and the inputs and outputs that tie these processes together.
- For the process approach to be effective the environment must be conducive to accommodating parents, families, and communities and also, supporting the child's growth and development. As with the task approach the teacher, school, or therapist may select the target skills, although where possible involving the child, parents, and the community in selecting the materials to be used may help encourage/motivate them to undertake the task at hand and results in more effective results.

- **Benefits of Process Approach**

- There are a wide variety of benefits to a process approach for organizations:
 - a. Functional integration: The process approach integrates organizational functions across the organization to accomplish shared objectives and milestones.
 - b. Efficiency enhancement: Organizations can better hone their focus on the final products and end customers with a process approach.
 - c. Smooth workflows: The process approach makes it easier to create a manageable, high-performance workflow and ultimately improve relationships with customers through consistency.

d. Continual improvement: Each process becomes an asset with this approach, so it's easier to build a culture of continuous self-improvement over time.

e. Economic savings: A process approach often leads to shorter cycle times, which slashes costs and leads to more resources available for boosting efficiency.

f. Organizational structure: Processes help the most valuable asset, human resources, to become involved and empowered with every branch of the organization toward shared goals.

- In the nutshell, using the process approach to engage parents, families, and the community in the school system leads the institution to function in the higher pedestal.

- **Developmental Approach**

- Humans are constantly growing, shifting, developing, and transforming. This process begins at conception. The development approach is described in terms of a series of crises through which the individual grows and evolves. Each of these crises is due to the conflict between the old self and the new abilities and attitudes that are constantly increasing and expanding. Resolution of conflicts results in the development of a sense of competence with respect to a specific capability. The resolution of conflicts is never perfected during one developmental phase but continues through succeeding stages. Families and cultures are important and integral to development. Societies play a large role in the progress of an individual through life. From this approach, a series of developmental tasks need to be successfully developed for a child and/or an adult to progress normally in society.

- Freud (psychoanalytic), Piaget (cognitive), Erikson (ego psychology), Margaret Mahler (object relations), Kolberg (moral), Jung (analytical psychology), Bowlby (biology), Maslow (Humanism), Carl Rodger (self-actualization), and Skinner (behaviorist/social learning theory) are some of the theorists that created their own developmental models to explain and explore human development. The developmental approach holds that old wounds, issues, and current challenges originate from being unable to develop normally through a specific stage. These stages are different based on the theoretical framework that is held by the therapist.

- It is, therefore, based on the belief that everyone has an innate ability to heal, people are constantly trying to heal unfinished business or old wounds that often formulate during childhood. The school uses a development approach to assist and engage parents, families, and the community to explore where a habit, pattern, or issue may be created from an earlier time period. This is done while remaining in the ‘here and now.’ Whether a past situation, issue, or specific trauma is or is not discussed during a session, there is the need to always maintain a developmental perspective

- *Two Essential Features to consider when using a developmental Approach*

1. Recognition of the human being (parents, families, communities, etc.)
as the main resource to be utilized.

- Interpersonal relationships, more specifically social role performance,
as the focused concern

- *Three Major Themes Characterize the developmental approach*

1. Humanistic - a view of one human being by another. Humanistic approach emphasizes the personal worth of the individual, the centrality of human values, and the creative, active nature of human beings. In the school, for example, the institution respects the other stakeholder's common purpose and integrity as a group. The school is an enabler, and show belief in people's ability to cope with their common task. The school offers itself openness, authenticity, compassion, involvement, support, expectation, and assistance

2. Phenomenological - the main concern is what is happening at present, whether in the group or outside of it, or both. This approach is reality-oriented.

3. Developmental - it sees people as being able to move forward in a life-long process of self-actualization or fulfillment of potential in social functioning. That is, they see the parents, families, and the community as people, all of whom face difficult developmental stages, and crises with which they must cope.

- **Comprehensive Approach**

- Generally, a comprehensive approach is about developing mechanisms and cultures of understanding, sharing, and collaboration, both vertically between nations and international organizations, and horizontally between nations and between organizations. Involving parents, families, and the community using this approach aims to promote active, authentic, flexible, and scenario-based learning.

- Having a comprehensive approach to partnerships between schools, families, and communities allows schools to build on their strengths. A comprehensive approach fosters positive attitudes about the school and about families and community members because it respects the varying capacities of the school population as a whole (Davis, 2000).
- It should be well noted that educating the parent on childhood education needs a more comprehensive approach than just sensitization.

LECTURE 5

• UNIT 5: ACTIVITIES FOR INVOLVING PARENTS, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IN ECE

- a. Guidelines for Involving Parents and families in ECE
- b. School Activities that Parents can Participate in.
- c. Importance of Parents' Participation in School Activities.
- d. School Activities that the Community can Participate in.

- e. Importance of Community Participation in School Activities.
- f. Ways by which the Parents can Participate in the Education of their Children.
- g. Activities that Teachers can Participate in the Community
- h. Conducting Home visits
- i. Conducting Parent-Professional Conferences

• **5.1 Guidelines/Strategies for Involving Parents and Families in Early Childhood Education**

• Learning does not end in the classroom, yet most parents are at a loss when it comes to supporting their children's intellectual development. Many try to do too well and hover around them when they do homework, which can stifle creativity and self-development. Others let them roam free and hardly monitor their progress. It is, therefore, necessary for us to engage parents in early childhood education. And below are some of the strategies for engaging parents and other family members effectively in Early Childhood Education.

1. It should be noted that every relationship starts with introduction and communication. To effectively involve parents and family members, the school should;
 - Talk with parents, and not at them. Establish a rapport of equality and create a comfortable atmosphere. Place the student at the center of all communication, making sure that parents understand they are the priority. Avoid the education jargon and be concise. Do not come with fixed answers. Rather, ask parents for their input and suggestions.

- Ask families about their communication preferences. This includes desired frequency and preferred medium of communication. Send class newsletters and performance reports to share the good news, too. It is important that parents know that you are not criticizing their children, but looking to make a difference.
- Starting a blog. This can be a fantastic tool to share classroom updates and involve parents throughout the year. Public or private, your blog can become the place where you discuss study activities, your personal philosophy on teaching, field trips, and more. In other words, providing a common platform for the parents and other family members to know about what is going on in the educational field is key in getting them to participate in their children's education.

2. Organize parent-teacher workshops where you can discuss homework, tests, and study skills. Make these events fun and unique: turn “Mother’s Day” and “Father’s Day” into an opportunity to celebrate matriarchs and patriarchs and how they can respectively make a difference in their child’s progress.

3. Educate parents about the differences in how children learn, study, are motivated, and prepare for testing. Inform parents of curriculum goals for each subject. Advise parents about how they can help students meet individual expectations, and develop skills and habits that promote lifelong learning. Involve parents in setting school and student

goals, and in planning for higher education and careers. Clearly indicate what classes are necessary for high school graduation (Riley, 2004). In other words, there is a need to detail how parents should be involved and revise them on a case-by-case basis depending on the student's progress.

4. Provide parenting support. School staff can build parents' leadership, decision-making, and parenting skills to support the development of the educational needs of the students and behaviours among students and help build a healthy home and school environment. If school staff can enlist parents to lead and organize these educational opportunities, other parents are more likely to be receptive and willing to participate. In addition, the school that provides these opportunities and services to parents might get them engaged in other school activities.

5. Host Parent-Teacher Conferences. Parent-teacher conferences are great ways to keep parents tuned to the pulse of their children's education. Not only will parents find out where their kids are excelling, but they'll also learn about areas in need of improvement.

At the same time, parents get to develop personal relationships with their kids' teachers, which gives them a better understanding of the people who are playing important roles in their children's lives.

6. Focus all communication on the student's engagement at school and progress in learning. Mentors maintain a focus on what the student needs in order to have the best school experience each year. Mentors engage with parents to improve the student's educational performance – never to judge or fix the family. Mentors use a realistic (describe the student's actual level of performance) but optimistic (describe what is possible with intervention support) message. For example, the mentor may say: "Appiah is currently on track to receive 3 Ds, 2 Cs, and 1 B this semester".

Ds means barely passing and barely learning the course content; therefore, these grades will not help his future plans. Her performance in those 3 classes could improve if we implement an intervention. Would you talk with us about the best strategy? I was thinking we might want to discuss encouraging homework completion, providing tutorial assistance, or setting other academic goals.”

7. Suggest enrichment activities. This will help parents build constructive relationships with their children as well. Some good ideas include fun, family trips to the library, age-appropriate museum exhibitions, and theatrical plays.

8. Establish a parent/family resource center including information on parenting, child development, and support service. (Riley, 2004).

9. Foster a climate demonstrating that parental involvement is valued. Invite families to participate through welcome signs, friendly staff, open houses, school directories, and displays. Provide staff development on effective and regular communication between the school and family.

10. Publish helpful content on social channels. Is school closed today because of last night's blizzard? What is on the agenda of the Board of Education meeting tomorrow night? Has the district hired a new high school principal yet?

These are just some of the questions you can answer on your district's social channels in order to increase parent engagement.

11. Help parents find a balance that works for their children. Provide information and ideas about how to best assist with homework and other curriculum-related activities. Encourage reading at home by creating a custom reading list based on the child's personality, interest, and level.

5.2: School Activities that Parents can Participate in

- **Sports and Games:** Sports bring people together. It does, though it doesn't happen by magic. When used with people and clear intent for positive outcomes, it can truly make a difference to individuals and communities. Parent support schools' sporting activities by donating sports equipment such as football, jerseys, table tennis balls to the schools. Parents are also invited to watch sporting events and games. In doing so, the schools and the parents see themselves as partners in the development of the schools.

- **Open Days:** A schools' open day is organized in order for parents and guardians to have a peek into the academic, behavioural and social world of their children/wards. It also serves as a very good medium for prospective parents and pupils to choose a suitable school from the numerous schools available. Parents get to know the general running of the school and the calibre of teachers that work there as well as the quality of learning. It clearly exposes the values and culture of the school. As education is the best legacy that you can ever leave for your child, and not education but quality one, it follows that your child's school affairs should be handled with all seriousness. Your presence and full participation at your child's open day and that of the members of the community is vital to appreciating his/her academic strengths and weaknesses. Parents' presence has psychological effect on the child. The child feels loved with accompanied sense of belongingness and pride. A typical open day takes 5 hours if properly done.

- **Speech and Prize-Giving Days:** This is a ceremony where prizes are awarded to people who have produced a very high standard of work. Prize-giving motivates learners. Rewarding students for their hard work has been described as important aspect of creating competitive spirit among students. Competition is important as it encourages every student to do their best to stand out during prize-giving ceremony. It happens when schools want to celebrate their successes. Medals/books are awarded to deserving students. Parents do attend such ceremonies and exhibitions and appreciate the work being done by the pupils and teachers.

- **4: Parent Teacher Association Meetings:** Parents meet regularly to discuss school issues in most public schools in Ghana. The meetings give you a good opportunity to talk with other parents and to work together to improve the school as well as the chance to voice your hopes and concerns for your child and the school. It is an effective way for both parents as well as teachers to discuss how the child has been doing in the school. This includes how he/she is learning, actively participating in activities, his/her physical, mental, and emotional development. Parent Teacher Association meeting usually happens once or twice in a year. If you cannot join the meeting in person, you may do so virtually or ask for the notes to be e-mailed to you.

- **5: Volunteer in the School:** Some schools may allow volunteers to help them during field trips or cultural activities, help in the classrooms or run a school event. You can volunteer to translate newsletters into other languages, make phone calls to let others know about school related activities or work on materials for the school. You can also teach songs, rhymes, poems and in some cases serve as a resource person by giving lectures on health-related issues.

- **6.Attend back to school or other orientation events:** At such events, parents get to know their children’s teachers at the beginning of the school year and start building relationship. Teachers use this opportunity to explain the goals of the class and the child. Orientation events provide parents an opportunity to experience and understand the world their children explore in the school. These events are also a great way to meet other families.

5. 3: Importance of parents' participation in school activities

- The importance of working cooperatively with parents and families cannot be overlooked in quality programs for young children. This idea is embraced by educators and lawmakers at all levels. Research continues to support the importance of parents' involvement in the success of children in school (Marcon 1999, McWayne et al. 2004). Even parents who participate infrequently in school activities can make a big difference in their children's academic lives compared to those who do not participate at all (Hampton & Mumford, 1998).

1. When there is good communication between parents and teachers, absenteeism decreases and there is the likelihood that the child may not drop out of school.

2. Infants have emotional feelings, social feelings, individual needs and various interests which they cannot express verbally. Since it is hard for the infant teacher to capture their complex social and emotional needs, it is necessary to involve parents who will be able to provide rich information about their children to the teacher

3. It helps both teachers and parents build good relationship so that parents can have better understanding of the teacher's job and curriculum

4. It helps teachers acquire a better understanding of families' culture, diversity and form deeper respect for parents' ability and time.

5. When students feel supported at home and school, they develop more positive attitudes about school, have more self-confidence and place higher priority on academic achievement. Children of involved parents are more likely to feel that they are accepted, included, and respected at school.

6. Parental involvement improves teacher performance. When parents have better communication with teachers, they learn to value the work and the challenges that teachers face which make the teachers appreciated. It also helps the teachers to get to know the students more, allowing them to teach in a more personalised and effective way.

7. It helps improve student behaviour in the classroom. Having parents and teacher communicate more helps students feel more motivated in their classes; their self-esteem and attitudes in class improves.

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8. Academic performance increases. Aspects of the curriculum such as comprehension and reading fluency improve when there is parental involvement. Students feel more motivated to learn and the grades improve. Teacher's work is also appreciated.

5.4: School activities that community can participate in

1. Invite local professionals to discuss issues with students: Posing a hypothetical problem to children can get them to think critically for a moment, but presenting an actual problem in their community that relates to your curriculum can really intrigue them. Invite a few local professionals to come into your class so children can ask them what they know about the issue and how they've tried to solve it. Studying what a carbon footprint is and why it matters? Why not bring in a local scientist and someone from the local waste management facility to discuss your community's waste issues? Together, children and professionals can discuss ideas, incentives and ways to spread awareness. Children can then create a proposal detailing a new course of action that they think should be tried and why, or they can create an informational pamphlet to spread awareness in their neighbourhood.

2. Invite professionals to lead workshops: Inviting local professionals to share a bit of their knowledge and experience shows learners how their lessons have real-world uses. Ask a retired lawyer to talk about how to build a strong argument, invite a journalist to talk about reliable sources and how to spot fake news, or bring a farmer or gardener in to talk about pesticides and organic produce. Students can prepare questions, engage in hands-on activities with the professional, and come away feeling excited about the experience they've had while still learning all of the required material. It also shows them there are adults in their community who are eager to help them and hear their ideas and questions.

3. School Programs: This includes helping out on non-credit extracurricular activities such as student governance, organizing school activities (i.e., sports, art, drama or music productions), assisting in school activities (i.e., ushering, parent's night).

5.5: Importance of Community Participation in School Activities

1. Strong, sustained community participation in the management of school can enhance transparency and accountability in the educational system and promote a sense of ownership, agency and responsibility for positive change.
2. To keep track of the needs of the school and that of the teachers and ensuring that such needs are met. Needs such as teaching and learning materials, furniture, library, computer and sporting equipment.
3. Community participation gives students great experience in terms of helping others, building strong character and mental habits as well as developing relations between students, teachers, community members and other organizations.

4. Helps in infrastructural development of the school. The community provides school infrastructure where there is none or increase the number of educational infrastructures so as to solve the problem of overcrowding in the classrooms. Communal labour and local resources are usually mobilized for the construction of classroom blocks, library, toilets, urinary pits, ICT centres for schools. Communities are able to diagnose local problems, identify priorities, develop action plans and execute them.

5. Volunteerism is one of the most common and popular ways to encourage community involvement in schools. Local businesses, civic organizations, charities, non-profit foundations and other groups in your community may help the school as volunteers to come before, during or after the school day. Volunteering comes in various forms. Invite local leaders and individuals in the community to visit classes and speak about their chosen profession for Career Day. Encourage community members to get involved by volunteering with enrichment opportunities before and after schools such as tutoring, and helping in field trips.

5.6: Ways by which Parents can Participate in the Education of their Children

1. Attend back to school or other orientation events: At such events, parents get to know their children's teachers at the beginning of the school year and start building relationship. Teachers use this opportunity to explain the goals of the class and the child. Orientation events provide parents an opportunity to experience and understand the world their children explore in the school. These events are also a great way to meet other families.

2. Communicate with Teachers: Parent-teacher communication can take place in person, typically through parent-teacher conferences, or during student drop-off or pick up times. Parents can also make phone calls, e-mails, or texts to teachers. These are some of the ways to get up-to-date progress on your ward. These are also some ways to communicate problems and challenges facing you. One should not be afraid to speak up if a need to do so arises. The more parents and teachers talk to each other, work with one another, and remember that the child is the focus, the more successful that child will be. When parents communicate with teachers to discover their children's needs, students see that their family wants them to succeed in school

3. Demonstrate a Positive view of Education at Home: Parental school involvement does not only occur inside the schools. It is also about communicating your larger values and attitudes regarding education and the hopes, dreams, aspirations, and expectations you hold for your children. Communicating cherished values motivates young people to be persistent when faced with challenging educational tasks.

4. Help Manage the Homework Process: Let children know that you think education is important and that homework is a priority. Do not do your child's homework for him. Set aside a special place (well-lit quiet room) for the child to study and establish regular time for homework. Ask about daily assignments and monitor their work. Help your child to develop time management and organizational skills. Help your children develop love for reading. Show them the importance of lifelong learning by reading books on your own. You may read same books with them and discuss the book together afterwards. You can also read to them during bedtimes. Encourage healthy eating, sleep and exercise to keep your children focused and prepared for work. Help your child to stay organised. Praise efforts when necessary.

5. Attend Parent Teacher Association Meetings: Parents meet regularly to discuss school issues in most public schools in Ghana. The meetings give you a good opportunity to talk with other parents and to work together to improve the school as well as the chance to voice your hopes and concerns for your child and the school. It is an effective way for both parents as well as teachers to discuss how the child has been doing in the school. This includes how he/she is learning, actively participating in activities, his/her physical, mental, and emotional development. Parent Teacher Association meeting usually happens once or twice in a year. If you cannot join the meeting in person, you may do so virtually or ask for the notes to be e-mailed to you

6. Volunteering opportunities: This gives parents the chance to transition from spectator to active participant in the school and their child's education. It can also give them a greater understanding of what their child does on daily basis and what challenges he or she may face. Some schools may allow volunteers to help them during field trips or cultural activities, help in the classrooms or run a school event. Parents may be given the chance to be involved in an art exhibition in school or help to take care of children that are considered to be below average. You can volunteer to translate newsletters into other languages, make phone calls to let others know about school related activities or work on materials for school events.

7. Give them good news: A note from school should not be a dread for parents, so make sure you regularly feedback good news and once in a while worries or concerns. Communicating with parents on a regular basis is a way of letting the parents in on what is happening in the child's life in school. Giving parents good news makes them feel good that maybe the little effort they are putting into their child's life is yielding results and therefore they will like to do more. When you keep giving the parents good news about the child then they will be interested in the affairs of the child but then you keep giving them bad news, some of the parents will not want to know what happens in their child's life. Little things like letting the parent know that his child was able to read a sentence without making a mistake will let the parent know his child is capable and will therefore want to help his child achieve his next milestone that might be reading a whole paragraph without any mistakes.

8. Use social media platforms: social media is one of the blessings of this technological age. Looking at the way things have evolved over the last couple of years, using social media platforms are very important to help parents know what is happening in the lives of their children. Some parents are very busy and might not have the time to attend workshops during the day but with the help of social media parents will still be able to know what is

9. Tackle language barrier: There are some parents who don't speak English language and therefore find it difficult to interact with teachers and may end up feeling separated from their child's school life. Communication is very important if you want to keep any relationship going so once there is a communication barrier then the relationship is going to suffer. In order to deal with this problem, some schools run literacy sessions to help parents who fall under this category or use other parents and colleagues as interpreters. This boosts such parent's morale and they want to get involved in their child's life because they understand what is going on now and no longer feel left out. Imagine a school where the only language spoken is English and a parent comes for a PTA meeting or is interacting with his child's class teacher and the only language being spoken is English. That parent will definitely feel out of place and will find it difficult getting involved in the child's academic life but once the person gets someone to interpret what is being said then things will change. Now the parent will be able to understand what is being said and what is going on around him which will now make him want to get involved in the child's life.

10. Invite parents to learn more about you, your staff and how your child care operates: The school has to be one that is inviting and welcoming. The individuals in the school need to be warm and friendly to make parents feel comfortable to be in the school. The school is the second home of the child and indirectly, teachers play a surrogate role in the school. It becomes a key assignment for the school authorities to facilitate programs that will draw and portray the school's mission and vision for the child. Invite parents to Sporting events, Open Days, Speech Days, Social programs. Parents become well informed of the school activities and the way forward for their wards which helps to create connection between the school and the parent. Your involvement in school-wide events, even when your child is not directly involved helps build a community at large. You will meet other members of the school community and show support for all children.

5.7: Activities Teachers can Participate in the Community

•As a teacher you are expected to help the community to progress. You are expected to participate and get involved in community affairs for the enrichment of living standards. You are expected to engage in the following activities:

- 1. Religious activities:** Church work if the school happens to belong to a Religious Organization like the Presbyterian Church, Anglican Church, Catholic Church. You need to be a member of the church choir, singing band, bible class, Christian Youth Builders.
- 2. Voluntary work:** Voluntary work like helping in clean up exercises, tree planting, weeding around source of water supply or any communal labour. The teachers' participation /presence serves as a morale booster not only to the people but also to the pupils. The pupils feel that they too can help in the communal work and should not look down upon it.

3. Celebration of Festivals: Celebration of festivals such as Hogbetsotso, fetu Afahye, Damba, can be actively participated in by teachers. It is only then that pupils will listen attentively when teachers talk/teach cultural enrichment activities.

4. Political education: They may engage in political education in the community. They may talk about democracy, rule of law, human rights and citizenship. This political education makes it possible for the community members to behave according to the dictates of the law and to bring peace and order into the society.

5.8: Conducting Home Visits

- Home visits are still an important means of establishing solid parent-teacher relationships thus, one of the best ways to get acquainted with parents and families is to take time to go out and meet with families in their homes. Some parents are much more comfortable in their own homes than at school. The teacher sets up an appointment, plans an agenda, and travels to the parents' home to meet and talk with the family. Home visits have been shown to be highly effective in teaching parents the skills that they can use in working with their children and for conducting parent-teacher conferences. Perhaps the best way, however, for teachers to get the most from home visits is to use them to get better acquainted with children and their families. The information gained about the child, the parents and the home environment are worth the investment of time and energy.

- Many preschool teachers attempt to have home visits with the family before the school year actually begins. In this way, the child and the teacher can get to know each other individually before having to relate to each other in a group setting. These getting-acquainted visits typically last thirty to forty-five minutes and may include a variety of activities. Some teachers take a book or a simple activity with them to break the ice with the children who will be coming into their classrooms. Young children frequently want to lead the teacher on a tour around the house and show off their bedrooms and favourite playthings. Home visits are an ideal time to share casually with parents a little bit about yourself as a person and what you hope to accomplish during the year as a teacher. Sharing in this way often encourages parents to open up to you about their lives as well. Refreshments, casual conversation, and an opportunity to get a feel for home life are other common elements of a getting-acquainted. If you choose to make home visits, consider the following suggestions (Barbour & Barbour, 1997; Gestwicki, 2000):

- It is essential that you make an appointment with parents ahead of time and explain to them the purpose of the visit. Assure parents that they do not need to make any special preparation for your visit.
- Establish a time frame for the visit (typically thirty to forty-five minutes) so that parents know what to expect. Arrive and leave on time.
- Think carefully about what you will wear on the home visit. Remember that first impressions are important and that you want to appear professional but still approachable by parents.

- Be a gracious guest. If parents offer you something to eat or drink, accept it politely. Respect the parents and the home.
- Do not make snap judgement about the home environment. If the physical surroundings do not match your image of a home, do not conclude that the home is not a good environment for the child.
- Be prepared to talk about the programme and your plan for the children in an informal manner. Listen, ask questions and listen.

- Avoid note taking during the home visit itself. Parents generally feel anxious when you do. Drive a few metres away after the home visit, and then stop to make any needed notes about things you wanted to remember.
- Teachers would like to take something along when they visit- materials for making a nametag for the child, a camera for photo-taking the child, a photograph album of activities from the previous year, a puppet, a book or paper and crayons for drawing. Taking something can provide openings for sharing information and opportunities for observation (Johnston & Mermun,1995).

- It is also helpful for teachers to make an information sheet for the parents that gives his name and phone number; a school calendar with holidays and special events marked, a list of rules for celebrating birthdays and for bringing objects to share at school.
- During a home visit, the headteacher may want to discuss the special needs and interests of the child, any allergies or health problems that the teacher needs to be aware of and the expectations the parents have for the child in the programme. Parents may also want to know about the teacher's background, training, and experience. She should be prepared to discuss the programme, how decisions are made about what to study, and how he/she plans to deal with discipline problems.

- It is important that all parents understand how much they teach their children and how important they are in their children's education. Holmn, Banbt and Weikart (1979) suggest that teachers help parents realise that “..... Parenting is teaching, they already know a lot about child development in general and about their own children in particular, and ... teachers are not purveyors of knowledge but rather people who wish to support and extend the learning that is already going on at home” (p.20).

- If it becomes impossible for the parents to come to school and the teacher also cannot visit them at home, it behoves on the teacher to try to meet the family at a park, library or other public place. Meeting on neutral ground may help the parents feel more comfortable. If such a plan is not possible, then the teacher should try to contact the parents on phone or by letter to share the information. The teacher should make her contacts with them nonthreatening and non-judgemental. It is vital that the teacher continues to reassure parents that she is interested in their child and will welcome their questions.
- A real partnership between schools and families is possible only if both truly believe that the other has something valuable to bring to the relationship, that the common goal is the welfare of the child, and that there is a sense of shared responsibility (Workman & Gage, 1997).

5.9: Parent Meetings

- Getting together with parents in group settings is yet another possible communication strategy to be considered (Foster, 1994). A number of meeting types are useful. Some gatherings could simply be social times, when you have a chance to get to know the parents and help them meet other families in the class. The traditional casual visitors to a family fun day are examples of this meeting type. Many parent meetings are designed to be educational and focus on a topic of interest and importance to a large number of parents. “Helping Prepare Children for Reading” might be one topic that would interest a variety of parents.

Some additional parent meetings are needed to be organised for a specific task or to deal with the management of the school. These business meetings can frequently be dull and uninspiring, so it may be best to try to combine this task with another more fun event. Finally, some parent meetings provide an opportunity for child performances. While not appropriate for the preschool and toddler years, a musical program or the presentation of a play can be a very enjoyable experience for primary children and their families. Essentially, parent meetings should provide information, create awareness, or teach parents about children's development, parenting issues and the early childhood programme.

- Meetings also allow parents and teachers to socialize in a relaxed atmosphere. If you plan on incorporating parent meetings into your collection of communication tools, be sure to plan carefully for them. Make sure the meeting topics are of interest to parents. A simple questionnaire can be used to determine what parents want and need for their group gatherings. Plan a variety of interesting activities that actively involve parents in discussion and learning. Have a planned agenda organized to keep events moving along smoothly. This careful planning will pay big involvement in your meetings. Some topics for parent meetings are suggested here:

- 1. Building self-concept:** This is to give parents information on the importance of children's self-concept and to give examples of ways to foster positive self-concept.
- 2. Siblings Rivalry:** This is to offer potential guidelines and real-life examples for fostering co-operative sibling relationships.
- 3. Health Issues:** This is to have relevant discussion on health issues led by a medical professional. These could include upper respiratory infections, ear infections, hepatitis A virus, chicken pox, measles etc.

4. Creativity: This is to explain the development of creativity and to suggest activities that could enhance self-expression, imagination, invention and exploration.

5. Discipline: This is to explain methods of discipline and guidance and to discuss methods of preventing inappropriate behaviours and using praise, logical consequences and conflict resolutions.

6. Communication: This is to teach effective listening, explain the importance of determining the child's feelings and meanings and to respond to the child by giving open-ended responses (Berger 1991).

7. Nutrition for children: To provide helpful hints about nutrition for children with a nutritionist or dietitian as guest speaker. Recipes for nutritious foods that children enjoy at the centre can be shared with parents.

8. Story telling: To give suggestions to parents on effective ways to use storytelling to benefit children.

9. Transition to school: To help parents consider relevant issues and develop strategies for assisting children in the transition from childcare to kindergarten- primary.

- These topics should be discussed and meetings should be planned using a variety of formats and methods. Roundtable discussions, buzz sessions, workshops, classrooms observations and field trips can be used to vary the method of providing information to parents (Berger 1991). Be prepared to evaluate your parent meetings by one or more methods. Elicit verbal feedback or written comments and use this information to plan subsequent meetings.

5.10: Parent- Teacher Conferences

- One of the most common communication tools used in early childhood classrooms/centres is the parent- teacher conference (Gestwicki, 2000). It is an excellent way to give and receive information about a child. Most schools expect teachers to have conference with parents at least once each academic year and more commonly twice. A typical pattern is to have conferences fairly early in the term and towards the end of the term. In many early childhood settings, schools will set aside one or two regular school days and additional afternoon times for conferencing.

- Parent-teacher conferences have many strengths as a communication tool. An important benefit of the conference situation is that it brings parents into the classroom/to the centre. For some, this may be the only time they enter the school. When done well, the conference builds positive rapport with parents as the teacher and parent discuss the child's strengths, progress, and possible areas for improvement. Conferences allow for far greater detail to be shared about the child's progress than either a report card or written report can. In addition, when the conference is held in the classroom, the parent can actually see projects the child has completed and get a better sense for the learning experiences occurring there.

- Although most parent-teacher conferences are pleasant and enjoyable for both the parent and teacher. Occasionally issues raised require the teacher to demonstrate quick thinking and tact to avoid possible problems (Koch & McDonough, 1999). The following purely hypothetical excerpt from a conference situation highlights this issue:

- As Anita's teacher, you want to understand Margaret's (Anita's mum) concerns and work effectively with her while also helping her see the good things Anita does in your classroom. It is not an easy task.

- Think about how you might respond to this parent. Another major consideration for the parent-teacher conference is whether or not to include the child in the event (Taylor, 1999). This is often referred to as a three-way conference and has both strengths and problems. When children are involved, their anxiety over what is being discussed is eliminated. They can also share their perspectives on the conference issues and, along with the parent and teacher, can commit to any plans for improvement. Many times, seeing the interaction between parent and child in the three-way conference is also insightful and provides the teacher with important information about family life.

- The three-way conference has potential problems. For example, the teacher or parent may be less comfortable when the child is present. Each may wish to share information about family life or classroom interactions that is just not appropriate or helpful for children to hear. In other instances, the adults may downplay the child's problems when she is present. Adults can also make the child feel that she is an unimportant part of the conference process by talking over and around the child. Some argue that another potential problem with the three-way conference is that younger children may not understand or be ready to participate in the conference.
- Despite these potential problems, you should consider including the child as you prepare for parent-teacher conferences. With careful preparation, even the youngest children can benefit from participation in at least part of your interactions with parents. Bjorlund and Burger (1987) suggest the following guidelines for the parent conference.

- **Advance Preparation:** Communication with parents is an ongoing process. Establishing relationships through daily contacts with parents is vital toward preparation of the conference. Knowing the parents very well will assist you in anticipating the parents' approach to the conference. There is the need to provide concrete information about the goals for the conference to consider before you meet. Set a convenient date and time for the conference. Prepare, organise and review all written materials necessary to conduct the conference efficiently and productively.
- **Setting the Stage:** Create a comfortable, non-threatening climate for the meeting. Ensure privacy. A brief review of the conference agenda should be provided.

3. Talking to parents: During the conference, you should try to:

- Help parents feel relaxed, comfortable and welcome.
- Communicate with parent at their level. Avoid educational jargons.
- Emphasize the positive attributes of the child.
- Provide specific ways the curriculum will address individual needs and activities for their child/children and suggest activities the parents can do at home.
- Ask open ended questions to elicit parents' opinion and ideas
- Be an active listener. Encourage information sharing. Active listening requires you to pay attention to the stated and implied feelings of parents to enable you respond in a reflective manner that promotes further communication.

1. Content: During the conference, be sure to talk about developmental assessment information. Development assessment information is about the child's growth and development.

- Teachers should share information about the child's daily experiences. Parents should also be encouraged to share children's development and participation in the programme.

1. Ending the conference: Summarise major points and goals, agree on a plan action and a follow up plan if needed. Always ask whether there are questions or concerns and thank the parents for coming.

LECTURE 6

• UNIT 6: PROMOTING ATTITUDE CHANGE AMONG TEACHERS, PARENTS AND FAMILIES

- a. Attitude
- b. Nature of Attitude
- c. Culturally sensitive issues in parental attitudes
- d. Strategies for changing parental and communal attitudes towards children
- e. Strengthening collaboration

- **6.1: Attitude**

- Zimbardo and Leippe (1991) defined attitude as: An evaluative disposition toward some object based upon cognitions, affective reactions, behavioural intentions, and past behaviours ... that can influence cognitions, affective responses, and future intentions and behaviours.

- An attitude is a positive, negative, or mixed evaluation of an object that is expressed at some level of intensity. Our attitude can vary in strength along both positive *affect*, and with negative *affect*, with ambivalence or with apathy and indifference. It usually implies feelings that are either positive or negative.

- Attitudes are directly observable or measurable. They are inferred by one's reaction to stimuli (Dawes,1972). Attitudes are simply responses and are formed by environmental interactions (Goodnow, 1985)

- **6.2: Nature of Attitude**

- Attitudes are a complex combination of things we tend to call personality, beliefs, values, behaviors, and motivation.
- An attitude refers to a set of emotions, beliefs and behaviors towards a particular object, person, thing or event.
- Attitude provides us with internal cognitions or beliefs and thoughts about people and objects.
- Attitude cause us to behave in a particular way towards a particular object or person.
- An attitude exists in every person's mind. It helps to define our identity, guide our actions, and influence how we judge people.

- Although the feeling and belief components of attitude are internal to a person, we can view a person's attitude from his or her resulting behaviour.
- Attitude helps us define how we see situations, as well as define how we behave toward the situation or object.
- Attitudes are often the result of experience or upbringing, and they can have a powerful influence over behavior.
- An attitude exists in every person's mind. It helps to define our identity, guide our actions, and influence how we judge people

- Although the feeling and belief components of attitudes are internal to a person, we can view a person's attitude from his or her resulting behavior.
- Attitude helps us define how we see situations or objects. Attitude provides us with internal cognitions or beliefs and thoughts about people and objects.
- Attitude cause us to behave in a particular way towards and object or person.

*Attitudes are the feelings and beliefs that largely determine how employees will perceive their environment, commit themselves to intended actions and ultimately behave.

*While attitudes are enduring, they can also change

Characteristics of attitude

- **Affective Cognitive consistency:** The degree of consistency between the affective and cognitive components influences the attitude behavior relationship. That is, the greater the consistency between cognition and evaluation, the greater the strength of the attitude-behaviour relation.
- **Strength:** Attitudes based on direct experience with the object may be held with greater certainty. Certainty is also influenced by whether affect or cognition was involved in the creation of the attitude. Attitudes formed based on affect are more certain than attitudes based on cognition

- **Valence:** It refers to the degree or grade of likeliness or unlikeliness toward the entity/incident. If a person is fairly unconcerned toward an object, then his attitude has low valence.
- **Direct Experience:** An attitude is a summary of a person's past experience; thus, an attitude is grounded in direct experience predicts future behavior more accurately. Moreover, direct experience makes more information available about the object itself.

- . **Multiplicity:** It refers to the amount of features creating the attitude. For example, one may show interest in becoming a doctor, but another not only shows interest, but also works hard, is sincere, and serious.
- . **Relation to Needs:** Attitudes vary in relative to requirements they serve. Attitudes of an individual toward the pictures serve only entertainment needs, but attitudes of an employee toward task may serve strong needs for security, achievement, recognition, and satisfaction.

Types of Attitudes

- **Positive Attitude:**
- This is one type of attitude in organizational behaviour. One needs to understand how much a positive attitude it takes to keep the work moving and progressing. It means that keeping a positive mind-set and thinking about the greater good, no matter whatever the circumstances are. A positive attitude has many benefits which affect out other kinds of behaviour in a good way. For example, a person who has a positive attitude and mind-set will look for the good in other person's no matter how bad they behave or how bad is their attitude. The former person thinks about the greater good and that is why he is called a person with a positive attitude. They nurture their skills daily and overcome almost anything and everything that comes in their way. If you have a positive attitude, then you should have some list of attitudes,

- Confidence
- Happiness
- Sincerity
- Determination

- **Negative Attitude:**

- A negative attitude is something that every person should avoid. Generally, people with negative attitude ignore the good things in life and only think about whether they will fail. They often find a way out of tough situations by running away from it. They often compare themselves with other persons and find the bad in them only. In short, he is exactly the opposite of the one with a positive mind-set. There are certain bad effects that a person with a negative mind-set has to face. Anger, doubt and frustration are signs of negative attitude.

- **Neutral Attitude:**

- This is another type of attitude that is common. That mind-set is a neutral one. There is no doubt. Neither is there any kind of hope. The people generally tend to ignore the problems in life. They wait for some other individual to take care of their problems. They generally have a lazy life and they are often unemotional. It is as if they don't think about anything that much and doesn't care for the same as well. They never feel the need to change themselves as they can simply live with the way they are.

- He or she will feel disconnected quite often and that is why having a neutral attitude is very bad and should be fixed as soon as possible. However, a person with neutral attitude if changes can only go to the path of a positive attitude. In most cases, it has been seen that the attitude adjustment mental therapies have led persons to a road filled with positive feelings only.

- **Sikken Attitude**

- One of the most dangerous types of attitude and different is the Sikken attitude. The Sikken attitude has the calibre to destroy every image that comes in connection with a positive image. This type of attitude is more of a negative attitude and is very destructive. It often reflects the mind's negativity. It is necessary to let go off this kind of attitude for the betterment of the self and the people around you. They are often difficult to be mended because the attitude is deep-rooted within one's personality. However, with time, it nevertheless is possible to change the course of direction of this attitude.

- To conclude, Attitude will either define you or destroy you. What generally follows is, your attitude will be an inspiration for many in your team. Therefore, companies look for people with a positive attitude. People in general seem to stick around the positive vibration, as that will motivate them enough to progress in life. Bad or good, attitude has the power to change people's thoughts and therefore, their behaviour. Be an example of a good one.

Importance of Attitude in an Organization

- A positive attitude in the workplace helps employees to accomplish tasks faster and in a better manner. The performance of employees to a great extent depends on the good relationship they share with their colleagues.

- **Productivity**

- With a positive attitude, employees tend to take more interest in what they do and deliver. Consequently, they produce better quality work with minimum errors. This improves their overall output as well as productivity.

- **Team work**

- Good relationships among employees help them to build effective teams where all the members are united and work for a common cause. A positive attitude helps employees to appreciate each other 's competencies and work as a team for achieving common objectives instead of being overly perturbed by inadequacies of team members.

- **Decision making**

- Having a positive attitude helps employees to take better decisions, in an objective manner. It triggers a healthy thought process, enabling employees to choose wisely and logically.

- **Motivation**

- Having a positive attitude helps in motivating employees to overcome obstacles that they may face during the course of their job. It also determines the way they see the world around them. The moment they are successful in overcoming obstacles; they are motivated to move forward.

- **Leadership**

- Working in an organization is all about managing a diverse workforce. Some employees earn respect easily and people often follow and listen to them. This is possible through the positive attitude demonstrated by leaders.

6.3: Culturally Sensitive Issues in Parental Attitude

- Sensitivity or responsive parenting refers to family interactions in which parents are aware of their children's emotional and physical needs and respond appropriately and consistently. Sensitive parents are 'in tune' with their children. Sensitive, responsive parents make their children feel safe. They make kids less suspicious of other people, and therefore more relaxed. Secure, relaxed children experience fewer spikes of cortisol, and when they do get stressed, they recover more quickly. Pre-schoolers develop better problem-solving ability, attention skills, and school readiness when their parents are sensitive and responsive (Landry et al 2003). Sensitive, responsive parenting is linked with better cognitive outcomes for children. Culture influences some parenting cognitions and practices and, in turn, child mental health from very

early age, through such pervasive factors as what parents expect of children, when and how parents care for their children, and which behaviours parents appreciate, emphasize, and reward. The unique cultural influences children respond to from birth including customs, and beliefs around food, artistic expression, language, and religion affect the way they develop emotionally, socially, physically, and linguistically. Cultural norms about parenting practices typically influence how children are raised. These norms affect what beliefs and values parents teach their children, what behaviours are considered appropriate, and the methods used to teach to teach these values and behaviours.

- People from different cultures have different relationships with their children. For example, while some cultures expect children to be quiet and always respect their elders, other cultures rather encourage children to speak up and be independent. The cultural beliefs of individual family members and the entire family inform decisions made about the child and the family. Cultures shape our views on key issues such as family roles and goals, caregiving practices, learning, education, school readiness, child behaviours, and the nature of childhood itself.

- Parents have been implicated as the principal causal agents in their child's behavioural, personality, emotional, and cognitive development (Holden & Edwards, 1989). Parental attitudes are derived from many sources and are maintained through experience. Attitudes are learned behaviours and are formed on the basis of parental beliefs. Parents' attitudes toward parenting are a product of their knowledge of parenting and the values and goals (or expectations) they have for their children's development, which in turn are informed by cultural, social, and societal images, as well as parents' experiences and their overall values and goals. Attitudes are shaped in part by parenting self-efficacy—a parent's perceived ability to influence the development of his or her child.

Parent's attitude towards the adult and siblings in the family contribute significantly to various components of the personality of the child particularly in improving his/her academic performance

The pivotal role of parent's attitude still continues as it has been recognized by the teachers and parents who are essential for the complete development of the personality and career of their children. Gonzalez Pienda, et al. (2002) indicated that "Without parent's support, it is hard for teachers to devise academic experiences in helping students learn meaningful content". In home settings, the learning processes occur explicitly or consciously often in an informal way. Parents teach and train children early in their entire lives, the fundamental skills, attitudes and values necessary for day-to-day living (UNESCO, 1992).

- The attitude of parents is inevitable for the betterment of student's life and their academic. One of the educational settings and parent's positive attitudes towards a child's education is in determining school attendance and academic achievement of the child. Parents' favourable attitude towards schooling and education enhances parents' involvement in children's present and future studies. Parents' attitude towards their children's education is affected adversely by low Socio-Economic Status (SES) of the family.

6.4: Strategies for Changing Parental and Communal Attitudes towards Children

- An appropriate attitude of parents toward their children's flourishing is therefore characterized by an attitude of hope, accompanied by reasonable expectations when dealing with less ultimate goals of which one can oversee the expected outcome. Parents do indeed have attitudes about certain child rearing practices and these attitudes are handed down to their children, one can only speculate about the possibilities of encouraging attitude changes. Hereford (1963) believed that changing parental attitudes could be done through group discussion. Through this attitude change, it is possible that a behavioral adjustment or change will be undoubtedly follow. Hereford (1963) determined that a parent should be directed to grow in his own way that seems appropriate for him and his child.

- A parent's goal should be to help the child develop his potentials and in doing so find the behaviours, values, and attitudes that are most effective and rewarding for the family. It is believed that through participation and personal involvement that the participating parents realized that they had to become ego-involved and self-invested. By listening and interacting with other parents, parents attitudes could be adjusted, if not changed.

- **Strengthening Collaboration**

- Collaboration is the process of two or more people in organizations working together to complete a task or achieve a goal. It is also defined as two or more people working together to achieve shared goals. Collaboration is a working practice whereby individuals work together for a common purpose to achieve business benefit. Collaboration enables individuals to work together to achieve a defined and common business purpose. Fruitful, effective collaboration requires sensitivity and planning.

- The six essential elements of the collaborative style are as follows;
- Voluntary participation: teachers have the choice to collaborate rather than being administratively assigned into the relationship.
- Parity: all professionals must believe that each individual's contribution is valued and an integral part of the collaborative effort.
- Mutual goals: collaborators must share common, well-defined goals.
- Shared responsibility: all parties share the decision-making responsibilities
- Shared resources: team members contribute and share resources such as time, expertise, space, and equipment.
- Shared accountability for outcomes: collaborators jointly share the results of their decisions, both positive and negative

Strengthening Collaboration Between Schools and Families

- In preparation for an initial meeting, the teacher can take a strength-based approach when thinking about the child's abilities and skills. For example, perhaps a child is not yet reading independently, but can follow print and pay attention to a story when others read aloud.
- Similarly, behavioural observations need to be descriptive and as matter-of-fact and non-judgemental as possible in order to invite collaboration. A statement such as, "He's violent and dangerous" is not only judgmental, but also shuts down positive communication.

- Prior to the meeting itself, the teacher can email, phone or send a note home inviting parents to think about the strengths and preferences of their child.
- Parents need to feel they are prepared for the meeting as well.
- If there are reports that will be discussed, provide a copy to parents prior to the meeting so they are not trying to read and absorb new information while discussing the report at the meeting.

- If there are areas of concern, ensure that parents have been told about these immediately after they occur, so there are no surprises at the meeting. Communicating frequently, honestly and openly develops trust.
- Enquire whether the parents have any concerns they would like to discuss at the meeting. It helps the teacher to have time to check into concerns before the meeting, rather than being surprised by them. Ensuring there are no surprises for parents or teachers helps to build collaboration, and trust.

- Agree on a time for the meeting, and include both a start and a finish time. Both parents and teachers are busy people with other commitments, including their families. If the meeting is not completed within the set time, it is better to meet again on another day rather than disrupting people's schedules.
- If notes are to be taken, let the parents know that a copy of the notes will be provided to them at the end of the meeting to check for accuracy and to ensure everyone has a record of what was decided.
- An inviting way to start any meeting is to do a “round robin” with each person sharing one strength of the child.

- Move from what the child can do to what parents and teachers would like the child to be able to do.
- Finally, talk about how progress will be monitored and what will be indicators of success.
- Parents have an important role to play in supporting this, and providing additional practice and feedback at home. Collaboration ensures that parents know what is expected, and how to support and reinforce their child's learning at home.