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Involvement of Parents and Community: The Need and Importance

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- Learning and development are continuous through life, and especially in young children. Development of young children takes place in different atmospheres such as at home where they are surrounded by their parents, grandparents and other family members.
- Whatever might be the settings, parents play a very important role during these early years of children's lives. A well-coordinated quality partnership between the school and the parents and good communication between both during ECCE and early primary years is very important.
- A positive link must be established between the preschool and the home. Quality partnership system also provides support for expected learning outcomes by our young children which in turn help in smooth transition from preschool to primary classes.

The Need and Importance of Parents and Community Awareness in ECCE

It is not only the parents but other family and community members who share the responsibility of caregiving.

Defining Parent Involvement



- The first one is ‘parents are supporters in their children’s early education and care’ . The second is parents are active partners in their children’s early learning. Involvement of parents in ECCE could be seen as when parents participate in the early education, growth and development of their children from birth.
- They are the primary source of influence in their children’s lives. The early years of a child’s life are the impressionable years. Whatever is said or done to them by caregivers is deeply embedded in them for life.

In order to understand the meaning of parental involvement, we need to understand the following:

- Helping parents to establish a stress-free, harmonious home environment that help children flourish freely and learn without fear.
- Encouraging parents to volunteer and help during cultural programmes in the preschool or accompany the children during a theme-based or project related excursion where additional adult

supervision is required.

- Keeping the communication channels open between home and preschool and encouraging exchanges of children's activities. This two-way communication is essential for children's overall development as it helps to know the children better.
- Finally, involving community means identifying the resources from the community and then utilizing the same to strengthen the preschool programme, family practices and young children's learning.

Parental involvement in a quality ECCE programme helps the community members understand that a child deserves to live in a healthy and happy family environment.

Why We Need Parents and Community Awareness

- Parents should acknowledge that preschool teachers know about their children and their development. Children can only benefit when each partner talks and listens to the other.
- The National Early Childhood Care and Education Policy 2013 recognizes that young children are best cared for in their family environment and thus strengthening family capabilities to care for and protect the child will receive the highest priority.
- Parents of poor families or those belonging to low – income families do not find Early Childhood Education (ECE) necessary for children between the ages of three and six years, for whom it is mainly intended. Most parents who send their children to ECCE centers or preschools have altogether different ideas about the purpose and implications of ECE.
- Children develop in the warmth of their families and communities that are characterized by diversity in family composition, languages spoken, their own religious belief systems and cultural practices. Families serve as the primary context for their children's development.
- Therefore, preschools and Anganwadis comprise a vital context that in turn impacts children's development through quality care and early education as provided in the centers. Resources from parents and the community are essential for creating an emotionally supportive environment in which children develop optimally.