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## **FAMILY READ PARENT WORKSHOPS**

### **Victory Boulevard Elementary School**

### **North Hollywood, California**

Victory Boulevard Elementary School had limited funds to spend on family involvement. As a result, they looked for good programs that were free. Victory Boulevard contacted the community business partner Family Read to help improve the school's Parent Education Program. The school and faculty supported the program by providing space and adult supervision for childcare while parents took classes. The goal of the classes was to increase parents' awareness of ways to strengthen their relationships with their children.

After Victory Boulevard Elementary and Family Read established their partnership, they needed to handle the challenge of providing childcare for participants. Making room for childcare and knowing who would care for the children was difficult, but the Bilingual Coordinator solved the challenge by rotating the classroom aids.

A flyer was created to announce the workshops to parents. The ten-week program met every Wednesday morning from 8:30 to 10:30. Workshop topics included:

- Multicultural Los Angeles
- Typical foods in other countries
- Customs in other countries
- Supporting and celebrating children
- Listening to both sides of a problem
- Looking for teachable values in books, T.V., and other media
- Self esteem
- Relationships

The instructor gave a variety of homework assignments like making a family collage, writing a story, reading a book every week, cutting out recipes from the newspaper, and reading with their child every day for twenty minutes.

Fifteen to twenty parents participated in Family Read Parent Workshops due to limited space. Those who participated felt encouraged and enlightened by the program. The topic of watching too much TV was discussed thoroughly. Some parents were not aware of television's negative effects. In response, a few parents started alternative activities with their children such as

sports in local parks. Other parents discovered how much their children enjoy reading books with them and the importance of reading with their children.

Despite the small number of parents that was able to attend the workshops, other parents learned about the topics by word of mouth before and after school, from neighbors, and by attending classes at the parent center where the topics of Family Read were always shared.

Another school might like to find a community business partner to conduct a similar program. Parent-child relationships can benefit from parenting workshops.

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