
FATHERS MATTER

William Cullen Bryant School Cleveland, Ohio

William Cullen Bryant School partnered with another school to involve fathers and their children in a program offered in the community. Fathers Matter involved monthly woodworking projects for parents and their children at Lowe's Home Improvement. On the last Tuesday of every month from October to May, fathers and their children met at Lowe's from 6:00-7:00 pm to build birdhouses, bird feeders, planters, toolboxes, picture frames, spice racks, and toy trucks. Even though families worked together in a non-academic setting, the projects helped students practice their literacy and math skills in real-world applications.

The family liaisons for both schools met with Lowe's store management. After agreeing to the partnership, the family liaisons created an invitation describing the program to parents. They called parents to manage the number of families attending each month, because a limited number of students from each school could participate. Every month, the liaisons set up a table with school information at Lowe's and helped Lowe's employees clean up after the project. The PTO donated refreshments for the participating parents and their children.

Through Fathers Matter, students worked with their parents on woodworking projects and practiced their literacy and math

skills in the real world. Students were particularly excited because they could use their creations at home. Teachers enjoyed seeing fathers and children working together. Parent comments included: "This workshop gives my children and me a chance to spend quality time together," and "My daughter learned that building projects are fun as well as productive." Based on the positive results, William Cullen Bryant hopes to continue their partnership with Lowe's next year.

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