

**Authors/Autoras:** Kyle, Diane W ([diane@louisville.edu](mailto:diane@louisville.edu)) and McIntyre, Ellen. University of Louisville, U.S.

**Title/Título:** Making family visits as a school-wide effort: Strategies, benefits, and challenges  
Construyendo visitas a domicilio como un esfuerzo de alcance de los centros docentes: Estrategias, beneficios y retos

**Topic:** Strategies and methodologies to promote family-school-community partnership  
Estrategias y metodologías para promover la cooperación entre las familias, los centros docentes y las entidades sociales comunitarias

**Presentation time/Día de presentación:** Session in English. Thursday 15, 4:00-5:30 p.m. Room 2, Third Floor

Sesión en Inglés. Jueves 15, 4:00-5:30 p.m. Sala 2, Tercer Piso

### **Abstract**

When teachers make an effort to reach out and learn from families by making visits to their homes, what insights do they gain? Over time, what results seem to occur in school/family relationships, on parent involvement, and on teaching? A group of 12 teachers from one urban elementary school in a Midwestern state in the United States made a commitment to visit the families of their students during the summer of 2003. Interpretations of findings were based on sociocultural theory, specifically that learners construct understandings based on their cultural histories. Thus, understanding the learner becomes paramount. The teachers aimed at accomplishing several goals through the family visits: to help students feel more at ease about entering their new classrooms, communicate to parents or guardians an interest in learning from them about their child, establish an effective relationship with families that might increase parent involvement during the school year, and gain greater insight from families that could inform their teaching and help support students' academic achievement. The data resulted in several conclusions, including ways of initiating and conducting the visits, how families responded to the visits, new insights gained, the impact on parent involvement and on teaching throughout the year, and the challenges involved in sustaining such work. Although in most cases they made only one visit per child, the teachers felt that they reaped many benefits throughout the year, such as an increase in parent participation at school and deeper understandings about students and their families. These benefits had an impact on the teachers' instruction and, ultimately and most importantly, have potential for helping students achieve.