

# Tracking Attendance Patterns

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I was in charge of collecting data on attendance of the Even Start program. I was to do a prepared evaluation for the National Center which is in Virginia. They have a prepared form, computerized system that you just enter the data in. I looked into how many people participated in the program, how long they stayed, the hours, what field trips they went to and what educational programs they participated in.

I entered them in and developed a system for myself to go about that.

## The program has three components.

One is the Parent-Child attending an **After School Program**. I looked to see how many came regularly. And I found out that there were a handful of families that came regularly with their children.

The second component is a **Parent Club** that takes place on Fridays for mothers, or fathers also if they want to attend. There are only two fathers that usually come. That program consists of a literacy program for parents. It has a fun component to it too. They like to make crafts and things like that.

Not all of the parents that attended the After School program with their children came to the Parent's Club. But the mothers who did come, came regularly.

The third component is **Home Visits**, for parents that could not come to the school all of the time. There would be a person to go to their homes, teach their children and teach them. The ideal number of Home Visits is five, but not all the parents and children participating in the program had five visits.

## Data sheet on After School Program Even Start Child Parent Attendance

It gives you the name of the families, and the number of times they participated. They could participate two days a week, Tuesday and Thursdays. The HV tells you about the Home Visits made to those families. And then there are Field Trips. The number of hours that each family participated in all these programs is added up.

At the National Center they want to know how many hours each family participated during the year.



Students in After School Program working with games.

"We did a variety of games in the summer and After school program. This is a good way to build literacy, you must read rules, follow directions, build strategy, solve problems and several are good for math."

Dr. Elizabeth Landerholm, Project Director

## Data sheet on Parent Club Parent Club Attendance 1997-98

**The same thing is given for the Parent Club.** When compared with the After School Program, not many parents participated in the Parent Club program. It might have been for the reason that they had small children, or some of them worked during the day time. It is on Friday mornings, and the hour might not be very convenient for some parents to come.

I started the program by this being my practicum. I was a graduate student at the time. I talked to Dr. Landerholm that I would like to do something that has a parent component to it. She suggested this program, so I started by just doing my hours to complete my graduate program. Then Dr. Landerholm asked me if I would like to stay on with the program after I finished my degree, and I agreed. And now I would be considered as a Research Assistant or a consultant with Dr. Landerholm on this project.

One thing that really impressed me when I was attending the Parent Club and some of the After School Programs, was that these parents were really making an effort. It was sometimes obvious to me that some times they did not really feel comfortable being there. But they were trying hard. And I would see grandmas coming in. They are older, obviously, and sometimes they do not connect with the material that is presented for the children's education. But it was very encouraging to see how they came every time. How they sat there and read to their children. And worked with them.

Another thing that I noticed was that some parents really made a turn around. They came in with little education, without even a high school diploma or GED, they stayed in the program. They really took advantage of it, they learned, they ended up taking their GEDs. And they are getting prepared for college. So that for me was very impressive to observe.

I will continue with what I have done before. I will continue to do the evaluation this year. I am also taking an active part in the parent club as an assistant to the other person who is teaching the parent literacy. We have come up with a book club idea. We are hoping it would work with the parents. We would read and try to write more this year. Different articles, books, novels, anything that would interest the parents. And then we try to encourage them to write more. Because I think last year there was not much writing going on, so we will see what we can do this year.



"One of the grandmother said this summer 'When I am here I am so relaxed, I just enjoy myself.'"

Dr. Elizabeth Landerholm, Project Director



"We use a variety of tools for literacy. This child is doing a stencil, which is a novel way of writing letters."

Dr. Elizabeth Landerholm, Project Director