

## **Snapshot: Excerpt from Support Visit Questionnaire and related Support Visit Conversation**

### **Page Turners Program, Rauschenbusch Metro Ministries:**

#### **Excerpted from 2011 RBF Support Visit Questionnaire completed previsit:**

Item 22 & Response:

Please describe your program's strategy for parents and family involvement.

*We desire for the parents to be very involved in the life of Page Turners. We realize that the more the parents are involved with their children's learning and development, the more successful the children will be. The director of Page Turners speaks with parents each day and fills them in on their child's work and behavior. We encourage parents to let us know of report cards and teacher's analysis of a child's learning, which we currently have on file. We then try to adapt as best as we can the style and content of our tutoring for each child. We keep evaluation folders that the tutors fill out for every student they work with, so that the staff and parents can be aware of any issues during homework time.*

*We have at least two meetings every year where the parents can give us feedback and discuss the needs of their children. In addition, we hold community gatherings at least twice per year where the students along with their families are invited to participate. This year, such gatherings included our annual Fall Festival, Bingo Night, and Apple Picking.*

*Currently, we are preparing for the Page Turners year-end Banquet which will be a celebration of the year for the students and their families.*

Item 23 & Response: In what ways could it improve?

*We would like to research and implement ways that parents can actively become involved in our programming. This could involve volunteering in different capacities within the program. We could also improve the staff members' Spanish speaking skills.*

Item 24 & Response: What actions could be taken to improve your program's ability to involve parents and families?

*We could set up a policy where parents are required to give at least four hours of volunteer service per semester. The Director of Page Turners is attending a Spanish Immersion program this summer.*

#### **Excerpt from RBF Support Visit, June 1, 2011:**

Anne Lawrence with Tiffany Triplett Henkel, Executive Director, Rauschenbusch Metro Ministries, and Michele Richardson, Director of Page Turners Program:

**Anne Lawrence:** *Parent Involvement is an ongoing struggle for all programs, especially if you have more than one language. What you're considering sounds good, a requirement of several hours of volunteer time, and meetings around their needs. Another program did a meeting on time management for parents. Parents come in to see events where their children are showing what they've accomplished. Laura Paris at CHFS (Coalition for Hispanic Family Services) focused on involving parents one of the first years I knew her. She tried all sorts of things -- translations, Parent Advocate. If you're interested, I could get you in touch with her. It was the topic of some of our early networking meetings, and a number of ideas are on the website. Communications and parents feeling welcome are always key, and that is certainly true here.*

**Tiffany Triplett Henkel:** *Michele and I have done some brainstorming. She's done a good job and this is always a challenge. It is true that parents are busy, but lots of our parents want to be involved and don't know how to do it. We've looked at the co-op preschool model that is in this neighborhood and ideas about parents investing in the program. They may not be able to volunteer during the week, so we're planning some workdays, maybe a Saturday or a Sunday cleaning/organizing the library, or being involved with a field trip.*

**Michele Richardson:** *I've always wanted parents to share their cultures with the kids. Something like cooking or geography. I'd like to do something that brings in culture and touches the families of kids. We have parents from places like the Philippines, China, Argentina.*

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Toward the end of the meeting Lawrence returns to the topic of goals.

**Lawrence:** *As far as your goals. They're wonderful goals, but there are many. Having one or two goals to focus on is good. You've listed: mentoring teens, parent involvement, corporate involvement. Did you feel last year's goals have been met? You were interested in expanding literacy activities and you've been active participants in the Julia Palmer workshops.*

**Richardson:** *Yes, they are inspiring.*

**Lawrence:** *What are one or two goals you'd like to focus on this year?*

**Richardson:** *Parent involvement.*

**Lawrence:** *I'll give you Laura Paris' information. Also look at the e-newsletter that is on our website. One of the earlier networking meetings was on Parent Involvement. Two programs wrote articles that have helpful suggestions.*

The process of completing the questionnaire, followed by Program Officer Anne Lawrence meeting with the Executive Director and Afterschool Program director, gives staff the time and opportunity to reflect and plan ways to improve the program