University of Nevada, Reno

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters:
Young Children's Experiences with a Technology-Based Parent Involvement Tool

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Science in
Human Development and Family Studies

by

Heidi E. Cromer

Dr. Bridget A. Walsh/Thesis Advisor

August, 2012

University of Nevada, Reno
Statewide · Worldwide

We recommend that the thesis
prepared under our supervision by

HEIDI E. CROMER

entitled

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters: Young Children's Experiences With A Technology-Based Parent Involvement Tool

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Bridget A. Walsh, Ph. D., Advisor

Melissa Burnham, Ph. D., Committee Member

Cynthia Brock, Ph. D., Graduate School Representative

Marsha H. Read, Ph. D., Dean, Graduate School

August, 2012

Abstract

Monthly DVD classroom newsletters are one proposed means for using technology to encourage parent involvement with all families, including the growing Hispanic population. Previous studies have explored parent and teacher experiences with this parent involvement tool. Children's experiences have not been a major area of focus in the emerging monthly DVD classroom newsletter literature. Children are stakeholders in parent involvement as they are the individuals who are at the center of the home-school relationship and the focus of parent involvement outcomes. Research focusing on children's experiences recognizes children as respected persons who have valued thoughts and responses about what they encounter in the world. This study focused on the experiences of pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) children who come from predominantly Spanish-speaking homes with bilingual (English and Spanish) monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Children's experiences were captured through child interviews and other sources including parent logs, teacher logs, and a teacher focus group. Parent and teacher input were gathered to add insight as it was assumed that the young Pre-K children would not be able to verbalize all of their thoughts and experiences during child interviews. Results depict children's experiences with this parent involvement tool and major themes are presented and explored. Results indicate children have overall positive experiences with Monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Findings also suggest monthly DVD classroom newsletters are supportive of parent involvement and classroom learning experiences. Overall findings support the use of DVD newsletters in Pre-K programs.

Keywords: experiences, Hispanic, monthly DVD classroom newsletters, parent involvement, pre-kindergarten, technology, qualitative

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to express a most sincere thank you my thesis advisor and mentor throughout my graduate school journey, Dr. Bridget A. Walsh. You have presented so many opportunities that have both challenged me and enriched my overall graduate school experience. I am so glad to have worked with you over the past three years. Words cannot begin to express how much I have appreciated your guidance throughout the development of my thesis as well as throughout graduate school. Thank you for all you have done for me!

I also have so much gratitude for my family for their love and support throughout this process. Mom and dad, I thank you for always believing in me and for your encouragement. Mom, I always knew that I could pick up the phone and call you when I needed to chat or vent. Thank you for always being right there for me, even if far away geographically. To my husband, Bodie, thank you for your support and assistance throughout this process. From helping to put together parent folders to giving me quiet working time, I really appreciate you putting up with me through it all and loving me despite some not-so-pleasant days. You always encouraged and believed in me and I love you so much for it.

Dr. Melissa Burnham and Dr. Cynthia Brock, thank you so much for your thoughtful input and your flexibility throughout the past year. My thesis would not have developed into what it has without your much-appreciated feedback and encouragement.

To the participating teachers and Professional Learning Community (PLC) members, thank you for including me in such an amazing project and inviting me into your classrooms. I feel fortunate to have seen such amazing teachers in action!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters:

Young Children's Experiences with a Technology-Based Parent Involvement Tool

Chapter I: Introduction

General Problem Statement

Providing all school children with equal opportunities for academic success has been an emphasis of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). NCLB has shaped educational policy for approximately a decade. One component of NCLB has been parent involvement (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Disputes have occurred over the appropriateness of NCLB and states are currently being given more flexibility for how to meet standards (Obama, 2011). Although great debates continue over NCLB (Obama, 2011), the achievement gap and ways to close it, few would disagree that parent involvement is important for academic success (Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2011).The literature indicates that parents who are involved with their children's schooling have children who exhibit more positive academic and social outcomes (Angelides, Theophanous, & Leigh, 2006; Christenson & Hurley, 1997; Fan & Chen, 2001; Fantuzzo, McWayne, Perry, & Childs, 2004; Ingram, Wolfe, & Lieberman, 2007; Jeynes, 2003; McWayne, Hampton, Fantuzzo, Cohen, & Sekino, 2004; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Xu & Gulosino, 2006).

Hispanic families, including those who are dual language learners (DLL) are on the rise in the United States and face unique obstacles to parent involvement, including parent-teacher communications (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011). This may put Hispanic children at a possible disadvantage to their peers (Walker, Ice, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2011). As such, there is a need for culturally-sensitive tools to

bridge the gap between families and teaching staff to promote effective home-school partnerships (De Gaetano, 2007; Sosa, 1997). This study examined one such parent involvement tool: monthly DVD classroom newsletters.

This study built on recent literature and investigated bilingual (English and Spanish) monthly DVD classroom newsletters as parent involvement tool (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh, Buckley, Rose, Sanchez, & Gillum, 2008). To date, preliminary studies have focused primarily on teacher (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010) and parent (Walsh et al., 2008) experiences with using monthly DVD classroom newsletters as a parent involvement tool. Children's experiences have not been a major area of focus in the emerging monthly DVD classroom newsletter literature. Children are stakeholders in parent involvement as they are the individuals who are at the center of the home-school relationship and the focus of parent involvement outcomes. Research focusing on children's experiences recognizes children as respected persons who have valued thoughts and responses about what they encounter in the world (Greene & Hogan, 2005). This qualitative study contributes to the discussion by examining children's experiences with this technology-based parent involvement tool.

Theoretical Framework

Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1977) and Joyce Epstein's Six Types of Involvement (1995) together provide a useful theoretical framework for examining the issue of parent involvement and ways for classrooms to promote it, such as the parent involvement tool of monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory takes into account the exchange, influences, and relationships

surrounding a developing person. Epstein also focuses on influences surrounding a child, such as home, school and community, and their roles in parent involvement.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. Bronfenbrenner (2001), one of the founders of the Head Start program, recognized that there is a "growing chaos" within our schools. This includes an increasing gap in the success of children of different socioeconomic statuses and other contexts such as home-language (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 209). He emphasized the importance of relationships and support structures being provided for young children who may be at an academic disadvantage (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). He also maintained that in order to understand any issue, one has to go further than directly observing behavior or outcomes and take into account the multiple contributing factors/contexts (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). There are certainly key contexts to consider (e.g. family, culture, school, and child/student) when examining the use of monthly DVD classroom newsletters as a parent involvement strategy. When approaching this topic, Bronfenbrenner would likely encourage a consideration of each of the relevant systems.

In Ecological Systems Theory, the five systems are often depicted graphically, using circles enclosed within one another. Within the innermost circle is the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The microsystem consists of the developing person and the immediate setting/relationships in which the person lives and develops (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Some examples of microsystem influences include a child's characteristics, the child's immediate family, the child's school setting, child-care setting, and more. Previous studies on DVD newsletters and parent involvement have focused on the insights and experiences of parents and teachers that are a part of the developing child's

microsystem (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh et al., 2008). This study went further to examine the experiences of the individual at the center of the microsystem: the child.

The next level of Bronfenbrenner's (1977) Ecological Systems Theory is the mesosystem. The mesosystem consists of interactions or interrelations amongst the microsystem settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). In this particular study, the primary mesosystem influence being considered were the interactions between a child's home and school. This includes teachers being able to interact with the family through this parent involvement tool as well as conversations promoted between children and their families about their schooling. Monthly DVD classroom newsletters are a proposed parent involvement tool that may help foster a positive relationship between a child's home and classroom.

The next system in the Ecological Systems model is the exosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The elements of the exosystem do not directly interact with the developing person but may influence and "encompass the immediate setting in which that person is found" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 515). An example of an exosystem influence is parent employment. When examining the issue of parent involvement, parent employment could influence how much time and resources a parent may have to be involved.

The final level in Ecological Systems Theory is the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The macrosystem includes the broader economic, social, political, and cultural conditions that influence an individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). For this study, today's technological and diverse society creates a need for novel parent involvement approaches. In addition, early childhood position statements (e.g., National

Association for the Education of Young Children, or NAEYC, and the Fred Rogers Center's, 2012) state that technology tools have a place in early childhood environments when the use of them is based on developmentally appropriate practice. (see Copple and Bredekamp, 2009). The Ecological Systems Theory was revised at a later date to include a consideration of how influences and conditions change across time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Bronfenbrenner (1994) labeled these changes over time as the chronosystem. Changes over time including changes in a family's structure, a parent's employment, access to technology, and more can all influence parent involvement.

        Epstein's Framework for Six Types of Involvement. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System's Theory partially inspired Epstein's school-family partnership model (Deslandes, 2001). Epstein specifically emphasized the importance of parent involvement, as she suggested that parent involvement promotes student academic and developmental success (Epstein, 1995: Epstein, 2005). She examined how different ecological systems, which she referred to as "spheres of influence," could promote parent involvement (Epstein, 1995, p. 82). These spheres of influence include the individual, the school, the family and the community (Epstein, 1995). Similar to Ecological System's Theory, Epstein noted that the child is at the center (Epstein, 1995). She expressed that the child plays a central role in the topic of parent involvement. For instance, the child plays a role in his/her own school success and the influences parent involvement has (Epstein, 1995). She asserted that children are the protagonists in the developmental and educational outcomes of parent involvement (Epstein, 1995). Home-school relationships alone do not ensure positive child outcomes but can provide children, even the youngest children, with the tools to be key players in their own successes (Epstein, 1995). Children

can also encourage parent involvement as they are a primary source for parents to find out more about their child's schooling (i.e., parent-child communication) (Epstein, 1995). As the child plays a key role in the topic of parent involvement, this lends support to the child's insights being valuable for examining a technology-based tool that promotes classroom to home communication.

Epstein's (1995) framework included discussion of sample practices, challenges, and expected results. She proposed that through parent involvement, children could be more successful in schools (Epstein, 1995). This proposition has been supported through some of Epstein's own research (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005) as well as other research studies utilizing Epstein's typologies (Ingram et al., 2007; Keyes, 2002). The center of Epstein's framework is the concept of "caring" in which mutual trust and respect are fostered between schools and families (Epstein, 1995). The monthly DVD classroom newsletters are designed to promote these relationships through communication between classrooms and parents.

School-family partnership activities include 1) parenting 2) communicating 3) volunteering 4) learning at home 5) decision making and 6) collaborating (Epstein, 1995). Type 1 (parenting) involves helping parents create a home environment that is supportive of children's schooling (Epstein, 1995). Type 2 (communicating) involves creating an effective means for school and home to communicate with one another (Epstein, 1995). Some traditional examples of this include parent conferences and paper classroom newsletters (Epstein, 1995). This can also include children communicating with their families about their schooling. Type 3 (volunteering) involves promoting a means for parents to help and support in the child's schooling (Epstein, 1995). This can include

having a system in-place so that families feel welcomed into the school environment (Epstein, 1995). Type 4 (learning at home) involves providing information and ideas to parents for how to help their child at home with his/her academics and skills (Epstein, 1995). Type 5 (decision making) includes parents as important figureheads in school policy and other school-related decisions (Epstein, 1995). This can include having parents participate in Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) or other school organizations (Epstein, 1995). Lastly, Type 6 (collaborating with the community) involves using resources found in the community to strengthen both school and family functions, as well as encourage optimal student development and learning (Epstein, 1995).

Monthly DVD classroom newsletters primarily address Epstein's Type 2 method of parent involvement: communication. DVD newsletters provide a means for teachers and children to communicate with families. Teachers could also use the medium of DVD newsletters to address the other types of parent involvement. For example, teachers can use the DVD newsletters to provide suggestions to parents (Type 1 and Type 4), encourage family volunteering (Type 3), share community-available resources with families (Type 6), and/or inform them of how they can become involved in school policy decisions (Type 5).

Research Highlights

The literature indicates that parent involvement is very important for children's academic and social outcomes (Angelides et al., 2006; Christenson & Hurley, 1997; Fan & Chen, 2001; Fantuzzo et al., 2004; Ingram et al., 2007; Jeynes, 2003; McWayne et al., 2004; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Xu & Gulosino, 2006). Parent involvement is especially important when considering younger children and children who may be at-risk (Copple &

Bredekamp, 2009; Ingram et al., 2007). Hispanic families are on the rise in the United States (Ennis et al., 2011). Children of Hispanic families face unique barriers to parent involvement (De Gaetano, 2007; Ramirez, 2003; Sanchez, Walsh, & Rose, 2009; Sosa, 1997; Walker et al., 2011). As such, schools are facing a need to find culturally sensitive ways to address the unique barriers to Hispanic parent involvement.

Effective communication methods, one of Epstein's (1995) 6 Types of Involvement, is one way to help encourage Hispanic family involvement (Keyes, 2002; Ramirez, 2003; Sosa, 1997). One modern way to communicate with families is through the use of technology. Using technology can be one means to meet the unique needs of Hispanic families (Epstein, 1985; National Association for the Education of Young Children & the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media, 2012). One form of technology that has been recently explored as a parent involvement strategy is bilingual monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Previous studies of bilingual monthly DVD classroom newsletters have primarily explored parent (Walsh et al., 2008) and teacher (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010) experiences. This study considered another perspective relevant to the issue. This study examined children's experiences with this parent involvement tool.

Definitions of Terms

Children's experiences. An experience is a conscious interpretation of a situation or a state (Greene & Hogan, 2005). Research focusing on children's experiences sees children as respected persons who have valued thoughts and responses about what they encounter in the world (Greene & Hogan, 2005). Children's experiences in the school environment are multidimensional, determined by factors such as actual classroom

conditions and the teacher, such as her teaching style (Ryan & Grolnick, 1986). This study sought data from various sources (e.g., children, teachers, and parents) on children's experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters as described in the method section.

Monthly DVD classroom newsletters. DVD classroom newsletters use video technology to record clips from the child's school day, teacher messages and announcements, information about children's learning, and more (Sanchez et al., 2009). These clips are put onto a DVD and sent home to communicate information to parents regarding their child's schooling.

Parent involvement. Parent involvement entails parents' participation in, support of, and meaningful communication with their child's schooling and learning. According to Epstein's (1995) parent involvement framework, there are six types of parent involvement. Descriptions of each type of parent involvement were discussed in the theoretical framework section.

Pre-kindergarten. Pre-kindergartens are district-sponsored early learning programs that children attend prior to entering district-sponsored kindergarten programs. In this study, pre-kindergarten classrooms included children approximately 4-5 years of age.

Assumptions and Delimitations

For the purposes of this study, it was assumed that pre-kindergarteners have thoughts and experiences with the parent involvement tool of monthly DVD classroom newsletters. It was also assumed that the young children would not be able to verbalize all of these thoughts and experiences during child interviews. As a result, input from

other sources including parent logs, teacher logs, and teacher interviews were used to capture children's experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters. The study was delimited to only children's experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters. It did not take into account the experiences of other relevant individuals (e.g., parents, teachers) with this parent involvement tool. This study was delimited to the children, parents, and teachers of four classrooms in one school district of the Western United States.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

Parent Involvement

There is widespread recognition in the literature that parent involvement in a child's schooling is important (De Gaetano, 2007; Epstein, 1995; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; McCarthey, 2000; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Sosa, 1997; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005). There are many reported positive results of parent involvement. For example, students tend to do better academically (Angelides et al., 2006; Christenson & Hurley, 1997; Fan & Chen, 2001; Ingram et al., 2007; Jeynes, 2003; McWayne et al., 2004; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Xu & Gulosino, 2006). Fan and Chen (2001) performed a meta-analysis of quantitative literature that focused on the relationship between parent involvement and students' academic achievement. Their meta-analysis included 25 studies where Pearson correlations between parent involvement indicators and academic outcomes were obtainable. Their meta-analysis revealed that a positive and "practically meaningful" relationship existed between the two variables (Fan & Chen, 2001, p.1). This suggests that parent involvement is a factor in academic success even when analyzing multiple sources of data and considering parent involvement from multiple indicators (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Furthermore, children who have parents that are actively involved in their schooling tend to demonstrate more positive social engagement with their peers and adults (Fantuzzo et al., 2004; McWayne et al., 2004). Fantuzzo et al. (2004) examined parent involvement and child outcomes of 144 children enrolled in a Head Start program using a multi-dimensional parental report assessment. One outcome of the study indicated that parent involvement (such as talking to the child about school at home) was linked to better child behavioral outcomes (Fantuzzo et al., 2004). McWayne et al. (2004) similarly examined the relationships between parent involvement and child outcomes with a sample of 307 low-income kindergarteners. Parent involvement was measured using a self-reported parent scale and kindergarteners were assessed by a number of measures/scales that assessed peer-play behaviors, social skills, and academic competence. Related to behavioral outcomes, the results of their study indicated that parents who are involved, including frequently communicating with schools, have children who engaged positively with learning, their peers, and with adults (McWayne et al., 2004). Parent involvement in a child's schooling is certainly important for young children (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).

Copple and Bredekamp (2009) discuss that it is an important recommended practice for teachers to create collaborative relationships with families of young children. Xu and Gulosino (2006) examined the influences early childhood practices have on child outcomes. They did so using pre-existing data from a nationally representative sample of early childhood kindergarten programs, both public and private. They determined that the relationships teachers established with parents were more important to student achievement, as measured by children's reading and general knowledge scores, than

other variables. Other variables included teacher credentials, family socioeconomic status (SES), culture, and ethnicity (Xu & Gulosino, 2006). Relationships between teachers and parents are clearly important to child outcomes, but Xu and Gulosino's (2006) study also sheds light on the importance of other variables (e.g., ethnicity, SES) that make the topic of parent involvement complex and multifaceted.

Educational policy has placed an increased focus on parent involvement in order to provide equal opportunities for all students (Epstein, 1995; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Students who are considered at-risk are of particular concern. It has been recognized that parent involvement also plays a large role for at-risk students' academic achievement (Ingram et al., 2007). Ingram et al. (2007) conducted a survey study from 220 parents whose children attended low-income/at-risk public elementary schools. They used Epstein's framework to investigate the elements of parent involvement that were related to student's improved academic achievement (Ingram et al., 2007). The results of their study indicated that schools should focus on Epstein's parent involvement typology to encourage academic achievement for at-risk students (Ingram et al., 2007). Some strategies they found especially successful with promoting academic achievement in their sample were Type I (parenting) and Type 4 (learning at home).

There are some general factors that can affect the relationships between parents and teachers. These include the degree of match between the two parties' cultural and other values, the societal or other macrosystem influences, and how teachers and parents respectively view their roles (Keyes, 2002). These factors need to be considered when

exploring how to promote Hispanic parent involvement, as families of Hispanic students face unique challenges to home-school partnerships.

Unique Challenges of Hispanic Families

According to the U.S. Census, 16% of the U.S. population identified themselves as being of Hispanic or Latino origin in 2010 (Ennis et al., 2011). This is considered the largest minority population in the United States and has increased over time (Ennis et al., 2011). More than three-quarters of the Hispanic population resides in either the Western or Southern portions of the United States, in states such as Texas, Arizona, Nevada, and California (Ennis et al., 2011). In the state of Nevada where this study took place, 26.5% of the total population was of Hispanic or Latino origin in the year 2010. This is a leap from the 19.7% of total population recorded in the year 2000 (Ennis et al., 2011).

Furthermore, in the state of Nevada, 38.8% of students were classified as Hispanic during the 2010-2011 school year (Nevada Department of Education, 2011). These students made up the majority of the state's student population, slightly outnumbering the percentage of students classified as White (38.7%) (Nevada Department of Education, 2011). Of the large school district where this study took place, about 17.4% were classified as limited English proficiency, with high rates of limited English proficiency being reported at schools with higher (often 50% or more) Hispanic populations (Nevada Department of Education, 2011). This suggests that many of the Hispanic populations in these schools are from DLL or Spanish-speaking families.

Due to the higher numbers of Hispanic and DLL families in school districts in the United States, there is a recognized need to look at the special challenges to parent involvement facing Hispanic populations (De Gaetano, 2007; Ramirez, 2003; Sanchez et

al., 2009; Sosa, 1997; Walker et al., 2011). Special concerns exist with how to encourage active Hispanic parent involvement, such as regular and meaningful communications between home and school and home reinforcement with tasks being learned in the classroom (De Gaetano, 2007; Sosa, 1997). A barrier to encouraging Hispanic family involvement can be language (De Gaetano, 2007; Sosa, 1997). As already noted in this section, many Hispanic families may be dual language learners (DLL) or Spanish-speaking. As such, they may have difficulties communicating with teachers or school officials who only speak English.

There can also be cultural barriers to Hispanic parent/family involvement (Sanchez et al., 2009; Sosa, 1997). For example, in many Hispanic cultures it is considered respectful to not be involved or interfere with what occurs in the classroom (Sosa, 1997). As a result, parents of Hispanic origin may not become involved in the child's schooling out of respect for the teachers or the educational process (Ramirez, 2003).

Many families may also experience low literacy and experience difficulty reading newsletters or other materials provided by teachers, even if provided in their native language (Sosa, 1997). Other barriers to parent involvement may include parent experiences (Sosa, 1997). For instance, parents may have negative thoughts about the educational system based on their own educational experiences. The lack of Hispanic parent involvement may be construed by teachers to be a sign of the parent's disinterest or not caring about their child's academic success (De Gaetano, 2007; Sosa, 1997). However, research indicates that this is not the case (Ramirez, 2003; Walker et al., 2011).

Specifically, the literature supports that many Hispanic families want to be involved in their children's education (Ramirez, 2003; Walker et al., 2011). Ramirez (2003) interviewed approximately 45 parents in a predominantly Hispanic school community and asked them about their relationship with their child's school. Overall, parents expressed that they wanted to be more involved and felt frustrated with doing so (Ramirez, 2003). Some frustrations included problems communicating, not knowing what was going on in schools, the teacher's or school's expectations, and the teacher's or school's perceived lack of accountability for their child's education (Ramirez, 2003).

Parents foremost expressed a need for more communication supports for their predominantly Spanish-speaking community (Ramirez, 2003). This can include sending home documents in both Spanish and English and having translators readily available at parent-teacher conferences and school events (Sanchez et al., 2009). This goes hand-in-hand with promoting Epstein's (1995) Type 2 of parent involvement, communication. Some also shared that the expectations of teachers for attending or participating in certain events that conflicted with work schedules made them uncomfortable (Ramirez, 2003). They felt that the teachers at times had unreasonable expectations for them (Ramirez, 2003). On the other hand, some parents also perceived that the teachers had lower expectations of them as parents or of their child than they would of other groups (Ramirez, 2003). Other frustrations expressed by the parents included not feeling invited in the school environment and not having a good sense of what was really going on in their children's classrooms (Ramirez, 2003). As a result of these findings, Ramirez (2003) suggests taking a culturally-sensitive approach with Hispanic families to encourage parent involvement.

Communicating with families, one of Epstein's (1995) six types of involvement, should be a primary focus of encouraging Hispanic parent involvement (Keyes, 2002; Ramirez, 2003; Sosa, 1997). Communications should be done in the parents' home language whenever possible (Ramirez, 2003; Sosa, 1997). This is considered a recommended practice for early childhood educators (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Teachers and schools can also make their expectations clear and make sure parents feel invited and informed about their child's school and classroom (Ramirez, 2003). To become better at promoting effective classroom to home communication, teachers need to be more culturally sensitive and explore relevant ways to promote Hispanic family involvement (De Gaetano, 2007). One relevant means for promoting Hispanic family involvement may be to integrate the use of technological means that includes the parents' home language (Sanchez et al., 2009).

Young Children and Technology

Technology is an unavoidable aspect of each child's ecological system in modern society in the United States (Takeuchi, 2011). Many forms of technology are readily available in most young children's households (Takeuchi, 2011). For instance, television, DVDs and VCRs are "virtually universal" in all homes regardless of income or ethnicity (Gutnick, Robb, Takeuchi, & Kotler, 2011, p. 23; Michael Cohen Group & U.S. Department of Education Ready to Learn Program, 2007). In fact, lower-income Hispanic children actually consume more media overall than middle-class White children do (Gutnick et al., 2011).

There has been a great deal of debate over whether exposure to technology is appropriate for younger children (Gutnick et al., 2011; Takeuchi, 2011). Technology can

either support or hinder a child's early development (Takeuchi, 2011). According to the

National Association for the Education of Young Children's and the Fred Rogers Center

for Early Learning and Children's Media's (2012) position statement on technology,

media and technology when used in an appropriate and intentional manner can support

children's development, learning, interaction, communication, and collaboration. This

also includes the ability of technology to improve means of communicating and recording

information to share with parents, resulting in strengthened classroom to home

connections (Epstein, 1985; National Association for the Education of Young Children &

the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media, 2012).

Technology can serve as an opportunity for engagement and positive interaction

amongst many of the primary systems influencing a child (Takeuchi, 2011). Technology

can be used to better communicate with families, encouraging effective teacher-home

mesosystem interactions. Young children have a developmental desire to connect with

their parents and media can provide a means to do this (Takeuchi, 2011). For example,

parents can also co-view media (such as DVD newsletters) and engage in discussion with

their child. Co-viewing with young children is a recommended practice (Fisch, 2004;

Gutnick et al., 2011; Wright, St. Peters, & Huston, 1990). Children, through reflecting on

media and engaging in discussion can deepen their own learning and understanding as

well (Takeuchi, 2011). One study examining children, families and technology asked the

question: "what role can technology play in bridging what children are doing at home and

the structured learning environment?" (Takeuchi, 2011, p. 38). Epstein (1985) also

pondered how technology could be used in the future to encourage parent involvement.

Monthly DVD classroom newsletters can be one possible technological method for

exploring Takeuchi's (2011) and Epstein's (1985) questions and for making this connection.

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters

Traditional classroom newsletters have been discussed as an effective way to inform and support relationships with parents for some time now (Jensen, 2006; Shepherd & Roker, 2005). However, a major consideration for teachers using traditional (paper) newsletters are some parents' lack of literacy or parents who may not read or speak English fluently (Shepherd & Roker, 2005). Technology and bilingual DVD newsletters may help address this issue.

DVD newsletters, similar to traditional (paper) classroom newsletters, can serve as a means to provide parents with information. However, bilingual monthly DVD classroom newsletters provide the unique opportunity of visually depicting information to parents, eliminating some language and literacy barriers. Newsletters can also be bilingual and include both English and Spanish. More information can also be relayed through media more effectively than may be done through traditional paper newsletters. DVD newsletters can include clips from the child's school day, teacher messages and announcements, information about children's learning, and more (Sanchez et al., 2009). For example, one DVD from a pilot project included an introduction in English and Spanish, a tour of the classroom in English and Spanish, three scenes of the children playing/learning, the daily schedule, and explanations in both English and Spanish about how children learn through play.

As discussed previously, DVDs tend to be a form of media that parents have access to and are an existing part of the lives of all children, including those of low

income and Hispanic populations (Gutnick et al., 2011; Michael Cohen Group and U.S. Department of Education Ready to Learn Program, 2007). DVD newsletters can address some of the unique challenges to Hispanic family involvement. For example, DVD newsletters can help communicate with families, provide a means for families to feel invited in the classroom, and provide accountability by showing families what is occurring in the classroom and school. Harniss, Epstein, Bursuck, Nelson and Jayanthi (2001) conducted a parent survey that revealed parents felt teachers should be responsible for making the primary communication contacts with the home. DVD newsletters can be one means for teachers to reach out and initiate contact with families; and, perhaps in turn encourage families to contact teachers.

Other research studies have explored using DVD newsletters as a parent involvement tool (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh et al., 2008). However, these studies primarily focused on teacher and parent experiences. Walsh et al. (2008) conducted a pilot study that explored parents' access to technology and their perceptions of DVD classroom newsletters. Parents were given consent forms for their children to appear on monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Children who were not given consent to appear in the DVDs were blurred from the footage. A letter describing the study, consent forms and a pre-questionnaire were sent to 88 parents of children in three pre-kindergarten classrooms (Walsh et al., 2008). The sample included 27 parents from this group (Walsh et al., 2008). Information gathered indicated the sample was primarily lower income, Spanish-speaking, with lower educational levels (Walsh et al., 2008). These parents were provided pre- and post- DVD intervention questionnaires to gather information on their perceptions of the DVD newsletters. Parents responded positively to the DVDs and

appeared to find them to be a valuable source of information (Walsh et al., 2008). They expressed an interest in implementing ideas shown in the DVDs. Furthermore, the parents of this population indicated they had access to DVD technology (Walsh et al., 2008).

Sanchez and Walsh (2010) similarly examined teachers' perspectives of using monthly DVD classroom newsletters through a pre- and post-survey and interview questionnaires. The pilot study included a sample size of three female teachers from two school districts in North Texas (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010). The study included pre- and post- surveys as well as face-to-face interviews. Four monthly DVD classroom newsletters were created and provided to the three teachers and the families of the students they serve. The DVDs included a welcome message from the teachers, information about the skills being learned in class, ideas for how to practice the skills at home, and footage of the children learning and playing throughout the school day (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010). Some main themes arose from the study. Teachers expressed that they found the DVDs to be more effective for promoting parent involvement than other electronic means (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010). They expressed that this was especially the case for parents with low literacy (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010). Teachers also offered insights on continued implementation, suggesting that they would like to continue using the method of DVD newsletters, provided they had the resources to do so (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010). Some unexpected benefits arose from the study, including parents' expressed positivity towards the DVDs and children's engagement and enjoyment from "seeing themselves" (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010, p.165).

As both Bronfenbrenner (1977) and Epstein (1995) recognized the child as an important factor in parent involvement, the child's experiences should also be carefully

considered. One pilot study, Walsh and Sanchez (2011), examined children's experiences

with monthly DVD classroom newsletters as a parent involvement tool. They conducted

eight child interviews and collected information from four parent logs (Walsh & Sanchez,

2011). In their unpublished report, the researchers reported some preliminary findings,

including suggestions that children enjoyed viewing the DVDs, appeared to find some

meaning in the DVDs, and often co-viewed the DVDs with their families at home (Walsh

& Sanchez, 2011). However, no published study to-date has examined children's

experiences of DVD classroom newsletters in-depth. The current study built upon this

pilot study (Walsh & Sanchez, 2011) and other monthly DVD classroom newsletter

studies (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh et al., 2008) and examined children's

experiences with DVD newsletters as a parent involvement tool.

Research Question

The findings of this qualitative study contribute to the discussion of the parent

involvement tool of monthly DVD classroom newsletters. This research sought to answer

the following question through child, parent, and teacher reports on the matter: What are

young children's experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters?

<div align="center">

Chapter III: Method

</div>

Context

The DVD newsletter project had been previously implemented the prior school-

year in the school district where this study took place. This study served as a continuation

of this project (Walsh & Sanchez, 2011; Walsh, Sanders, Waugh, & Sanchez, 2011). As

such, there was existing Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval that was modified to

include the current researcher and some method modifications focusing on gathering

children's experiences. In the previous school year, a Professional Learning Community (PLC) consisting of participating teachers, a teacher coach, a teacher coordinator, and a university faculty member, teamed together to make the monthly DVD classroom newsletters a possibility. The teacher coach and teacher coordinator participating in the PLC coordinated with classrooms and teachers who wished to be involved in the project. The university helped in the creation of the DVDs and providing support for participating classroom teachers as needed. This project was done in continuation of this collaboration through existing networks and resources.

Participants

The sample for this study included the children, families, and teachers of four participating school sites (2 classes: am and pm for each participating school site, for a total of 8 classes) in a large school district in the Western United States. Three of these school sites had participated in the previous year's monthly DVD classroom newsletter project and one school site was a first-year participant.

Of the 74 parents who consented to participate in the study, 98 monthly parent logs were collected over the study period. Of the 83 of children who were given consent to participate in the child interviews, 72 children were interviewed. Some children were not interviewed due to absence or disenrollment from the participating classroom. Of the four teachers who consented to participate in the study, a total of eight monthly teacher logs were collected and one focus group discussion was held at the end of the project. A teacher coordinator and teacher coach, members of the professional learning community (PLC), expressed desire to participate and also gave consent to participate in the focus group and provided their insight on the project from a supervisory perspective.

Information gathered from the focus group shared that teachers and the teacher coach and coordinators held bachelor degrees (*n*=4) and masters degrees (*n*=2). The years of experience teaching overall ranged from approximately 5 years to over 30 years experience. Years specifically spent teaching Pre-K ranged from 5 years to approximately 25 years experience. This question was not applicable to one of the supervisory PLC members as she had never been a Pre-K teacher.

The children in the DVDs and participating in the interviews were between 4-5 years of age. Information from the pilot study (Walsh & Sanchez, 2011) suggests that the children who participated in the study came from families who were primarily lower income and from Spanish-speaking households. In the pilot study, 80% of the children were identified as Hispanic, 74% of families reported that the home language was Spanish, and almost half of the families fell within the income bracket of $10,000 to $19,000 (Walsh & Sanchez, 2011). Detailed demographic information was not provided by the school sites for this year's DVD participants. However, it is estimated that these characteristics are reflective of the population of students who participated in the current study as the majority of the participating school sites were second-year participants and the newly added school site had similar demographics to the other school sites (perhaps an even higher Spanish-speaking population, as expressed by one participating teacher). As previously mentioned, in the state of Nevada where the study took place, 38.8% of students were classified as Hispanic during the 2010-2011 school year (Nevada Department of Education, 2011). These students made up the majority of the state's student population, slightly outnumbering the percentage of students classified as White (37.7%) (Nevada Department of Education, 2011).

All teachers who participated in the study signed informed consent forms (in English) pre-approved by the university's IRB. Parents who participated in the study also signed informed consent forms (in English or Spanish) for their participation, as well as signed permission forms (in English or Spanish) for their child to be interviewed. The classrooms had permission forms for video-taping each child on file. Any students who did not have permission to be on the DVDs were omitted from the footage.

Procedures

Recruitment and consent. Parents and teachers of participating classrooms were given information (cover letters) and consent forms (in English and Spanish) for their own participation in the study. Parents also received a cover letter and permission form (in English and Spanish) that gave them the opportunity to consent and provide permission for their child's participation. As an incentive, parents were informed that their child would receive a children's storybook at the time he/she was interviewed to thank him/her for answering questions. The researcher and/or a second researcher, a university faculty member, attended parent meetings at the participating classrooms for recruitment purposes. At these meetings, researcher(s) used an IRB-approved script to inform parents about the research, passed out folders containing cover letters and consent/permission forms, and answered any questions that parents had regarding the project. At this meeting, researchers also distributed cover letters and consent forms to the participating teachers. School personnel were also present at the parent meetings to help translate Spanish questions from parents to the researchers and to translate the researchers' responses to parents into Spanish.

DVD production. The teachers created the DVD newsletters from a period from approximately February to May 2012. Children also participated in the process of creating the DVDs. One of teachers' intentions was to actively include children in the production phase so they would learn the purpose of the DVDs and about video production. These monthly DVD classroom newsletters were copied/burned at the university and distributed to the classrooms in labeled folders along with research materials (parent logs) for children to take home to their families. The length of the project intervention was consistent with previous studies (e.g., Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh et al., 2011).

Ideally, one DVD was to be created and sent home to families each month over the study period in folders that included the DVD and parent logs in both English and Spanish. Three sites sent home three monthly DVD classroom newsletters and one classroom sent home two DVD classroom newsletters over the four month research period. However, one site had three monthly folders sent home and collected, whereas the other sites only distributed two sets of parent folders with parent logs. In other words, two of the sites sent home their final May DVDs without the folder containing parent logs. This circumstance was due to the distribution of the DVDs being at the end of the school year where parent response was not plausible.

The DVDs were burned at the university in DVD-R format which allowed them to be shown using either a DVD player or a computer. As already established, families tend to have access to technology to view the DVDs (Gutnick et al., 2011; Michael Cohen Group & U.S. Department of Education Ready to Learn Program, 2007). Families who did not have access to technology at home may have been encouraged to use places

in the community, such as public libraries that have computer and DVD technology. In this study, teachers may have provided families with a listing of public places in the community to view the DVDs without stigmatization.

      DVD focus. In the monthly DVD classroom newsletters, teaching and learning scenes in the classroom and messages from teachers were centered on a theme. DVD newsletters contained content within the theme that was at the discretion of the teachers. Walsh and Sanchez's (2011) pilot study included feelings, play, open-ended questioning, and problem solving. This year's DVDs had one theme: problem solving and social-emotional development. As previously discussed, DVDs may have included announcements, footage of children playing and learning, suggested techniques for learning skills at home, and more (Sanchez et al., 2009). An example of a bilingual monthly DVD classroom newsletter sent home this year contained a teacher message about social-emotional development (in English and Spanish), a segment of clips addressing social-emotional development, and a final video segment depicting what the children were learning in class. Another recent bilingual monthly DVD classroom newsletter focused specifically on problem solving and included a teacher narration on children's problem solving and clips of the children solving problems, such as how to get on a swing and how to get a Frisbee down that had gotten stuck in a tree. Within many DVDs, other teaching and learning scenes such as those showcasing classroom art, music and literacy activities, were also integrated in addition to the primary social-emotional and problem solving theme.

      Fidelity of DVD implementation. Each monthly DVD classroom newsletter was evaluated at the end of the study by two bilingual researchers, doctoral students, using a

revised version of Walsh, Hayes, Sanders, Vittrup, and Hammond's (2012) Monthly

DVD Classroom Newsletter-Rubric (MDCN-R), a rubric designed to measure

developmentally appropriate practice (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009) and the technical

aspects of the DVDs, such as audio quality (see Appendix A for MDCN-R). The revised

MDCN-R omitted a section on language congruency aspects, so teachers would not feel

the language needed to be exact matches between English and Spanish portions of the

DVDs (Walsh, Cromer, Villalobos, & Alvarez, in review). In addition, the revised

MDCN-R included a rewrite of the menu functionality categories in order to promote the

usability of the rubric. The scoring scale of the MDCN-R used included: insufficient (1

point), emergent (2 points), proficient (3 points), or distinguished (4 points). The

Technical Section of the rubric contained seven items for a possible 28 points (Walsh et

al., in review). The Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Section (see Copple &

Bredekamp, 2009 for a review of DAP) contained three items for a possible 12 points

(Walsh et al., in review). Overall, the original rubric demonstrated good reliability and

content validity (Walsh et al., 2012).

Two bilingual (English and Spanish) doctoral students participated in a ninety-

minute DVD newsletter rubric training session conducted by the researcher. At this

training session, the two raters were given an overview of the monthly bilingual DVD

classroom newsletter project and shown some clips to familiarize them with the layout

and purpose of the monthly DVD newsletters. Next, the MDCN-R was reviewed item-by-

item and thoroughly discussed. The scoring process was also discussed and explained in

detail. The raters were not familiar with the concept of developmentally appropriate

practice so this aspect of the rubric was reviewed in more depth. Following the

comprehensive review of the rubric, the raters practiced the scoring process by independently scoring some sample DVDs (both whole DVDs and DVD clips) using the MDCN-R. After each DVD or clip, the raters shared how they scored each item and a discussion regarding the scoring of each item commenced until the raters felt comfortable and experienced with the scoring process.

After the training phase, the raters independently scored each of the monthly DVD newsletters from this study as well as from the previous year. They used a computerized form to record the scores for each school site's monthly DVDs, and noted any relevant comments that arose during the scoring process. In addition to scoring each item, there was a total score for the technical section, the developmentally appropriate practice section, and an overall score summed for each of the DVDs. At the completion of the individual scoring, the scoring sheets of each rater were evaluated to assess inter-rater reliability (Walsh et al., in review). Following this process, the two raters discussed any disagreements and a consensus was reached to compose a final master score sheet. The overall quality of the DVDs using the MDCN-R is reported in the results. A detailed discussion of the quality of this year's DVD newsletters can be found in Walsh et al. (in review).

Readability evaluation. The language content in the DVDs was kept simple to meet the lower reading levels of parents participating in the study. A sampling of approximately 25% of the monthly DVD classroom newsletters were assessed using the readability statistics program available in Microsoft Word, the Flesch Readability Test, which estimated the reading ease for the text appearing in the DVD. This data is reported along with the MDCN-R scores in the results.

Data collection. Throughout the study, the parents and teachers were encouraged to keep a monthly log (logs provided by the university researchers, see Appendix B) documenting anything deemed of relevance related to the DVD newsletters. For example, how often the DVD was viewed, who it was viewed with, comments children make about the DVDs, etc. More information about the log framework is discussed in the next section. The completed logs were returned to the researcher via the classroom teachers each month, assigned a number, and typed for analysis.

The child interviews occurred shortly after one or two monthly DVD classroom newsletters had been sent home towards the end of the study. The researcher went to the classrooms during a time arranged with the teachers and conducted a short one-on-one interview with participating children in a quiet designated location. The researcher made attempts to build a rapport with each participating child prior to inviting the child to answer the interview questions. Each child was shown a brief teaching and learning scene from his or her classroom on the researcher's laptop computer. The clips ranged from less than a minute to less than three minutes in length. The interview information was gathered in the form of notes during the interview and audio recordings of the interviews. Each child was given a storybook after the interview to thank him/her for participation. More detailed information about the child interviews is described in the next section.

Towards the end of the study, the researcher conducted a focus group with the teachers to gather more information about their perspectives of the children's experiences with the monthly DVD classroom newsletters. This focus group took place during a regularly scheduled PLC meeting. Information sought during this focus group was driven by the information disclosed in the teachers' logs as well as predetermined questions. The

guiding question for the teacher focus group was: "What can you share were children's experiences with the monthly DVD classroom newsletters?" Probing and non-leading questions were asked that continued the flow of the conversation related to the guiding question. Descriptive information was also asked to gather information about the participating PLC members as reported in the participants section. More information about the focus group is described in the measures section. All the information gathered was collectively used to establish themes that addressed the outlined research question and painted a descriptive picture of children's experiences with the DVD classroom newsletter project.

Measures

Information about children's experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters were gathered through four primary sources: 1) child interviews, 2) parent logs, 3) teacher logs, and 4) a teacher focus group.

Child interviews. Special consideration needs to be taken when conducting interviews with young children. Powell and Snow (2007) provide suggestions for conducting a free-narrative interview with young children. When questioning children, simple language should be used, no coercion should be utilized, and elaboration should be encouraged (Powell & Snow, 2007).

Information on children's experiences, as illustrated by the children themselves, was obtained primarily through conducting qualitative interviews. Interviews with children were conducted shortly after a DVD had been sent home to the child's family towards the end of the study. Conducting interviews shortly after a DVD was sent home helped to ensure that the experience was fresh in the child's mind. The researcher was

introduced to the children prior to the children being invited to participate in the interview. The researcher/interviewer made efforts to build a rapport with each child such as using a friendly conversational approach. The child always had the right to refuse or give assent for his/her participation in the interview. Once the child was in a quiet designated location ready to be interviewed (e.g., school library, an empty classroom, a quiet corridor), the researcher explained that they were going to have a conversation about the monthly DVD classroom newsletter that the child's teacher sent home to his/her family. Following this explanation, the researcher briefly showed a teaching and learning scene from that child's classroom to the child on her laptop. The teaching and learning scene ranged in length from less than a minute to less than three minutes. Scenes were selected that were brief and depicted children that were in the participating child's class. In most instances, teachers gave input on which scene was appropriate. The researcher continued to use a friendly, conversational voice to help put the child at ease throughout the interview. In the pilot study (Walsh & Sanchez, 2011), the interviewer did not encounter many difficulties with conducting the interviews in English. As such, most of the interviews were approached in English. For children identified by their teachers as needing the interview to be conducted or assisted in Spanish, a bilingual classroom teacher or assistant helped with the interview process.

The interview followed Powell and Snow's (2007) suggestions and included approximately five open-ended, non-leading questions in an IRB-approved child interview guide. The interview was adjusted based on the conversation and children's responses to go with the flow of the conversation. The outlined questions in the child interview guide included: 1) Did you watch the DVDs from your teacher? 2) Who did

you watch the DVDs with? 3) Tell me about watching the DVDs, 4) What did you think about the DVDs? and 5) What do you like or not like about them? The researcher probed further if ambiguities occurred. The interview ended if a child demonstrated disinterest or discomfort during the interview or when enough information was gathered to answer the five basic outlined interview questions. At the conclusion of the interview, children were given a children's storybook in either English or Spanish (*Se Venden Gorras*, by Esphyr Slobodkina or *These Hands*, by Hope Lynn Price) to thank them for their participation. The language of the book given to the child was determined by which language that the permission/consent forms were returned by the parents in or the teacher's input on which language she felt would be best suited for this child and his/her family. Brief notes were taken during the interview and the interview was also recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interviews of the children underwent coding and recoding to reveal emerging themes.

Parent logs. Parents who consented to participate in the study were provided with logs (in both English and Spanish) enclosed in a folder with each monthly DVD classroom newsletter (see Appendix B for parent logs). The logs included three closed-ended questions and an open-ended space. In these logs, they were encouraged to write information concerning if and how many times their child watched the DVDs, who their child watched the DVDs with, and their child's comments or experiences with watching the DVDs. Information regarding the DVDs were recorded in this log at the parent's discretion. Parents were encouraged to return the log to the classroom each month. If parents wrote the log in Spanish, the logs were translated into English for coding and analysis by two bilingual doctoral students or a bilingual classroom teacher. Logs were

collected at the end of an assigned period each month from the classroom teachers, typed, and appropriately coded.

Teacher logs. The participating teachers were also provided monthly logs (see Appendix C). These logs were given to the teachers each month in a teacher folder with the DVDs and parent folders. In the logs, teachers were also encouraged to write down any information about the children in relation to the DVD newsletters. For instance, a teacher may have written down a child's comments at school regarding the DVDs. The teacher may also have chosen to play the DVDs in her classroom and take notes on the children's responses to the DVDs. This log was open to teacher interpretation and included information and notes at the discretion of the teachers. At the end of a monthly outlined period, these logs were collected by the researcher and the information was typed, organized, coded, and analyzed for emerging themes. Teachers received a bilingual (English and Spanish) children's storybook for their classroom to thank them for their participation.

Teacher focus group. Towards the end of the study, the researcher conducted an approximately 15 minute focus group with the teachers to gather more information about the children's experiences with the DVD classroom newsletters. This focus group took place at the beginning of a regularly scheduled PLC meeting. Because it was in a group setting, the researcher made a special effort to state that participation was voluntary. In addition to the participating teachers, two PLC leaders (a teacher coach and a teacher coordinator) also expressed an interest in participation and signed consent was given by these two individuals.

Prior to the focus group discussion, the researcher gathered information from the teachers and two PLC leaders that included the following: educational level, total years of experience teaching, and years of experience teaching Pre-K. This information is presented in the participants section of this paper. Information sought during the focus group was driven by the information disclosed in the teachers' logs and a guiding question. The guiding question for the teacher focus group was: "What can you share were children's experiences with the monthly DVD classroom newsletters?" The format of the focus group was semi-structured to allow for probing and further questioning. A university faculty member took notes while the researcher facilitated and audio recorded the focus group discussion. Teachers who participated in the focus group were each assigned a number (e.g., Teacher 1, Teacher 2, etc.) and were encouraged to state their number before making comments to maintain their anonymity and assist the researcher in keeping an accurate record when transcribing the audio. Focus group discussions are considered an effective way to collect data because the group setting allows participants to share ideas and support one another's responses and recollections of ideas and work off of the ideas the other participants share (Flick, 2006). The focus group discussion was transcribed and carefully coded along with the other data to reveal emerging themes.

Method of Analysis

Constant comparative analysis. The researcher analyzed the data collected from the child interviews, parent logs, teacher logs, and teacher focus group using the constant comparative method of analysis (Glaser, 1965; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This qualitative research method was used to reveal and report emerging themes. All the transcribed data (child interviews, parent and teacher logs, and teacher focus group) were examined

holistically by the researcher to allow for a triangulation of data and provide an overview of the emerging themes. Data triangulation is a research validation strategy where a researcher uses multiple sources to provide supportive evidence for developing themes (Creswell, 2007).

The researcher engaged in continual coding over the course of a several weeks. This immersion in the data allowed time to revisit and reflect on the data and to begin to arrange emerging themes. Immersion in the data is an important part of the coding process, continually rereading and reflecting on the data pushes a researcher to become "intimately familiar" with it (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 158). As the researcher coded, she took notes in the form of analytic memos (Glaser, 1965). The analytic memos provided the researcher with a means to review the process of coding and note any questions or notable thoughts that occurred throughout the coding process (Glaser, 1965).

In the initial coding, each item or statement from the interviews, parent and teacher logs, and the teacher focus group was given a detailed code or codes. This open coding included assigning detailed "units of meaning" or codes to words or sections of words (Flick, 2006, p. 297). For example, one initial code was that "the child labels items in the DVD." This detailed code eventually became combined with other detailed codes to become part of one of the final thematic elements, as discussed later in this paragraph. Codes and memos were noted electronically using the "Review: New Comment" feature within Microsoft Word. Codes were then recoded several more times using the same process, constantly refining codes and noting any notable thoughts throughout the process. For instance, the previous example of the initial code that "the child labels items in the DVD" was refined and included as a part of Thematic Element 4C, which included

children modeling actions/activities of the DVDs and/or other interactions that included

pointing, singing, and more. Each coding stage was saved as a separate electronic file for

an organized record and retrieval of the coding process. Early on in the coding process

there were more than 50 codes. At the end of analysis, the codes had been reduced by

more than half and categorized as thematic elements into five main themes.

Once codes were developed and themes began to emerge, the researcher reviewed

the data again in search of alternative understanding, as suggested by Marshall and

Rossman (2006). This involved challenging any themes and looking for other possible

meanings for coded data. Interviews of parents or children to confirm the meaning of

their statements did not occur. As a result, the researcher excluded any coding of data that

could be interpreted in any alternative ways to ensure that what was being reported were

accurate and reflective of that data. For example, one child reported that he liked seeing

his class in the DVD. There was no way to specify if this meant classmates or the

classroom itself. As a result, this statement was not assigned a code as the meaning was

not clear.

Throughout various stages of the coding process, qualitative codes were counted

by the researcher in order to have a sense of the frequency that thematic elements

appeared in the data. The practice of counting or reporting the frequency of codes in

qualitative research, although not always common, can be a component of qualitative

studies and is one means for qualitative researchers to emphasize the prominence of

occurring themes (Creswell, 2007; Sandelowski, 2001). If a thematic element was seen

from a single respondent in a data source multiples times, this thematic element was only

counted as a frequency of one. For example, if a child during an interview expressed that

he/she liked the DVDs multiple times, this enjoyment of the DVDs was only coded once for this child's interview. Re-occurring codes, or the codes that occurred most frequently, were kept for future coding approaches whereas non-reoccurring codes or infrequent codes were discarded in future coding or possibly grouped into other applicable codes/thematic elements. For example, one parent mentioned that her child recognized the parents of her classmates in the DVD. This concept was not mentioned by any other parent, child, or teacher. Furthermore, this code did not coincide with any existing codes. As a result, this initial code was disregarded in future coding.

Some codes' frequencies/frequencies of the thematic elements were integrated in the discussion of the thematic elements in the results to depict the occurrences of the codes within a certain data source. For instance, children recalled watching the DVDs in 67 out of 72 children who were interviewed. In addition, some frequencies were reported to provide comparison, For instance, the frequency of outlying information (e.g., children did not recall watching the DVDs and children's reports of not liking aspects of the DVDs) were reported in the results to provide a comparison and a more holistic picture of relevant themes.

Not all frequencies are presented because frequencies in the results can give a "quantitative orientation of magnitude and frequency" that may be misrepresentative of the nature of qualitative findings (Creswell, 2007, p. 152). The variations of data sources may have made representations of thematic elements appear misleading. Comparing frequencies across data sources is misleading due to the variations of the types of data. For example, family conversations were primarily reported in the parent logs (n=36) and were not mentioned at all in the child interviews and only twice in the teacher logs and

focus group. This should not detract this from being an experience the children had. The source of this thematic element was primarily parental due to the nature of the element itself. Furthermore, teacher input should not be taken at less value because of the fewer frequency of occurrences. The frequency of occurrences amongst teacher data sources was understandably much less due to fewer teachers in the study and less quantitative instances of teacher input. To help depict where thematic elements and themes were derived (i.e., within the child interviews, within parent logs, and/or within teacher logs and focus groups) and to represent the triangulation of data, data sources are noted in Table 3 in the results.

Review of coding and themes. Following this in-depth coding process and analysis, the researcher then gave the coded data to a second researcher, a university faculty member, who reviewed the data and codes. An overview of the coding process was provided to the reviewer. Having a single coder initially analyze the data in depth is an approach that other qualitative studies have similarly utilized (e.g. Alibali, Kita, & Young, 2000; Ford, Schofield, & Hope, 2003; Moore, 2003; Polk, 2005; Sawka et al., 2011), oftentimes bringing in a second researcher to review or code the data. Having another researcher review the data and codes helped reduce individual bias (Stumbo & Little, 1993). After the reviewer independently reviewed the data, discussion commenced for any items the reviewer felt could be interpreted differently. Together, the researchers coded and recoded as necessary to solidify the themes. During this process, discussion took place on each of the items that were in disagreement. Researchers discussed these items until a consensus was made. Following this analysis, the researcher reported the

final results in the form of themes and corresponding thematic elements, as reported in the results section.

Member checking. The final themes were shared with the members of the professional learning community (i.e., participating teachers, a teacher coach, and a teacher coordinator) as a form of member checking to assess the credibility and accuracy of the results from their perspective. Doing this is a validation strategy to check the credibility of the findings (Creswell, 2007). Two PLC members (the teacher coach and the teacher coordinator) responded to themes and thematic elements shared with them. The responses of the PLC members are reported in the results section.

Forced-Choice Parent Questions. Descriptive information (i.e., means, frequencies, and standard deviations) from the forced-choice questions in the parent logs were also analyzed in order to provide some descriptive and contextual information for the study, including how many children watched the monthly DVD classroom newsletters, who they watched it with, and how often they watched it. See Appendix B for parent questions.

Chapter IV: Results

Of the 74 parents who consented to participate in the study, 98 monthly parent logs were collected over the study period. Approximately 60% of these logs were returned in Spanish. Of the 83 of children who were given consent to participate in the child interviews, 72 children were interviewed. Some children were not interviewed due to absence or disenrollment from the participating classroom. Of the four teachers who consented to participate in the study, a total of eight monthly teacher logs were collected and one focus group discussion was held.

From analysis of child interviews, parent logs, teacher logs, and the teacher focus group, five main themes emerged. Each theme contained between 1-4 thematic elements. These themes and thematic elements addressed the research question of: "What are young children's experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters?" Children's experiences are captured and discussed in the results section. The main themes, thematic elements, and data sources are shown in Table 3. Prior to the discussion of the themes and thematic elements, results of the forced-choice parent questions and the overall quality and reading ease of the monthly DVD classroom newsletters are presented to set a context for the themes.

Forced-Choice Parent Questions

The parent logs included three forced-choice parent questions to find out some basic descriptive information about the monthly DVD classroom newsletters. The three-forced choice parent questions asked if the child watched the monthly DVD newsletter, who the child watched the DVD newsletter with, and how many times the child watched the newsletter. The forced-choice parent questions can be found on the first page of the parent log (see Appendix B).

From the 98 parent logs, 95 parents, approximately 97%, reported that their child watched the monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Three parents, approximately 3% reported that their child did not watch the newsletter.

Table 1 – *Percentage of Monthly DVD Newsletters Watched or Not Watched by Child*

Did the child watch the monthly DVD classroom newsletter?	
Yes	No
96.94%	3.06%

Ninety-three out of 98 parents, or approximately 95%, shared that they watched the monthly DVD classroom newsletter with their child. Seven, or approximately 7% of children, watched the DVD by themselves in addition to watching it with their parents. Twenty-eight, or approximately 29%, parents reported that their child watched the DVD newsletter with another family member including 22 with siblings, 3 with cousins, 4 with grandparents, and 3 with aunts or uncles. Of the 28 parents who reported their child watched the DVD newsletter with another family member, only one reported that their child watched the DVD newsletter with the other family members only and not with the parent as well. One parent did not respond to this question and 3 participants' responses were not applicable as they reported their child did not watch the DVD newsletter. No parents reported that their child watched the newsletter with another person (e.g., friend, neighbor, etc.).

Table 2 – *Percentages of Parent Reports of Who Children Watched Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters With*

Who Children Watched DVD Newsletters With		
Parent	By Self	Other Family Member(s)
94.90%	7.14%	28.57%

Note. Percentages can overlap. For instance, all children who watched the DVD newsletters by themselves also watched with a parent or parents. Only one parent reported their child watched the newsletter with other family members and not with the parent as well.

The average times parents reported their child watched the monthly DVD classroom newsletters was calculated and the standard deviation reported. This question asked the parent how many times the child watched the DVD newsletter, which included response options of 0 times, 1 time, 2 times, or 3 or more times with a space to indicate how many times. Some parents checked the three or more box but did not indicate how

many times. For these instances, the frequency of viewing was counted as a three. For respondents who mentioned their child watching the DVD but left how many times blank, this was counted as a one. For those who reported not watching the DVDs, their frequency was a zero. The responses of times watched ranged from 0 times to 10 times (R=10). Overall, the mean number of times parents reported children watched the DVDs was 2.70, or approximately 3 times (SD= 1.78).

Overall Quality and Reading Ease

The overall quality of this year's monthly DVD classroom newsletters according to results using the MDCN-R was reported as a mean of 37.72 out of a possible 40 points (SD=2.00). Results indicate that the respective technical components (M=25.73/28; SD=2) and developmentally appropriate teaching practices (M=12/12; SD=0) seen within them were of an overall high quality. See Appendix A for a copy of the revised MDCN-R. A detailed discussion of the quality of this year's DVD newsletters can be found in Walsh et al. (in review).

Approximately 25% of the English portions of the DVD newsletters were randomly sampled to assess the reading ease of the text appearing in the DVD newsletters. This was done using the Flesch Readability Test available in Microsoft Word. All of the DVDs sampled had a reading ease score of 100 on the 100-point scale. This indicates that the reading ease is high or very easy to read (Flesch, 1960; Microsoft Corporation, 2012). Reading ease takes into account sentence length as well as the average number of syllables per word (Flesch, 1960; Microsoft Corporation, 2012). As information suggested that participating parents had a lower reading level, it was important that the DVD newsletters showed a high reading ease so that DVDs were more

accessible to parents. According the Microsoft website (Microsoft Corporation, 2012),

the desired reading ease for the average document is between a score of 60 and 70.

Scores that are between 90-100 are estimated to be understood by more than 90% of the

U.S. adult population (Flesch, 1960). The randomly sampled DVD newsletters had a

higher reading ease with an overall score of 100. This suggests the DVDs were very

accessible to parents.

Themes and Thematic Elements

From analysis of child interviews, parent logs, teacher logs, and the teacher focus

group, five main themes emerged. Each theme contained between 1-4 thematic elements.

These themes and thematic elements addressed the research question of: "What are young

children's experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters?" Themes and thematic

elements are not presented in any particular order. The main themes, thematic elements

and their presence in data sources (child, parent, and teacher) are depicted in Table 3.

Table 3 – *Presence of Thematic Elements in Data Sources*

Theme	Thematic Elements	Presence in Data Sources		
		Child Interviews	Parent Logs	Teacher Logs & Focus Group
1: Positive Response & Recognition	1A: Positive Response to DVDs	X	X	X
	1B: Recognition of Self; Enjoyed Being in the DVDs	X	X	X
	1C: Recognition of other Children	X	X	X
	1D: Recognition of Teachers	X	X	X

2: Technology Experiences & Digital Literacy	2A: Technology Knowledge, Experiences and/or Discussion	X	X	X
3: Classroom Learning & Experiences	3A: Reflection or Review of Activity/Activities	X	X	X
	3B: Social-Emotional Skill Building and Problem Solving	X	X	X
4: Conversations & Other Interactive Experiences	4A: In-Class Conversations about DVD Newsletters			X
	4B: At-Home Conversations with Family about DVD Newsletters	X	X	X
	4C: Other Interactive Experiences		X	X
5: DVD Recall	5A: Recall Watching at Home with Family	X		X
	5B: Recall Watching in Class	X		
	5C: Recall Watching Both at Home & in Class	X		

Note. An X in the table indicates that the thematic element was present in a given data source.

Theme 1: Positive response and recognition. The first theme that arose from the

qualitative analysis captured that children had overall positive responses to the DVDs.

This theme also included children's recognition and enjoyment of seeing people they

recognized in the DVD newsletters. The young children often noticed other children, themselves, and their teachers. This theme consisted of four primary thematic elements.

Thematic element 1A. Thematic element 1A captured children's expressions that they liked the DVDs or had positive responses to the DVDs (such as displayed enthusiasm). This theme was present across all sources of data, with the highest appearance occurring in the child interviews with 55 instances in 72 child interviews. In other words, approximately 76% of children mentioned that they liked or enjoyed the DVDs during the child interviews. One child mentioned "I like to watch it [the DVD newsletter]" and another shared "I liked them and every day I want to watch them."

Children's positive responses to the DVDs were also supported by their teachers. One teacher mentioned that "…many children commented on how they watched them at home and were very excited about it." Another teacher shared that the children had "…a lot more excitement…" about the DVD newsletters than they had in the previous year.

Overall, children displayed positive responses to the DVDs. Only seven children mentioned suggestions for improvement or areas of the DVDs that they did not like. A few had to do with the DVD itself, such as two children mentioning that the DVD was too short and they wanted to watch more or that they found parts with children not in their class (e.g., the am or pm class) "boring." The majority of the comments about disliking aspects of the DVDs had to do with the activity or actions being portrayed in the DVD itself. For example, one child did not like the doctor play area and another child did not like seeing other children not follow the classroom rules. However, in most of these instances, children still expressed an overall enjoyment with watching the monthly DVD classroom newsletters.

Thematic element 1B. Thematic element 1B captured how children continually mentioned recognizing themselves in the DVDs and/or expressed enjoying seeing themselves in the DVDs. This was another element that was present across all data sources (parent, teacher, and child). One parent shared that her child was"…very excited to see herself on television and she said to her grandma 'me is in the TV, I'm famous.'" Children also expressed their enthusiasm with seeing themselves in the DVD newsletters with comments like "There's me!," "I like watching myself on the television," "I like seeing me on the TV because I like seeing what I'm doing," and "I like being in the movie." During a child interview, a child mentioned seeing herself and the researcher asked her what she thought about that. She shared "It's great" and made her feel "really, really good."

Thematic element 1C. Similar to the previous thematic element, thematic element 1C captured how children continually mentioned recognizing other children (both in their class and those in the morning or afternoon program) and enjoyed seeing other children in the DVD newsletters. This was also present across all three data sources. The highest occurrence of this thematic element occurred in parent logs with 50 occurrences, where parents reported their children mentioning and/or getting excited over seeing their classmates and friends while co-viewing the DVD newsletters. One parent shared that while her son was watching the DVD newsletter "…he got excited seeing his classmates on TV." Another parent expressed how her daughter "…likes seeing her little friends in the DVD a lot and she tells us what their names are and she smiles."

Thematic element 1D. The young children also recognized and enjoyed seeing their teachers in the monthly DVD classroom newsletters. This was captured in thematic

element 1D. This was another thematic element that was present across all data sources with the most reports coming from child and parent sources. Children often exclaimed their teachers' names while seeing an appearance of their teacher in the DVD or recalled seeing their teacher as a memorable event. Some comments included a child saying "I like seeing my friends and teachers" and a parent sharing that his child "…liked looking at his teachers."

Theme 2: Technology experiences and digital literacy. This theme captured children's technology experiences and digital literacy. Digital literacy is a term used in the Early Childhood field to encompass media and digital literacy (National Association for the Education of Young Children & the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media, 2012). This theme was comprised of one primary thematic element.

Thematic element 2A. Thematic element 2A included children's technology and digital literacy experiences (i.e., participation in the creation of the DVDs), displayed technology knowledge and technology discussion (i.e., using technology vocabulary such as tripod, pause, edit, etc.). This thematic element was present across all data sources.

Teachers were the predominant reporters of this thematic element and often provided experiences for the children to promote their digital literacy. One teacher mentioned how the children were "…involved in creating the DVDs, so they had a part in actually acting in it and editing…" which included "…choosing colors for the buttons and which videos should go in it." Another teacher shared that she "showed the raw footage during group time" and they "discussed what parts to keep and what parts to edit." Teachers also promoted technology vocabulary and overall digital literacy. One teacher shared that through the monthly DVD classroom newsletter project, children were

"…becoming that much more immersed in" technology and the "way of using technology to communicate" with each other and with their families. The same teacher mentioned how this was "a learning process" but seemed "natural" for the children to just "pick it up." Children began using their digital literacy in statements such as "oh, are you going to pause it?," "don't forget to bring out the tripod," and "make sure you go get the camera because I want my mom to see this." One teacher also shared how the children developed "the idea of being more aware" during filming which included "being more respectful about making sounds or coming in front of the camera."

At home, children were also having digital experiences and displaying digital literacy. For instance, one parent shared that the child knew "how to work the DVD" including "which one she wants to watch and in what order." During child interviews, children displayed digital literacy in sharing how they were able to play and operate the DVD at home themselves, discussing classroom technology related to the DVD newsletters such as an interactive electronic whiteboard (where one teacher showed the DVDs to the class), how links to clips operate a video, and how video segments were made up of multiple video clips.

Theme 3: Classroom learning and experiences. This theme captured how the monthly DVD classroom newsletters were serving as a support, review, or reflection of classroom learning and experiences for children. This included overall reviews of classroom learning activity/activities as well as specific connections to the theme of this year's monthly DVD classroom newsletters: social-emotional skill-building and problem solving. Both of the thematic elements comprising Theme 3 occurred across all data sources.

Thematic element 3A. This thematic element captured children's experiences with the DVD newsletters being a source of reflection or review of classroom learning or activities. One of the supervisory PLC members shared that the DVDs have children "reflect on the things they've done." Another comment was that the DVDs were "a visual reflection, not just a verbal reflection" resulting in "more impact." This included ideas or concepts seen in the DVDs being brought home. For example, one parent shared that after watching the DVD teaching and learning scene where textures were explored "every time we go to the park I try to explain the difference between soft and rough by checking the grass and dirt." Another parent similarly shared that when they went to the park the child "started searching for smooth things and coarse things." Teachers also agreed with this concept. One teacher explained that "the things that they see on the DVD are being brought home" and "…because they are being reinforced at home it's more meaningful for the child and they're kind of being surrounded in it so I think they get a lot more out of that connection as well."

Children also commented about or reflected about learning experiences depicted in the DVDs. One child reflected on his color-mixing knowledge and stated "red and yellow make orange" when watching the color mixing segment. A different child also reflected back on the color-mixing activity during the child interview and stated "I make colors, watercolors" and "I make pink and blue turn purple." Another child reflected and shared his learning with his parent when he stated "we are learning how to count with rocks and put the name of our mom and dad."

Thematic element 3B. This thematic element captured children's experiences with specifically reflecting on social-emotional skill building and problem solving

aspects of the DVDs. These experiences and concepts were a specific focus and overall theme of this year's monthly DVD classroom newsletters. This included children's reflections of other children's behaviors, problem solving, and social-emotional related experiences. In the classroom, one teacher shared that she would leave the video running and "catch some kids saying some not so nice things to other kids" and she would have conversations with the children about "is that the best way we could tell someone or help someone?" She expressed that these conversations were "helpful in the classroom" and helped children's "self awareness." Another teacher shared that the DVDs prompted a "pivotal learning moment" for one of her students. This child saw himself doing something inappropriate to his peer and "to see that visually reflected back to him…he just turned to this student after watching it and gave this incredibly heartfelt apology." She explained that the DVDs served as "a real amazing tool for that student to grow socially in his problem solving skills." Teachers were also sharing that they would have group discussions with their class about problem solving and the children "were excited when they saw themselves solve a problem" in the DVD newsletters.

This social-emotional and/or problem solving reflection was also being reported outside of the school environment. One teacher shared that the social-emotional techniques demonstrated in the DVDs were being used at home. She provided the example a parent shared with her that one of the children in her class was at a soccer game and encountered a problem with another child. The child came up to her mom and shared what the other child had done. The parent then responded with one of the techniques highlighted in the video and asked "what solution do you want to use?" The child said "I want to ignore her" and then walked away. This teacher also stated that other

parents had shared with her that they were using techniques with siblings and in different situations outside of school as well. One example of a problem solving technique was highlighted in a parent log where the parent showed various ways her child had been independently solving problems using techniques seen in the videos. Parents also mentioned children correcting other children's behaviors while viewing the video. For example, when a parent was watching the children playing cards in one DVD clip, her child "said that it is not OK that the boy threw the card in the face to the other boy, that they should have to share and wait their turn to play."

Children also highlighted their reflection and emphasis on the social-emotional and problem solving theme demonstrated in the DVD newsletters during child interviews. One child mentioned that she enjoyed seeing the social-emotional problem solving techniques seen in the video because "it's good solutions." Another child reflected on the techniques in the video and mentioned if "somebody push you" then "say please stop." Another child mentioned he saw children not doing the right thing in the DVD and he thought "they need to take turns."

Theme 4: Conversations and other interactive experiences. This theme captured that the DVDs promoted conversations in the classroom and at home along with other interactive experiences such as pointing, singing, modeling, and more. This theme was comprised of three thematic elements.

Thematic element 4A. This thematic element captured that children had in-class conversations about the DVDs and was present in only the teacher data sources (teacher focus group and teacher logs). Teacher logs and focus groups included mentions of in-class conversations about the DVD newsletters. In-class conversations often included

whole group discussions, small group discussions, and children spontaneously conversing with their teacher(s) about the DVD newsletters. For example, one teacher showed the newsletter whole-group during circle time and recorded what children were saying regarding the DVD newsletters in her teacher log. This included conversations with the children about specific elements of the DVD newsletters, including what their favorite parts were.

Thematic element 4B. This thematic element captured the children's conversations with their families about the monthly DVD classroom newsletters at home. Children expressed enjoyment in being able to converse with their families, especially their parents, about the content of the DVDs. One child told her parent "I like watching the DVD with you and showing you what me and my friends do in the class." A teacher noted that the children "are able to tell them [the parents] and reflect on things they've done and share with them…more about their school environment" through at-home conversations about monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Parents were the primary reporters of this element, mentioning conversations with children 36 times in the parent logs, although this element was present across all data sources. One parent mentioned in a parent log that "during watching he kept telling me about his friends, his teachers and how they do all the activities shown in the DVD." Another parent mentioned something similar stating "he describes the activity to us; how he did that in school." Another parent shared that his child was excited and "was telling us about it before it even started and naming all of the people in the video, how they act and what they were doing."

Thematic element 4C. This element captured other interactive experiences that children were noted having with or as a result of the monthly DVD classroom

newsletters. For example, children modeling or wanting to model the actions in the DVDs, pointing, snapping, singing, repeating, and counting along with the monthly DVD classroom newsletters. This thematic element was discussed and captured by teachers and parents. One teacher mentioned that the children often got inspired by what they saw children doing in the DVDs and would want to do it too, stating that "they kind of work off each other's ideas." For example, some children would try to copy a picture that they saw in the DVDs or would want to repeat an activity. One parent said that her daughter "repeated the things she watched in the movies." Another parent shared that her child repeated "what the other kids say" and made "all the angry and scared faces where there is a girl reading a book of the expressions of the face."

Theme 5: DVD recall. This theme captured that children found the monthly DVD classroom newsletters memorable and mentioned that they recalled watching the DVDs. This theme is made up of three thematic elements that captured if children recalled watching DVDs at home with their families, watching DVDs at school with their class, or if they recalled watching them in both settings. In total, only three children out of the 72 children interviewed (approximately 4%) mentioned that they did not recall watching the DVDs at home and/or at school. One child's response was not applicable because it was not understood who or where he was sharing he watched the DVDs with. Two other children said they did not watch the DVDs but also did not participate in the interview process in general and may not have been providing an accurate response. Two other children mentioned that they watched the monthly DVD newsletter at home alone, as well as in the classroom. These children's' responses were included as only recalling watching the DVD at school because at home they did not watch them with family

members and thus did not fit into the thematic element 5A. Overall, children recalled watching the DVDs in some setting in approximately 96% of the child interviews, suggesting that the monthly DVD classroom newsletters were an overall a memorable experience for the child participants.

Thematic element 5A. This thematic element captured that children recalled watching the monthly DVD classroom newsletters at home with their family members. For example, one child shared that she watched the DVDs at home with three cousins, a brother, a baby sister, her mom, her aunts, and her grandma and grandpa. The majority of the children interviewed, 55 children or approximately 76%, reported this thematic element.

Thematic element 5B. This thematic element captured that children recalled watching the monthly DVD newsletters in their class. Six children or approximately 8% of children reported this thematic element during the child interviews. They mentioned that they recalled watching the DVD newsletters in their class with their teachers and classmates.

Thematic element 5C. This thematic element captured that children recalled watching the monthly DVD classroom newsletters both with their family and their classmates. This thematic element occurred with eight children in the child interviews. In other words, approximately 11% of children reported this element.

Member Checking

Two PLC members (the teacher coach and the teacher coordinator) responded to the member checking attempts via email made by the researcher. The four participating teachers did not respond to the member checking, which may have been due to the fact

that school was out-of-session by the time the results of the study were analyzed and shared. Responding PLC members suggested that the themes and thematic elements reported appeared to be in-line with what the teachers had shared were children's experiences. One PLC member stated, "I think the findings match what I heard from teachers." The other respondent felt that she thought the themes were accurate but did not know the comments of the teachers regarding children's experiences outside of their meetings. Consequently, she was unable to state that she agreed with the findings in their entirety due to this factor.

Chapter V: Discussion

This study examined young children's experiences with a technology-based parent involvement tool: monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Parent involvement was reviewed as an important factor for young children's development and academic success (Angelides et al., 2006; Christenson & Hurley, 1997; Fan & Chen, 2001; Fantuzzo et al., 2004; Ingram et al., 2007; Jeynes, 2003; McWayne et al., 2004; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Xu & Gulosino, 2006). The topic of parent involvement was approached using a combination of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1977) and Epstein's Framework for Six Types of Involvement (1995). Unique barriers to Hispanic parent involvement were explored as well as strategies to address these barriers (De Gaetano, 2007; Keyes, 2002; Ramirez, 2003; Sanchez et al., 2009; Sosa, 1997; Walker et al., 2011). One such strategy was to use communicative, bilingual, and technologically-based methods such as bilingual monthly DVD classroom newsletters (Ramirez, 2003; Sanchez, et al., 2009; Sosa, 1997). The research question of this study sought to discover what children's experiences were with monthly DVD classroom newsletters. A summary of

findings are presented. In addition, study limitations, suggestions for future research, and conclusions are discussed.

Summary of Findings

Overall, an understanding of children's experiences with this parent involvement tool emerged through child, parent, and teacher data sources. Five main themes which consisted of 1-4 thematic elements each surfaced from the data. These themes highlighted experiences children had with the DVD newsletters, some of which suggested that monthly DVD classroom newsletters were effective at promoting children's communication about school with their families, one of Epstein's (1995) six types of parent involvement.

Overall, results also suggest that this technology (monthly DVD classroom newsletters) resulted in experiences that were positive and supportive of children's learning and development. NAEYC and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media's (2012) position statement on technology suggested technology can be supportive of learning and development and can thus be appropriately integrated in early childhood environments. Furthermore, more than half of the parent logs (approximately 60%) were returned in Spanish. This suggests that the monthly DVD classroom newsletters were accessible to the bilingual Hispanic parent population as intended. This accessibility was promoted by the bilingual, visual, and simple (readability ease) nature of the monthly DVD classroom newsletters.

One theme that emerged (Theme 1) was that children had an overall positive response to the monthly DVD classroom newsletters. They also enjoyed and recognized aspects of the DVD that depicted individuals within their microsystem, including

themselves, other children, and their teachers. It is not surprising that young children

focused on the people in their immediate setting when viewing the DVDs. These are the

individuals they interact with on a daily basis. Furthermore, children's positive responses

to the monthly DVD classroom newsletters was in accord with the positive responses

parents and teachers had in previous monthly DVD classroom newsletter research

(Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh et al., 2008). These findings were also in agreement

with the preliminary findings that children enjoyed monthly DVD classroom newsletters

presented in a pilot study (Wash & Sanchez, 2011). Children's positive response towards

monthly DVD classroom newsletters in this study combined with overall positive

responses from prior studies (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh & Sanchez, 2011) may

suggest that this is a medium that teachers could consider integrating into their Pre-K

programs.

Another theme that emerged (Theme 2) depicted children's experiences with

technology and their growing digital literacy. As previously discussed, media and

technology are unavoidable aspects of a child's macrosystem in today's technological

society (Takeuchi, 2011). Although monthly DVD classroom newsletters are a

technological tool that targeted parent involvement, one unexpected outcome were the

digital literacy experiences children had both at school and at home as a result. These

experiences were prompted by creating, discussing, and viewing the monthly classroom

DVD newsletters. Involving children in the process of creating the newsletters and

promoting conversations and vocabulary (e.g., tripod) related to the newsletters appeared

to be supportive in promoting children's digital literacy, as emphasized by teachers and

depicted by parents and children in the results of this study. These experiences suggest

that the process of creating, discussing, and sending home monthly DVD classroom newsletters are an appropriate use of technology to support the digital literacy aspect of children's learning.

A third theme that emerged (Theme 3) highlighted children's experiences with the DVDs as a medium for review or reflection of classroom learning and experiences. Although the monthly DVD classroom newsletters were intended to inform parents about activities and learning going on in the classroom, an unexpected benefit shown from this process was children's own reflection of classroom activities and experiences. This included reflection of general activities in addition to specific social-emotional skill building and problem solving (the specific focus of this year's DVD newsletters). This thematic element also suggests the supportive nature of the DVD newsletters in children's overall learning and reflection.

A fourth theme that emerged from the data sources (Theme 4) demonstrated the conversations and other interactive experiences that children had as a result of viewing the DVD newsletters. This included in-class and home conversations as well as children modeling and interacting with the DVD newsletters in other ways (pointing, copying, singing, etc.). The at-home communications and parent interactions in particular were supportive of the monthly DVD classroom newsletters being a parent involvement tool. The conversations and experiences illustrated in this study between child and parent(s) demonstrated one of Epstein's (1995) types of parent involvement, communication. This included communications between a child and parent about his/her school experiences as well as active experiences that were prompted by the DVD classroom newsletters. Some experiences captured in this theme could be categorized as Epstein's (Type 5) of parent

involvement, learning at home, where parents would engage or provide experiences for their children that supported what was being taught in the classroom/at school .

Young children have a developmental desire to connect with their parents (Takeuchi, 2011) and the monthly DVD classroom newsletters provided a means to do this through at-home conversations and interactions. The overall conversations and interactive experiences children had as a result of the DVD newsletters is another factor that suggests this technology can be integrated in early learning programs to encourage children to reflect on their learning as well as well as promote parent involvement.

The final theme that emerged from this study (Theme 5) suggested that children found the DVDs to be memorable. This included recalling watching the DVD newsletters at home with their families, watching them at school, or both. The majority of children in interviews reported that they recalled watching the DVDs with their parents. This information was supported by the data collected in the parent logs that demonstrated most parents reported watching the DVDs with their child. Co-viewing media with young children is a recommended practice (Fisch, 2004; Gutnick et al., 2011; Wright, St. Peters, & Huston, 1990) and can promote conversations and interactions highlighted throughout the previous themes. The memorable aspect of watching the DVDs suggests that these experiences can be revisited by the child.

Implications, Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Implications. The results of this study have implications for the emerging line of research on using monthly DVD classroom newsletters as a way to encourage parent involvement, including reaching a Spanish-speaking parent population. The findings provide insight to children's experiences with this parent involvement strategy. Overall,

children were depicted as having positive experiences with the monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Experiences appeared to support their learning and development as well as promote parent involvement strategies, including parent-child communication and experiences with learning at home. This provides support for teachers using this technological tool.

There are also other practical implications. Nationally pre-service opportunities designed to develop and promote teachers' parent involvement skills are scarce (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002). In July of 2011, the Nevada legislature charged the Commission on Professional Standards in Education to adopt regulations prescribing coursework on parent involvement on or before December 31, 2011 (Rheault, 2011). Coursework that includes parent involvement in teacher education programs will eventually benefit Nevada students, educators, families, and the community at large. The current study findings in combination with other monthly DVD classroom newsletter research (Sanchez & Walsh, 2010; Walsh et al., 2008) may have implications for parent involvement coursework, specifically regarding parent involvement strategies that have been utilized in Nevada pre-kindergarten classrooms.

Limitations. While there are implications of this study, there are also limitations. The study period was limited due to the time constraints of the school year, with the project not beginning until the second-half of the school year. Teachers were also in varying stages of expertise for producing the DVDs. As a result, there were varying numbers of monthly DVD classroom newsletters sent home for each participating school site. The end of the school year conflicted with the distribution of some DVDs and made it not plausible to receive parent or teacher feedback for these end of the year DVD

newsletters. It would have been more desirable to have implemented the study for a longer period of time and with an equal amount of monthly DVD classroom newsletters and logs being sent home. In the future, researchers should make efforts to implement this project earlier in the school year to encourage a more equal distribution of DVDs and end the project with enough time to receive adequate feedback.

More teacher support to help teachers produce monthly DVD classroom newsletters may be helpful as well (Sanchez et al., 2011). For example, a teacher with technology expertise who is willing to assist teachers with less experience may be helpful to support the technical components of the DVD production. This includes editing and formatting monthly DVD classroom newsletters and being available for troubleshooting when problems arise. Teachers who expressed difficulty with producing monthly DVD classroom newsletters early in the project anecdotally cited editing and formatting as their biggest challenge. Having this assistance early on the monthly DVD production may provide teachers will the skills and experience to feel more comfortable with producing the monthly DVD classroom newsletters in future months.

Time constraints also made it difficult to do member checking of the results of the study. It would have been ideal to have member checking with parents and teachers. For example, in a future study the researcher could send home a letter to parents sharing the findings and asking for their feedback of the results. Although attempts were made to member check with the participating PLC members, the results of the study were finalized after the school year ended and no responses were received from classroom teachers, only from two supervising PLC members.

Future research. Many parents responded to the parent logs with general comments and feedback not related to the children's experiences. Several of them expressed an enthusiasm, interest and gratitude for the project and shared their own impressions regarding what they were seeing in the DVD newsletters. This may be an area future researchers will want to explore further, as parents appeared to have insightful comments about the project. For researchers who wish to further explore children's experiences with the monthly DVD classroom newsletters, further clarification is recommended in the parent logs that provide more examples and explicit directions about the log's intended purpose. This may help eliminate responses from parents that although interesting, did not coincide with the purpose of the study. When exploring this topic further, researchers may wish to design their study focusing specifically on the thematic elements of this study that demonstrated links to parent involvement. For example, designing child interviews to specifically address any conversations or interactive experiences children were having at home with their parents.

The present study confirmed that children are making meaning out of the DVDs. Future studies may wish to explore child outcomes related to classrooms that use DVDs. For instance, future work may explore any correlations between this parent involvement tool and child outcomes such as academic achievement or social-emotional development. The social-emotional component might be especially meaningful as parent involvement has shown in previous studies to be associated with better social outcomes (Fantuzzo et al., 2004; McWayne et al., 2004) and the theme of the DVDs used in this study specifically focused on social-emotional skill building and problem solving.

The present study along with initial pilot studies (e.g., Walsh et al., 2008; Sanchez & Walsh, 2010) were implemented in schools serving predominantly families who identified as Hispanic, reported that their home language was Spanish, and that their income was low. Future studies should further examine this technology-based parent involvement tool with this group as well as explore the possibilities of it with other ethnic and income groups.

Conclusion

Through a triangulation of data, young children were shown to have meaningful experiences with monthly DVD classroom newsletters. Their experiences were overall positive and suggested parent involvement was promoted by DVD newsletters through the communicative and interactive experiences occurring between children and their parents. Furthermore, DVD newsletters were suggested to support classroom learning through child experiences and reflection. Overall, findings of this study support using monthly classroom DVD newsletters in Pre-K programs.

References

Alibali, M. W., Kita, S., & Young, A. J. (2000). Gesture and the process of speech production: We think, therefore we gesture. *Language & Cognitive Processes*, *15*(6), 593-613. doi:10.1080/016909600750040571

Angelides, P., Theophanous, L., & Leigh, J. (2006). Understanding teacher–parent relationships for improving pre-primary schools in Cyprus. *Educational Review*, *58*(3), 303-316. doi:10.1080/00131910600748315

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2001). Growing chaos in the lives of children, youth and families: How can we turn it around? In J. C. Westman (Ed.), *Parenthood in America: Under-valued, underpaid, under siege* (pp. 197-210). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. *International Encyclopedia of education, 3*(2). Oxford: Elsevier.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychology, 32*, 513-531.

Christenson, S. L., & Hurley, C. M. (1997). Parents' and school psychologists' perspectives on parent involvement activities. *School Psychology Review*, *26*(1), 111.

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

De Gaetano, Y. (2007). The role of culture in engaging Latino parents' involvement in

    school. *Urban Education*, *42(*2), 145-162.

Deslandes, R. (2001). *A vision of home-school partnership: Three complementary*

    conceptual frameworks. Paper presented at the A Bridge to the Future –

    Collaboration between Parents, Schools and Communities, Nijmegen,

    The Netherlands.

Ennis, S. R., Rios-Vargas, M., & Albert, N. G. (2011*). The Hispanic population: 2010.*

    2010 Census briefs. US Department of Commerce. Economics and Statistics

    Administration. Retrieved from

    http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-04.pdf

Epstein, J. L. (1985). Home and school connections in schools of the future: Implications

    of research on parent involvement. *Peabody Journal of Education*, *62*(4), 18.

Epstein, J. L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we

    share. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76,* 701-712.

Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement:

    A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, *13*(1), 1-22.

Fantuzzo, J., McWayne, C., Perry, M. A., & Childs, S. (2004). Multiple dimensions of

    family involvement and their relations to behavioral and learning competencies

    for urban, low-income children. *School Psychology Review*, *33*(4), 467-480.

Fisch, S. M. (2004). *Children's learning from educational television: Sesame Street and*

    beyond. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Flesch, R. (1960). *How to write, speak and think more effectively.* New York: Harper

Flick, U. (2006). *An introduction to qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ford, S., Schofield, T., & Hope, T. (2003). What are the ingredients for a successful evidence-based patient choice consultation?: A qualitative study. *Social Science & Medicine*, *56*(3), 589.

Glaser, B. G. (1965). The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems, 12*(4), 436-445. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/798843

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research.* Chicago: Aldine.

Good, M. E., Masewicz, S., & Vogel, L. (2011). Latino English Language Learners: Bridging achievement and cultural gaps between schools and families. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 9,* 321-339. doi: 10.1080/15348431.2010.491048

Greene, S., & Hogan, D. (2005). *Researching children's experience: Approaches and methods.* London: Sage.

Gutnick, A., Robb, M., Takeuchi, L., & Kotler, J. (2011). *Always connected: The new digital media habits of young children.* New York: Sesame Workshop.

Harniss, M. K., Epstein, M. H., Bursuck, W. D., Nelson, J., & Jayanthi, M. (2001). Resolving homework-related communication problems: Recommendations of parents of children with and without disabilities. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *17*(3), 205-225. doi:10.1080/10573560152121001

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1995). Parental involvement in children's education: Why does it make a difference? *Teachers College Record*, *97*(2), 310.

Ingram, M., Wolfe, R. B., & Lieberman, J. M. (2007). The role of parents in high-achieving schools serving low-income, at-risk populations. *Education & Urban Society*, *39*(4), 479-497.

Jensen, D. (2006). Using newsletters to create home-school connections. *Reading Teacher*, *60*(2), 186-190. doi:10.1598/RT.60.2.8

Jeynes, W. H. (2003). A meta-analysis: The effects of parental involvement on minority children's academic achievement. *Education & Urban Society*, *35*(2), 202.

Keyes, C. R. (2002). A way of thinking about parent/teacher partnerships for teachers. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, *10*(3), 177.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McCarthey, S. J. (2000). Home-school connections: A review of the literature. *Journal of Educational Research*, *93*(3), 145.

McWayne, C., Hampton, V., Fantuzzo, J., Cohen, H. L., & Sekino, Y. (2004). A multivariate examination of parent involvement and the social and academic competencies of urban kindergarten children. *Psychology in the Schools*, *41*(3), 363-377.

Michael Cohen Group & U.S. Department of Education Ready to Learn Program. (2007). *Children, families & media: A benchmark*. New York: Michael Cohen Group, LLC.

Microsoft Corporation (2012). Test your document's readability. Retrieved from http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word-help/test-your-document-s-readability-HP010148506.aspx

Moore, L. (2003). 'Billy, the Sad Sperm with No Tail': Representations of sperm in
children's books. *Sexualities*, *6*(3/4), 277-300.

National Association for the Education of Young Children & the Fred Rogers Center for
Early Learning and Children's Media (2012). Technology and interactive media
as tools in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8.
Retrieved from
http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PS_technology_WEB2.pdf

Nevada Department of Education (2011). *2010-2011 State accountability summary
report*. Retrieved from http://www.nevadareportcard.com.

Obama, B. (2011). Remarks on the No Child Left Behind Act. *Daily Compilation of
Presidential Documents*, 1-4.

Polk, D. M. (2005). Communication and family caregiving for Alzheimer's Dementia:
Linking attributions and problematic integration. *Health Communication*, *18*(3),
257-273. doi:10.1207/s15327027hc1803_4

Powell, M. B., & Snow, P. C. (2007). Guide to questioning children during the free-
narrative phase of an investigative interview. *Australian Psychologist*, *42*(1),
57-65. doi:10.1080/00050060600976032

Ramirez, A. (2003). Dismay and disappointment: Parental involvement of Latino
immigrant parents. *Urban Review*, *35*(2), 93.

Rheault, K. (2011). *Newly enacted statutes affecting public and private schools passed
during the 2011 legislative session.* Retrieved from
http://www.doe.nv.gov/PDFs/NewlyEnactedStatutesAffectingEducation2011.pdf

Ryan, R. M., & Grolnick, W. S. (1986). Origins and pawns in the classroom: Self-report
and projective assessments of children's perceptions. *Journal of Personality and
Social Psychology*, *50*, 550-558.

Sanchez, C., Walsh, B. A., & Rose, K. K. (2009). How to encourage Hispanic family
involvement. *Texas Child Care: The Quarterly Journal for Caregivers
Everywhere, 33*, 24-29.

Sanchez, C., & Walsh, B. A. (2010). Teachers' perceptions of the use of monthly DVD
classroom newsletters. *International Journal of Technology in Teaching and
Learning, 6*(2), 157-171.

Sandelowski, M. (2001). Real qualitative researchers don't count: The use of numbers in
qualitative research. *Research in Nursing & Health*, *24*, 230-240.

Sawka, A. M., Straus, S., Gafni, A., Meiyappan, S., O'Brien, M., Brierley, J. D., &
Goldstein, D. P. (2011). A usability study of a computerized decision aid to help
patients with, early stage papillary thyroid carcinoma in decision-making on
adjuvant radioactive iodine treatment. *Patient Education & Counseling*, *84*(2),
24-27. doi:10.1016/j.pec.2010.07.038

Sheldon, S. B., & Epstein, J. L. (2005). Involvement counts: Family and community
partnerships and mathematics achievement. *Journal of Educational Research*,
98(4), 196-206.

Shepherd, J., & Roker, D. (2005). The parenting of young people: Using newsletters to
provide information and support. *Children & Society*, *19*(4), 264-277.
doi:10.1002/CHI.832

Sosa, A. (1997). Involving Hispanic parents in educational activities through

    collaborative relationships. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *21*(2/3), 285.

Stumbo, N. J., & Little, S. L. (1993). Confirming, interpreting and reporting naturalistic

    research findings. In M. J. Malkin & C. Z. Howe (Eds.), *Research in therapeutic*

    recreation: Basic concepts and methods (pp. 279-298). State College, PA:

    Venture.

Takeuchi, L. M. (2011). *Families matter: Designing media for a digital age.* New York:

    The Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop.

U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *Title I- Improving the academic achievement of*

    the disadvantaged. Retrieved from

    http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg1.html

Walker, J. T., Ice, C. L., Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (2011). Latino

    parents' motivations for involvement in their children's schooling: An exploratory

    study. *Elementary School Journal*, *111*(3), 409-429.

Walker, J. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V.

    (2005). Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development.

    Elementary School Journal, *106*(2), 85-104.

Walsh, B. A., Buckley, R. R., Rose, K. K., Sanchez, C., & Gillum, N. L. (2008).

    Innovative school-family communication: Parental perceptions of the use of

    monthly DVD classroom newsletters. In P. G. Grotewell & Y. R. Burton (Eds.),

    Early childhood education. Issues and developments (pp. 211-221). Hauppauge,

    NY: Nova Science.

Walsh, B. A., Cromer, H., Villalobos, J. G., & Alvarez, M. (in review). *Use of a rubric to assess pre-kindergarten teachers' monthly DVD classroom newsletters*. Proposal submitted to the American Educational Research Association (AERA), San Francisco, CA.

Walsh, B. A., Hayes, J. T., Sanders, L., Vittrup, B., & Hammond, J. (2012, April). *Development and validation of an assessment method to measure the quality of a parental involvement strategy*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Vancouver, Canada.

Walsh, B. A., & Sanchez, C. (2011). *Children's experiences with monthly DVD Classroom newsletters: A pilot study*. Unpublished report, Human Development and Family Studies, University of Nevada, Reno.

Walsh, B. A., Sanders, L., Waugh, S., & Sanchez, C. (2011, June). *Using monthly DVD classroom newsletters as tools for parental involvement and educator professional development.* Paper presented at NAEYC's 20th Annual Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development Institute, Providence, RI.

Wright, J. C., St. Peters, M., & Huston, A. C. (1990). Television and families: What do young children watch with their parents? *Child Development*, *62*(6): 1409-1423.

Xu, Z., & Gulosino, C. (2006). How does teacher quality matter? The effect of teacher-parent partnership on early childhood performance in public and private schools. *Education Economics*, *14*(3), 345-367. doi:10.1080/09645290600777550

Appendix A

Revised Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletter Rubric (MDCN-R)

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters: Rubric, Technical Section

	Insufficient (1)	Emergent (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)	Rater Comment Box (if applicable):
		Scoring Scale			
Length of DVD	Footage is less than approximately 10 to 15 minutes (total).	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Footage is within the requirements of approximately 10 to 15 minutes (total).	
Written Language Conventions	DVD contains more than 4 grammatical, spelling, and/or vocabulary errors.	DVD contains 3-4 grammatical, spelling, and/or vocabulary errors.	DVD contains 1-2 grammar, spelling, and/or vocabulary errors.	DVD is free of grammatical, spelling, and/or vocabulary errors.	
Audio	Audio is not clear, it appears to have been recorded at too low or too high of a level. Background noise overpowers the main audio.	Audio level is somewhat clear. Background noise is present or is not in balance and somewhat overpowers the main audio.	Audio level is mostly clear. Background noise is non-existent or is mostly kept in balance and does not take away from the main audio.	Audio level is clear. Background noise is non-existent or is kept in balance and does not take away from the main audio.	

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters: Rubric, Technical Section

	Scoring Scale				
	Insufficient (1)	Emergent (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)	Rater Comment Box (if applicable):
Visual Definition (Resolution)	None to very few scenes have sufficient visual definition (resolution) for viewer to see the content.	Some scenes have sufficient visual definition (resolution) for viewer to see the content.	Most scenes have sufficient visual definition (resolution) for viewer to see the content.	All scenes have sufficient visual definition (resolution) for viewer to see the content.	
Visual Definition (Camera Techniques)	None to very few scenes flow. For example, there is excessive movement, panning, or zooming that disengages the viewer.	Some scenes flow and appropriate focus, movement, panning, or zooming is sometimes utilized to engage the viewer.	Most scenes flow and appropriate focus, movement, panning, or zooming is mostly utilized to engage the viewer.	All scenes flow and appropriate focus, movement, panning, or zooming is utilized to engage the viewer.	

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters: Rubric, Technical Section

		Scoring Scale		
	Insufficient (1)	Emergent (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Lighting	None to very few scenes have balanced lighting enabling the viewer to see the content.	Some scenes have balanced lighting enabling the viewer to see the content.	Most scenes have balanced lighting enabling the viewer to easily see the content.	All scenes have balanced lighting enabling the viewer to easily see the content.
Menu Functionality	Most menu links do not function and do not display main menu at end of any clips.	Some menu links function and DVD displays main menu at end of some clips.	Most menu links function and DVD displays main menu at end of most clips.	All menu links function and DVD displays main menu at end of all clips.

Rater Comment Box (if applicable):

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters: Rubric, Developmentally Appropriate Practice Section (DAP)

Scoring Scale

	Insufficient (1)	Emergent (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Planning Curriculum to Achieve Important Goals (3.A, 1) (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers do not display knowledge and understanding of DAP. For example, the display does not consider the domains of physical, social/emotional, and cognitive development and does not span across the disciplines, such as language, literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical, education, and health.	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers somewhat display knowledge and understanding of DAP. For example, the display considers one of three domains of physical, social/emotional, and cognitive development and spans across two disciplines, such as language, literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical, education, and health.	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers mostly display knowledge and understanding of DAP. For example, the display considers two of the three domains of physical, social/emotional, and cognitive development and spans across multiple (more than two) disciplines, such as language, literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical, education, and health.	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers always display knowledge and understanding of DAP. For example, the display always considers three of the three domains of physical, social/emotional, and cognitive development and spans across multiple (more than two) disciplines, such as language, literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical, education, and health.

Planning Curriculum to Achieve Important Goals (3.A, 1) Rater Comment Box (if applicable):

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters: Rubric, Developmentally Appropriate Practice Section (DAP)

	Scoring Scale			
	Insufficient (1)	Emergent (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Planning Curriculum to Achieve Important Goals (3C, 2) (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers do not provide experiences to support each child to reach the goals outlined in the curriculum.	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers provide few experiences to support each child to reach the goals outlined in the curriculum.	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers provide many similar experiences to support each child to reach the goals outlined in the curriculum.	In the teaching and learning scenes, teachers always provide many varied experiences to support each child to reach the goals outlined in the curriculum.

Planning Curriculum to Achieve Important Goals (3C, 2) Rater Comment Box (if applicable):

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletters: Rubric, Developmentally Appropriate Practice Section (DAP)

Scoring Scale

	Insufficient (1)	Emergent (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Creating a Caring Community of Learners (1B) (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)	In the teaching and learning scenes, relationships do not appear to be an important context through which children develop and learn. There are no opportunities in the teaching and learning scenes to play together, collaborate on investigations and projects, and to talk with peers and adults.	In the teaching and learning scenes, relationships somewhat appear to be of an important context through which children develop and learn. Fifty percent of the teaching and learning scenes evidence opportunities to play together, collaborate on investigations and projects, and talk with peers and adults.	In the teaching and learning scenes, relationships mostly appear to be an important context through which children develop and learn. Seventy-five percent of the teaching and learning scenes evidence opportunities to play together, collaborate on investigations and projects, and talk with peers and adults.	In the teaching and learning scenes, relationships always appear to be an important context through which children develop and learn. All of the teaching and learning scenes evidence opportunities to play together, collaborate on investigations and projects, and talk with peers and adults.

Creating a Caring Community of Learners (1B) Rater Comment Box (if applicable):

Appendix B

Parent Log (English and Spanish Versions)

University of Nevada, Reno

Child's Name: _____

MONTHLY DVD CLASSROOM NEWSLETTER LOG

Please return to the classroom by _____.

Please check one response to each of the following questions. Your answers to these questions will help us plan.

1) Did your child watch this month's DVD classroom newsletter?
   __Yes
   __ No

2) If your child watched this month's DVD classroom newsletter, with whom did he/she watch it with?
   __ Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
   __ Child watched it alone
   __ With another family member (tell us more): _____
   __ Other (tell us more): _____

3) How many times did your child watch this month's DVD classroom newsletter?
   __ 0
   __ 1
   __ 2
   __ 3 or more (tell us more): _____

Please tell us more about this month's DVD classroom newsletter by writing in the boxes. Please write as little or as much as you would like.

Comments

Date	Activities surrounding this month's DVD classroom newsletter	Language surrounding this month's DVD classroom newsletter (e.g., the child said, "I like seeing myself on TV")

Thank you for your participation!
Please return this to your classroom by _____.

Early Childhood Education
Washoe County School District
COW PRE-K

Building Blocks to Literacy

University of Nevada, Reno

Nombre del niño/a:_____

DIARIO DEL DVD MENSUAL DEL BOLETÍN DE NOTICIAS DE LA CLASE

Por favor devuélvalo a la clase _____.

Por favor marque una respuesta para cada una de las siguientes preguntas. Sus respuestas nos ayudarán a planificar.

1) ¿Su niño/a ha mirado este mes el DVD del Boletín de noticias de la clase?

___ Sí

___ No

2) ¿Si su niño/a miró el DVD este mes, con quién lo miró?

___ Padre(s) Tutor(es)
___ Lo miró solo
___ Con otro miembro de la familia (¿quién?) _____
___ Otra(s) persona(s) (¿quién/quiénes?) _____

3) ¿Cuántas veces miró su niño/a este mes el DVD?

___ 0
___ 1
___ 2
___ 3 o más (¿cuántas veces?) _____

Por favor díganos más acerca del DVD mensual del Boletín de Noticias de la Clase. Escriba en los espacios a continuación. Escriba tanto como quiera.

Comentarios

Fecha	Actividades relacionadas con el DVD de este mes	Expresiones relacionadas con el DVD de este mes. Por ejemplo el niño/a dice: "me gusta verme en la televisión"

Gracias por su participación!
Por favor devuelva este diario a su clase el _____.

Appendix C

Teacher Log

University of Nevada, Reno

Teacher's Name: _____

Monthly DVD Classroom Newsletter Log

Please tell us more about the children's experiences with this month's DVD classroom newsletter by writing in the boxes. Please write as little or as much as you would like.

Comments

Date	Activities surrounding this month's DVD classroom newsletter (e.g., "We showed this month's DVD classroom newsletter in the classroom during circle time")	Language surrounding this month's DVD classroom newsletter (e.g., the child said, "I like seeing myself on TV" or "I watched the DVD at home with my brother!")

Date	Activities surrounding this month's DVD classroom newsletter (e.g., "We showed this month's DVD classroom newsletter in the classroom during circle time")	Language surrounding this month's DVD classroom newsletter (e.g., the child said, "I like seeing myself on TV" or "I watched the DVD at home with my brother!")

Thank you for your participation!