

Module 4
Research Connections and Families of Young Children
Worksheet 4.1: Family Case Study

Your Name _____ Course _____ Date _____

Topic(s) to search related to "your" family (see list at the bottom of this worksheet for ideas): _____

As discussed in class, you will use *Research Connections* to learn more about one or more topics that may help you understand families like the one that is the focus of your case study. Your main source of information will be the *Research Connections* web site, www.researchconnections.org. Using the SearchTips in your guide and other suggestions from your instructor, learn more about characteristics of families like the one you are working with for your Family Case Study project.

1. Begin by doing a search from the home page using the topic or topics you have selected. Briefly describe the initial results.	How many resources? How many were peer reviewed journal articles?
2. In the "More Search Options" section, refine your search, using some of the suggestions discussed in class or in the <i>Research Connections</i> "Guide to Searching the Collection."	What did you do to refine the search? New term? Combination of terms? Using filters afterwards? Etc? What were the results? (fewer/more/better resources, etc.)
3. Following the format given by your instructor, summarize your findings as part of your Family Case Study written or oral report. Be sure to comment on whether "your" family seems to fit with the general research findings, and if not, why	On this worksheet, just make a few notes about main points you will summarize.

that may be.	
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Search Topics to Consider (base this on your knowledge about the family, gained through interviews, family visits, etc. These are just examples.)

- Family structure or family composition
- Working families
- Head Start families
- Poverty
- Grandparents
- Mother headed families (or single parents)
- Disabilities (if a child has a disability)
- Stress
- Time management
- Child care choices
- Race/ethnicity/culture (or specifics such as Asian-American, African-American, Hispanic)
- Mental health
- Children home alone
- Etc.!

Other notes:

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Worksheet 4.2: Family Diversity

Your Name _____ Course _____ Date _____

Dimension(s) of Family Diversity to Investigate: _____

Back-up (if you are not successful in finding information on your first dimension of diversity) _____

As discussed in class, your team will be responsible for learning more about dimensions of diversity in a hypothetical family of a young child, including a school-age child if this is of interest. Your main source of information will be the *Research Connections* web site, www.researchconnections.org. Using the SearchTips in your guide and other suggestions from your instructor, learn more about this family's culture, economic situation, racial identity, or other dimensions that contribute to their uniqueness. Your instructor will tell you whether to compile all your team's information on one worksheet or whether to use one for each dimension.

<p>1. Begin by doing a search from the home page using your assigned dimension of family diversity as the search term. Briefly describe the results.</p>	<p>How many resources? How many were from the past two years?</p>
<p>2. In the "More Search Options" section, refine your search, using some of the suggestions discussed in class or in the <i>Research Connections</i> "Guide to Searching the Collection." Note: if you aren't successful in searching for resources on this dimension of family diversity, try your back-up.</p>	<p>What did you do to refine the search? New term? Combination of terms? Using filters afterwards? Etc? What were the results? (fewer/more/better resources, etc.)</p>

<p>3. Download <i>ONE</i> resource that you found. Describe why you chose this resource. Bring to class (one resource for each dimension of family diversity that you investigated).</p>	
<p>4. Be prepared to comment on how your team's information might help you better understand and support this child's family.</p>	

Other notes:

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Worksheet 4.3: Beyond Mom—Fathers or Grandparents

Your Name _____ Course _____ Date _____

As discussed in class, your team will be responsible for learning more about one of two important categories of family members: fathers or grandparents. This search can include fathers or grandparents of younger children, older (school-age) children, or both, depending on your time and interest for this activity. Your main source of information will be the *Research Connections* web site, www.researchconnections.org. Using the SearchTips in your guide and other suggestions from your instructor, select one or more resources (depending on your instructor's directions) from those you find during your search. Summarize these for your classmates and consider how the information fits with your personal experience with (or as!) a father or grandparent.

1. Begin by doing a search from the home page using either the word "fathers" or "grandparents" as the search term. Briefly describe the results.	How many resources?
2. With your instructor's guidance, click on More Search Options and use the description search to quickly learn more about the emphasis of some of the sources you've already found. For example, maybe one report not only has "grandparents" as a Search Descriptor but also "Readiness, " "Kindergarten," or "father involvement" and "school-age children".	What did you learn from searching the description?

3. Follow your instructor's guidance to prepare to share your information with others in the class.

Just make notes here about what you are planning to do.

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Worksheet 4.4: Families and Their Children's Learning

Your Name _____ Course _____ Date _____

Your Topic/Search Focus _____

Families are often called their children's "first teachers," and while this role changes as children progress through school, parent involvement continues to be important to a child's academic success." As an early childhood professional, you need to know more about families' beliefs and practices, and how you can support families in helping their children learn. With others in your class, you will be preparing a parent/family meeting on this topic. As an alternative to a parent/family meeting, some students may want to plan an outing to a community event or organization that would engage families and children in sharing and learning about each others' backgrounds. The resources in the *Research Connections* collection will give you some extra background. Using topics/search terms recommended by your instructor (examples are at the end of this worksheet), your team will investigate one aspect of families and their children's learning. Again, your main source of information will be the *Research Connections* web site, www.researchconnections.org. Using the SearchTips in your guide and other suggestions from your instructor, find several resources that you think may be especially useful. Download examples and consider how the information may help you in planning your parent/family meeting.

<p>1. Summary of relevant research that your team identified. What were some of the resources close to the top of the results list (the <i>Research Connections</i> search program sorts them by relevance to the search terms you have selected)? Summarize on this worksheet and attach 1-2 downloaded full-text documents.</p>	
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2. Ideas for Parent/Family Meeting. What ideas have you gained that may help you decide on the content of your planned parent/family meeting or a similar event that is appropriate for the setting in which you work or plan to work? (For example, if you find that parents' book-reading is important for children's reading achievement, you might plan to share tips on that at the meeting. For school-age programs, a family "math" night or family "science" night could include activities that allow parents and children to explore subject matter together.)

Examples of Topics/Search Terms related to Families and Children's Learning (note that you will need to search for both Families/Parents and at least one other term, using the ANDs in "More Search Options")

Families (or Parents) AND

- Motivation
- Achievement (or academic achievement)
- Literacy
- Reading
- Attitudes
- Readiness
- Beliefs
- Learning

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***Research Connections* and Families of Young Children**
Worksheet 4.5: Family/Parent Involvement

Your Name _____ Course _____ Date _____

Family involvement in early childhood programs is known to be essential to young children's engagement in, and success in, learning. As part of the plan for your family involvement project, please complete the following worksheet and include in the materials that you submit in class. In these sections, you will use *Research Connections'* Browse by Topic feature to browse for, find, and summarize research and other resources that support your decisions about the focus of your family involvement project and the methods you plan to use. Your main source of information will be the *Research Connections* web site, www.researchconnections.org. Begin by going to Topic 2, Parents and Families, under "Browse by Topic," and then click on the "+" signs to get into relevant subtopics. On your own or as part of a team, continue systematic browsing to identify the best resources for your purpose. To focus on parent involvement in afterschool programs, or more generally on involvement of parents of school-age children, searches may need to be refined with terms such as "school age child care" or "afterschool programs" or "out-of-school time" or "extended learning". Then preview and download some of the most useful resources.

Research examples (below, list where you found the information, and also list exact references. Quality is more important than quantity!	Justification on the basis of research evidence (below, briefly describe how this research supports your decisions about the content and methods you plan to use in your parent involvement project)