

## Special Initiatives

Special initiatives promote family involvement through coordinated activities involving networks of organizations. For example, they include public service campaigns to increase parent involvement in children's learning, and literacy and foundation funded initiatives that include parent involvement as a key ingredient in improving children's educational outcomes.

**Annie E. Casey Foundation's** Making Connections is a 10-year investment by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to improve the outcomes for families and children in 22 tough or isolated neighborhoods. The initiative is based on the premise that any serious effort to improve outcomes for children must help families connect to the opportunities, support, and help in their communities that they need to do a good job raising children. All the Making Connections sites are involved in a network that supports exchange of ideas and the initiative has generated significant knowledge about strategies and promising practices. [www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc](http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/mc)

**Connect for Kids** is an alternative Web-based news source covering critical issues for children and families. Connect for Kids seeks to provide adults with tools and information that support efforts on behalf of children, youth, and families. From 2001 to 2003, Connect for Kids and the National Education Association together with the Ad Council conducted a large-scale Parental Involvement public service campaign with radio and magazine ads and spots on national television. [www.connectforkids.org/node/2638](http://www.connectforkids.org/node/2638)

**ENLACE (Engaging Latino Communities for Education)** is a nationwide initiative created to increase higher education participation and completion opportunities for Latino/Hispanic students by linking colleges, schools, and communities to ensure success from kindergarten through college. Thirteen partnerships located at Hispanic-serving universities and colleges in seven states provide support and services to children from preschool through high school and their families. Family involvement and linking the resources of family, culture, and community to colleges and K-12 schools are seen as central to building educational success. These 4-year efforts will run through 2004. [www.wkkf.org/ENLACE](http://www.wkkf.org/ENLACE)

For information about family involvement in Alabama or to learn about the Alabama PIRC Academy for Parent Leadership and Engagement, contact the Alabama PIRC at 334-567-2252 or visit us online at [www.alabamaparentcenter.com](http://www.alabamaparentcenter.com).

*Taking a Closer Look: A Guide to Online Resources on Family Involvement* was compiled by [Heather B. Weiss](#), Kelly Faughnan, [Margaret Caspe](#), Cassandra Wolos, M. Elena Lopez, and [Holly Kreider](#), Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE), Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP), September 2005.