



**Sample Questions to Ask Families
to Learn about Their Culture and
Their Views on Parent Involvement**

Consider the following questions as you develop your own list of questions to ask of families as you increase your own awareness and understanding of their culture and their views on parent involvement:

1. Please describe what schools are like in the country you came from. What are they like?
 - At what age do children start school? Stop going to school?
 - Do you have elementary, middle, and high schools?
 - What is a day like in the school?
 - What time do classes start and end? Is there recess?
 - What subjects do the students study?
 - Do they do independent work or work as a group?
 - How does the teacher teach?
 - What are the teachers called?
 - Is attendance mandatory?
 - Is there homework?
 - How do parents help the teachers? What is their role in helping a child learn?
 - What are the rules the children must follow? What happens if they break the rules?
 - Are there report cards?
 - How do you find out how your child is doing in school?
 - What does it mean to be successful in school in your country?
 - What are children expected to learn in school?
 - What are the big differences between schools in the country you came from and schools in Iowa?
2. What are your dreams/expectations for your children?
3. What do you want your children to learn in school?
4. How can the schools help your children be successful? What do you want or expect from the schools?
5. What kind of information do you want from the teacher? The school? What would help you?
6. What is the best way to give you this information? To whom should we give the information?
7. What do you do to help your child do well in school? What would you like to do?
8. What would help the teacher/school better understand your child and your family?
9. What can the teacher/school do to help you feel more comfortable contacting us? Working with your child at home? Coming to school?
10. How can parents and teachers work together to help the child do well in school?
11. What “rules” do you have about watching TV, playing video games, doing homework, etc.?
12. If a child breaks a rule, what happens? What form does discipline take?



13. How do you show a child you are proud of him/her and are pleased with what they have done?

Questions about the Community

1. What is the history of your community (e.g., Bosnian, Hispanic) in Iowa?
2. What are the major religious groups in the community?
3. What are the major support organizations and agencies within the community?
4. How is leadership determined in the community?
5. How does information spread from one place to another within the community?
6. What are the important formal channels of communication?
7. What are the important informal channels of communication?
8. Where do community members gather as an opportunity to share information?