



REPORT

Home Visits

as a Racial Equity Strategy in PreK-12 Education

How a program to get teachers and parents on the same team for student achievement using voluntary relationship-building home visits simultaneously breaks down racial and other implicit bias, builds the cultural capacity of the families, educators and students involved and supports equity in education.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
THE PROBLEM	4
OUR EVOLUTION	8
OUR PROGRAM	10
WHY DOES IT WORK?	11
HOW DO WE KNOW THAT IT WORKS?	12
CONCLUSION	14
CASE STUDIES	15
REFERENCES	17

INTRODUCTION

What Do Home Visits Have to Do with Educational Equity?

The Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project trains public school teachers to make a meaningful relationship with the families of their students, starting with a voluntary home visit. Parent/Teacher Home Visits are a high-impact family engagement strategy. Evaluations and third-party studies show the impact of relational home visits on students, families and educators, such as higher student test scores, improved school climate, increased parent participation at school, and increased capacity and satisfaction for educators.

The unique training and home visit practice not only results in improved outcomes for student achievement, but also has proved to be a powerful method for educators and families to connect across racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and other differences, increasing their cultural competency and their ability to support equitable education for all students.

Our project did not start as a way to close the achievement gap or end racism in public education. The point was to get parents and teachers in collaboration so that kids would learn. However, in home visit training and practice across the US, it became clear that racism and other socio-economic dynamics were keeping well-intentioned people apart, and our program was helping educators and families hurdle these barriers in order to get improved outcomes for students.

It seems simple that a strong relationship between the most important adults in the child's life – in the family and the school – increases a child's academic and developmental success. But the barriers in our society that prevent these adults from working together productively are numerous. Specifically, we have found that barriers related to racism, such as fear, segregation, stereotypes, unconscious assumptions and bias, and historic mistrust, are a profound impediment to getting people together, despite their common interest in helping children succeed. Overcoming these barriers is not simple.

In the context of the inequitable education system, with primarily white and middle class school staff going out into neighborhoods where they work but do not live, representing a distrusted institution, our model is proactively anti-racist and promotes cultural humility in order to effect authentic relationships and thus lead to real change in student outcomes.

PTHV uses community organizing tactics and principles of family empowerment, is endorsed by local stakeholders, and has a solid foundation in research on family engagement and school success. Our home visits are not “drop ins”, but rather an appointment set between two willing colleagues in a setting where teachers do not have the power/institutional advantage. In addition to changing up the physical setting, PTHV is a protocol that enables participants to 1) **connect** on a meaningful level, 2) **reflect** on any assumptions or unconscious bias and 3) **direct** new knowledge toward supporting the student's success.

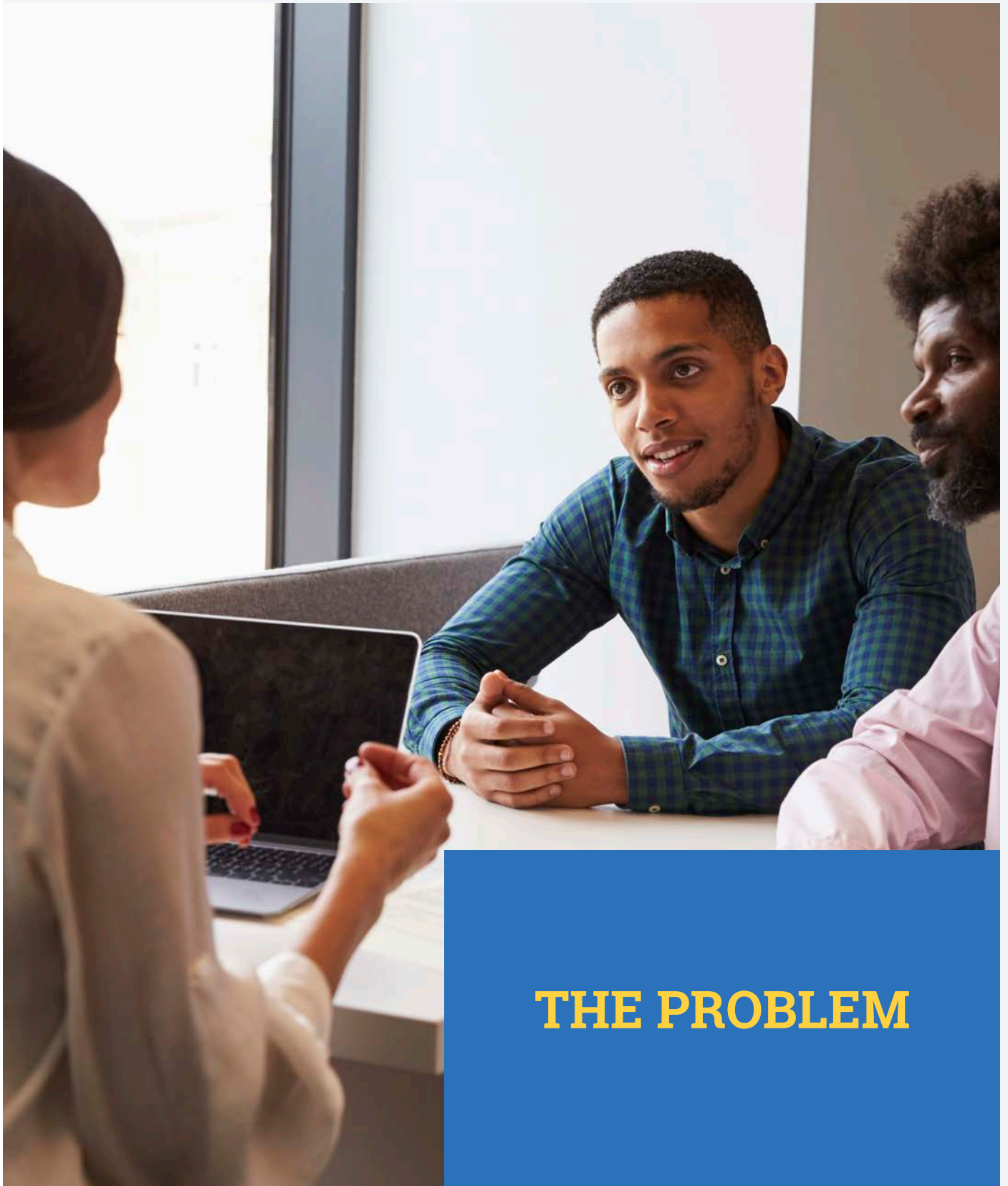
PTHV goes beyond “cultural competence” training with **connection**, **reflection** and **action** that is only possible by going outside of the classroom and into relationship with students' families.



Our Model

While the model is adapted to fit local needs in 17 states across the US, the following five core practices are found among all of the Projects:

- 1 Visits are always voluntary for both educators and families, and arranged in advance.
- 2 Educators are compensated for their time outside of the school day.
- 3 No targeting – visit all or a cross section of families.
- 4 Focus of visit is relational, on hopes and dreams for the child, and mutual expectations between the teacher and family.
- 5 Educators go in pairs, and together, after the visit, reflect on their assumptions and how they will bring what they learned back to the classroom.



THE PROBLEM

While our model is logistically simple, the underpinnings of our approach to home visits are grounded in a complex understanding of how individual biases and systemic racism are barriers to quality education for students of color.

1. Students of color are the majority in US public schools, yet the majority of teachers are white, middle aged and female.
2. Schools reflect and project a white-dominated culture.
3. Most teachers commute to work from outside of the community.
4. Family members have had their own negative experiences with the education system.

In addition, research shows that brown and black children are more likely to be viewed as intellectually deficient or behaviorally disruptive than their white peers in schools, leading to disproportionate remedial tracking, failures, suspensions, and what is known as the “Pre-K to Prison Pipeline” (McKown, Weinstein, 2008) (Skiba, 2011). According to US Education Department figures, black students are suspended about three times as often as white students. During the 2011-12 school year, for example, black children accounted for 16 percent of the U.S. student population, but 32 percent of the students suspended and 42 percent of those expelled. The disparity is the true disruption: a new study by Edward W. Morris and Brea L. Perry links the school discipline disparity to the achievement gap in math and reading (Oxford, 2016).

The problem is not limited to white teachers and black children. Even when a staff is diverse, a single teacher will be working with students (and their families) who are ethnically, racially, linguistically or culturally different than his/her own. Differences in socioeconomic status also multiply barriers between educators and families. Those differences may lead to assumptions, missed opportunities, and negative behavior. But the home visit model provides a structure in which barriers may be overcome.

Educational equity and college and career readiness for all students are often highlighted as goals in our public education system. However, despite best intentions and efforts to close the achievement gap at the federal,

It is not simple to bring families and educators to truly partner together because they each are acting and reacting within the following context:

5. Teachers and staff have little or no training in effective family engagement.
6. Even when teachers understand the importance of the family’s role in educating their child, their definition of family involvement may be too narrowly defined or culturally insensitive.
7. Educators have little or no practical training in cultural competence and also may not understand historic reasons for mistrust.

state, district, and school levels, disparities of student performance along racial, socio-economic, and linguistic lines exist and persist. In reality, education policies and practices continue to reinforce institutional biases that leave black, Latino, and low-income families in the margins of critical efforts to improve student academic outcomes.

Family and community engagement has been heralded as pivotal to student success and student outcomes. However, not all family engagement activities are effective. Family engagement efforts must proactively reduce, rather than enhance, institutional power dynamics that marginalize black, Latino, and low-income families in order to have genuine engagement. Power dynamics between teachers and families based on race, socio-economic status, and positional authority must be considered and mitigated to foster relational trust needed for authentic engagement.

Prior to PTHV, there were few effective professional development programs for family engagement that included a framework for bridging cultural and socioeconomic gaps. Despite the rapidly changing demographics in the US, where the majority of teachers are white and middle class, and the majority of the public school students are low-income children of color, teacher credential programs do not equip educators for the infinite variety of home cultures of their students, nor for the dynamics of race and class that have been proven to result in significant inequity in public education, most notably in discipline and academic achievement.

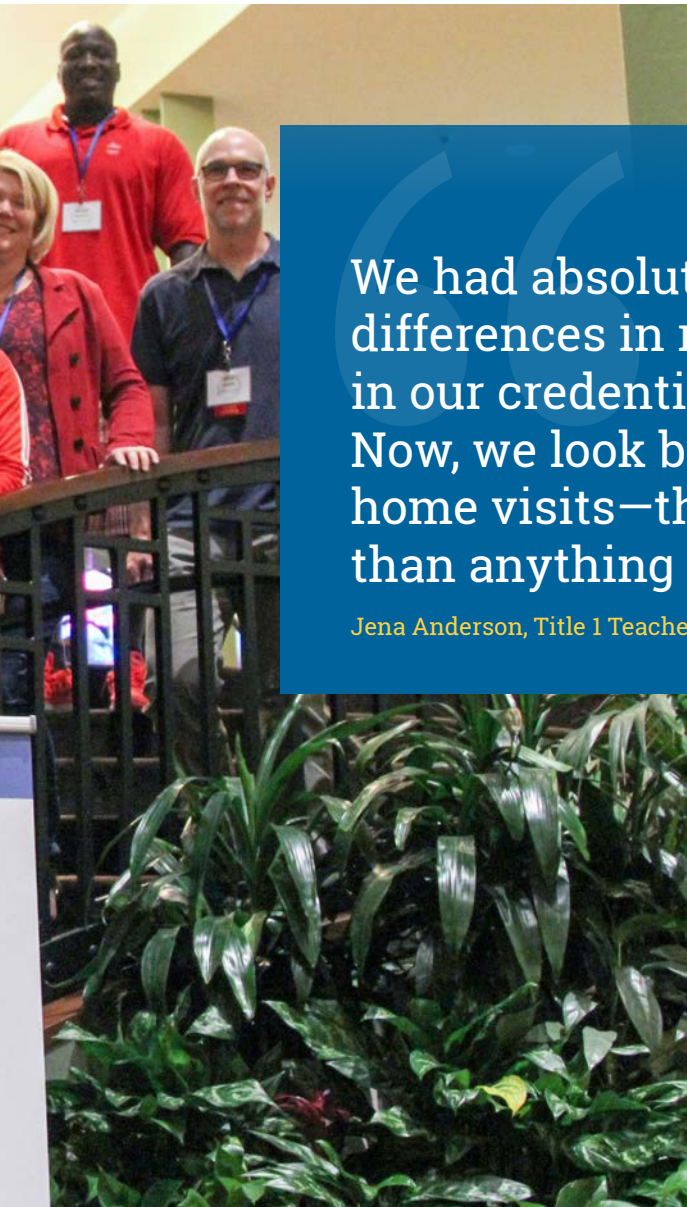
Our Origin

In 1998, an interfaith community organizing effort among immigrant parents in a low-income, racially diverse neighborhood in south Sacramento, CA resulted in a new approach to an old strategy: use voluntary teacher home visits to end the longstanding cycle of blame and distrust between the community and the school district, and build relationships between families and teachers in order to support student learning.

To connect the expertise of the family on their child with the classroom expertise of the teachers, the approach had to be not a “drop-in,” but rather an appointment set between two willing colleagues in a setting outside of the school, where teachers do not have the institutional advantage.

A collaboration of the community organization, the school district and the teachers’ union launched the pilot project, and then spun off into a 501C3 in 2002 as the Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project.





A Teacher's Story



We had absolutely no preparation for the differences in race, ethnicity, class, any of that, in our credential program. And it's really too bad. Now, we look back through our experiences with home visits—that has been more powerful for us than anything we got in our teacher training.

Jena Anderson, Title I Teacher, Warren Elementary, Helena, Montana

A Principal's Story

“After having the personal experience of home visits with many different families, with their own unique culture, and many different races and ethnicities, my thought was ‘This can be paralyzing to some people.’ It can also be the thing that can liberate people. But we have to address the elephant in the room.”



Cory Jones, Principal, Earl Warren Elementary School, Sacramento, CA

OUR EVOLUTION

Our project did not start as an explicit strategy to close the reported achievement gap or address racism in public education. The point was to get parents and teachers in collaboration so that kids would learn. The challenge to unite the family and the school in a multi-cultural low-income neighborhood in South Sacramento in the late 1990s had a local history with local pain: the majority of the kids were not reading at grade level, district superintendents revolved in and out, and though parents were told they were “partners,” they felt they were treated like problems. “I didn’t need the teachers to tell me how to be a better parent,” says Yesenia Gonzalez, a founding parent, “I needed to know how better to advocate for my children within the school and in the district.”

Home visits, done with an empowerment model on a voluntary basis, helped change the dynamic. A pilot program of 8 schools expanded with the collaboration of

“We have a process here with the home visits where you’re getting people sitting down in front of each other and that is really the only way you’re going to get over the hurdle of these differences and the fears.”

both the district administration and the local teachers union. News of the program spread, and schools outside of the district, even outside of the state of California, asked to be trained. The training teams always included a parent, often Ms. Gonzalez, who testified from their experience.

PTHV started as a grassroots effort by immigrant parents, mostly Mexican and Hmong, in Sacramento. It was then picked up by schools who were also serving predominately immigrant communities, throughout California and across the US, such as Springfield, MA and Denver, CO. The model spread to school districts such as Washington, DC, and Montgomery, AL, with primarily low-income African American families. And it is now also used by low-income communities serving Native American and white families in rural areas such as Helena, MT.

Trainers came back from talking with educators in other cities, and the stories they heard matched their experience in Sacramento. Says Cory Jones, a Sacramento principal and home visit trainer, “As a trainer, I was mixing with other educators frequently, and not just from my school or my district or my state but from all over the country. So

I got to see that the issues and challenges that I heard or experienced in education weren’t just local to me or my school or my state: it was like everyone’s having these challenges. Namely how to educate students of color, particularly poor students of color. I was coming back from trainings realizing this is a major issue, across all spectrums. We were talking about how home visits can help address some of that.”

In addition, unprecedented data about education had become available due to widespread standardized testing. Race was a predictive factor, the data showed, for academic achievement, suspension and expulsion rates, and graduation rates. African American children were at the greatest disadvantage, followed by Latino children. “And having the conversations with educators across the nation, their experiences reflected almost identically the data,” says Mr. Jones. “With this backdrop of the data, paired with

these conversations with folks, it was apparent that race and culture, along with other things, but particularly race and culture, were playing a huge role with students’ development academically and socially at school.”

The issue of race played out in different ways in the trainings. For example, some of the teachers didn’t understand our “no targeting” rule, and wanted to do home visits with the kids they felt needed it most, often kids of color. We had to explain that this would play right into a history of stigma, and that an across-the-board approach would be more

successful at building trust.

The biggest barrier we faced in our trainings: fear. Far more debilitating than the lack of time was the fear of going into students’ homes. And that fear came from teachers deeply held beliefs and assumptions about the students and their families. Our trainers had to wrestle with this.

“My initial reaction was, I was a little angry. ‘Why are y’all scared?’ That’s how I was feeling.” says Mr. Jones, who later led the development of a dedicated cultural competence training. “Sometimes it was explicitly said, or often it was said without being said, the teachers were uncomfortable and they were hesitant about going into students’ homes. So in seeing the resistance, the hesitancy of my peers, and having the personal experience of home visits with many different families, with their own unique culture, and many different races and ethnicities, my thought was “This can be paralyzing to some people.” It can also be the thing that can liberate people. But we have to address the elephant in the room. We have a process here with the home visits where you’re getting people sitting down in front of each other and that is really the only way you’re going to get over the hurdle of these differences and the fears.”

A Parent's Story



Getting a call from the teacher asking for a visit was off-putting at first, simply because I had recently closed out all issues with the Department of Social Services in order to obtain full and sole custody of my children. Because of me being African-American and a single father, I've experienced biases, particularly the assumption that I wouldn't have the ability in order to raise my children properly. I had my own barriers in place, as you can imagine. The project has been a way for the teacher and I to discuss things that are going on in our lives. She's pointed out other resources for me. It's also empowered me to become active in my children's education. We are the only voice our children have. The connections we make with the teachers pretty much determine how successful they're going to be.

Paul Lumpkin, Parent Springfield, MA

Building Relationships

During a home visit, educators focus on getting to know the student and the family. We don't recommend bringing any school paperwork, gifts or class work. The educators ask the family the following questions, and share their own answers:



What were your experiences with education as a child?



What are your hopes and dreams for your child?



What are your expectations of me as your child's teacher?

The student, too, can share their experience, hopes and dreams, and expectations of themselves, their family and their teacher. The answers to these questions naturally lead to the educator and the family identifying how they will help the child with their goals.

OUR PROGRAM

From the data, and from what we hear from teachers around the country, two things remain clear:

- A. Our strategy for education reform, to build relationships between educators and families in order to help kids learn, is in the context of profound racial bias and inequity in public education.
- B. Our strategy works because it provides a framework for educators and families to overcome the socioeconomic barriers that would otherwise keep them from working together to support their children's success.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

Getting families and educators in authentic collaboration requires that teachers, as representatives of an inequitable institution, leave their assumptions behind, listen and learn, and reflect upon their experience stepping outside the institution. Therefore, our trainings do the following with teachers:

- Build awareness and vocabulary about culture, race and bias
- Includes parents of color as trainers
- Role-play the respectful ask for a visit
- Help educators identify their assumptions and leave them at the door
- Address barriers and fears

The reflection afterward is essential to addressing assumptions and changing bias. The educators follow every visit with a debrief, which includes:

- A. Reflection with their visit partner on what their assumptions were before the visit, and what they learned, and
- B. Application of what they learned to specific student learning goals and improving the classroom climate

WHY DOES IT WORK?

1 Our model is a transformation model.

- We are based upon an empowerment model, community organizing, which believes that the people involved are capable and essential in the solution to their problems.
- Our home visits are always voluntary, set up in advance, and based upon mutual respect.
- By shifting the setting of the family engagement from a school to a student's home, home visits can offset the institutional power normally placed with teachers in the school setting.
- Personal testimony, openness and emotional courage are core methods.
- No one is selling a product, consulting, or other ways to line their pockets.
- Capacity is built in the community and stays in the community.

2 Changing bias requires action.

We believe educational equity is possible through action, not only ideas and good intentions. While some schools and districts may recognize implicit bias and offer training on cultural competency, PTHV goes a step further and provides a strategy to go out, connect, reflect and change practices, rather than just theorize about it.

The practical framework is key, says Principal Jones, to lasting change. "Reading it in a book, talking about it in a training, isn't going to change people's deeply held beliefs and thoughts. They have to have a concrete experience that can provide the vehicle for change. In front of a family, you're going to have some humility, and that's the grounds for change. It doesn't even happen because you want it to happen, all the time. It happens because you had an experience that you cannot deny. You can't deny that. That's life-changing. The home visit provides the opportunity for it."

Paul Lumpkin, a parent and trainer from Springfield, MA, agrees that in his experience, the combination of training and practice is what makes the home visit model effective.

"Based on all of the parents and teachers and everyone else I've trained over the years, I haven't heard of (any program with) more cultural competency than through this. That practical application is the proof. You not only frame this for them, but then it goes deeper when they go to the home and reflect, and they're actually able to see the biases that they may have."

2 Our organization is well-positioned.

- **Representation:** We are a representative organization of the communities we serve, and our diverse staff, board, teachers, parents and trainers bring a wealth of experience and connections to the issue.
- **Replication:** The practice of relational home visits has grown organically, and has been adopted and adapted in widely varying settings, from rural to inner-city, and widely diverse communities across the US.
- **Resources:** The cost of a home visit program is relatively inexpensive and the time it takes to start a program is relatively short.
- **Collaboration:** We started as a collaboration between a community group, a school district and a teachers union, and we require similar collaboration in our local projects nationwide. Diverse stakeholders provide support, accountability and long-term stability.
- **Best Practices:** our annual gatherings and regional meetings have always been peer-led and focused on moving the work forward, including broadening our practice regarding equity.

4 Multi-directional outcomes, multi-issue entry points

PTHV is not only multi-directional in building capacity among people of different ages, races, genders and backgrounds, but also multi-directional in the outcomes our program produces, from improved reading scores to family participation to challenging assumptions to ending racial bias in the classroom. Educators and families are primarily drawn to our program out of the desire to be more effective in helping kids learn. Because our primary focus is on academics, and we do not advertise our method as anti-racism training, our participants have widely varying experience and comfort levels with discussing racism. Thus, we attract those not specifically seeking a cultural humility program, and we avoid "preaching to the choir."

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT IT WORKS?

Evaluations show multi-directional impacts, such as higher test scores, improved school climate, increased family participation at school, and increased capacity and job satisfaction for teachers. For example, a recent evaluation of schools using our model in Washington, DC public schools, Johns Hopkins researchers found that students who received a home visit were 24% less likely to be absent from school, and were also more likely to read at or above grade level compared to those who did not receive a home visit.

Teachers report in evaluations that PTHV is the single most effective professional development they have received for cultural competence. In a comprehensive evaluation of PTHV in St. Paul, MN in 2014, for example, questions regarding teacher assumptions found significant answers:

- **Teacher assumptions about families were changed for the majority (76%) of survey respondents.**
- **Making a home visit taught the great majority of teachers (93%) something about students that they didn't already know.**

When the teachers in St. Paul were asked by researchers how what they learned might help them to teach better, responses covered two broad areas. The first was that the visit deepened the relationship and trust between teacher and student. The other theme in these responses was that the visits provided teachers with new insights about students' interests and needs in ways that could help them to individualize instruction to better meet student needs.

The evaluators, who attended trainings as part of their study, remarked on the difference in teachers' apprehensions before and after the visit, reporting

"It is notable that it appears that some of teachers' greatest concerns about home visiting might, in fact, be based on assumptions that are changed through the process of making a visit. Concerns raised during training (prior to experiencing visits) did not match what we heard about the program at debriefs from teachers who had made at least one visit."

St. Paul families, too, the researchers found, changed their attitudes toward the teachers following a home visit, as the following quote illustrates: "Families feel more connected to teachers as people - they also see themselves having more in common with teachers - rather than pushing teachers away."

Current evaluations are designed in part to further explore the impact of home visits on assumptions and bias. We have one in progress, in Sacramento City Unified School District (LPC and Associates) and a multi-state study (Johns Hopkins) is scheduled for the 2016-2017 school year.

A Visit Debrief

Following a visit, the debrief is a structured conversation between the two educators about how they will take what they learned and apply it toward the education of the child they visited.

The educators ask each other the following questions:

- What did you think was true about the family and/or student prior to the visit?
- What do you now know about a student's or family's culture that you learned from a home visit?
- How will you engage students in a more meaningful way during classroom instruction or families in a more meaningful partnership?

Some home visit programs do debriefs in groups or as part of a staff meeting.



A Teacher's Story

I can't express how beneficial these home visits have been in terms of understanding my students. Home visits often shed light on strengths that don't show up on standardized tests.

Teaching in high-poverty schools during the past four years, I've conducted more than 80 home visits. After these visits, not one of the families missed a parent-teacher conference or failed to return a phone call.

Stephanie Smith, Oak Ridge Elementary, Sacramento County Teacher of the Year 2015

Evaluation

Independent evaluations with both quantitative and qualitative methodology show significant shifts in educator assumptions about their students' families. For example, a study of the program in St. Paul, MN public schools discovered that assumptions of teachers about families were changed for the majority of teachers (76%) surveyed.

The following quote is a sample response:

"I got to see the way in which families I had previously not talked to or seen at school events support their scholar's education from home. More than once, I met with parents who were assumed to be disinterested or non-supportive and found that they were working multiple jobs and going to school themselves to provide for their children and give an example of hard work ethic."

Evaluation, Goff, Peja and Associates, St. Paul, MN, 2014





CONCLUSION

PTHV Home Visits Build Capacity in Educators, Families and Students by Breaking Down Racial and other Socioeconomic Bias, Building Relationships, and Supporting Academic and Developmental Success for All Children

Hundreds of trainings, thousands of visit debriefs and a dozen years of conferences dedicated to best practices later, teachers report that the PTHV training has been the most useful professional development they have done to build their own cultural humility and shift their teaching toward inclusion and relevance for all of their students.

These tactics of questioning assumptions and reflecting in order to change bias were essential in the creation of our model, in order to get the outcomes of family engagement, teacher professional development and student achievement. Subsequently, addressing individual racism and historic institutional power dynamics are a vital part of the home visit process: educators in our program are trained to get out of their comfort zone, recognize unconscious bias, reflect on what they learn from their families, and then apply that knowledge to change the bottom line: student academic and developmental success. So not only do outcomes for students of color improve with home visits, but there is cultural transformation among educators, families and, we hope, within the institution of education itself.

This year, we are implementing our first five-year strategic plan, building infrastructure to support and expand our active projects in rural, suburban and urban settings, from Native American reservations in Montana, to suburban Flint, MI to inner city Washington DC. We have HUBs and Projects in the following states: CA, CO, IN, IO, MA, MI, MN, MO, NV, NY, NC, OH, OR, TX, VA and the District of Columbia. In addition, pilot projects are underway at sites in Pennsylvania, Alabama, Arizona, Washington and Texas. Broad support is central to our model and collaboration is intrinsic to each local project.

We know we are a small part of the effort, but we think our model, our collaborative practice and our grassroots movement has unique strengths to contribute to education equity, especially in combination with other successful engagement and empowerment strategies such as restorative justice and community schools. We look forward to expanding our work in collaboration with other effective programs and partners.



Case Study – A Teacher’s Story

Sarah Thomas, 4th-grade Teacher,
McMeen Elementary, Denver, CO



Before making my visit to Joel’s home last year, I’d been in touch with his mom and we had a chance to meet in-person at a parent-teacher conference. But the hurried twenty-minute conversation never moved past the basics of grades and homework, thanks to a long line of parents waiting behind her.

When the year started, I knew Joel was a capable student. It was obvious he was highly intelligent—he could compute equations in his head that took most students a while to dissect—but he struggled to find the motivation to give school his best effort. Though I consider myself someone who can connect with students on a personal level, Joel’s reserved demeanor left me at a loss.

When I walked through Joel’s front door, I was greeted warmly by his parents and his toddler brother, but Joel lingered behind a door, surveying the scene. I knew inserting him directly into the conversation wouldn’t help build his trust, so I spent time getting to know his parents.

As Joel’s parents told me about their family, they playfully cajoled Joel. I watched how he opened up in those moments. In my classroom, I’d been worried about pushing Joel by joking with him, but his interactions with his parents revealed he responded warmly to gentle teasing. Similarly, I’d been cautious about asking Joel to engage with his classmates due to his shyness, but watching him demonstrate immense care, patience, and initiative with his younger brother as they played on the floor made me realize he could thrive with the same responsibility at school.

I left Joel’s home excited by everything I’d learned and ready to use this new information in class: I began interacting with him more playfully, and during partner work, I paired him with a classmate who needed a lot of patience and encouragement. But even so, I didn’t fully comprehend how much of a difference my visit would make until the weeks and months that followed.

In class, Joel’s engagement skyrocketed. He’d always demonstrated talent in math, but began excelling far beyond where he’d been. His writing also improved dramatically, which I credit to the increased collaboration with his mom: When Joel put a lot of effort into a writing assignment, I took a picture and texted it to her so she could celebrate him at home—something I wouldn’t have felt comfortable doing before the visit.

At their core, home visits are all about empowering teachers—and families—to tailor learning experiences in ways that support kids’ individual needs. Spending time in a space where Joel felt most comfortable allowed me to notice things about him that I couldn’t see in a classroom setting, where he was much more guarded.

Likewise, when his family, whose native language isn’t English, shared their perspectives from the comfort of their home—with me as a guest instead of the other way around, in my classroom—it leveled the playing field between us. It also gave Joel the opportunity to see his family as vital sources of knowledge, and validate his native culture. A twenty minute conference could never accomplish this.

This year, I’m teaching Joel for a second year in a row. There is still so much to learn about him and the rest of my students—who they are as learners, as parts of distinct families and cultures, and as individuals. Home visits are the best method to do this. They aren’t “extra work.” They are the work. If I’ve learned anything in four years of teaching, it’s that education, at its core, is immensely personal. Building trust and a connection between myself, my students, and their families, is what lays the foundation for real academic growth.



Case Study – A Parent’s Story

April Ybarra, Parent,
Oak Ridge Elementary School,
Sacramento, CA

Before the Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project, I was very close-minded to the school, very negative. When I was a student myself at Oak Ridge, the teachers there were very unsupportive of the needs of me and other students. In my case, I felt like I was discriminated against because of my economic background. So when I went in to Oak Ridge with my kids for them to start their education, I already had a barrier to the school and wanted to protect my kids from that kind of negativity. The principal and the assistant principal there made a point to try and build a relationship with me, even though I was always negative towards them and kind of stand-offish. No way would I agree to a home visit from a teacher. But then my daughter struggled, and they took this opportunity to kind of woo me into doing the first visit.

On the visit, the teacher asked me, and I’ll never forget this, she said “What are your hopes and dreams for your child.” And I knew that if anybody was going to come into my home, in a nonjudgmental way, and ask me that question, that they really cared. So from then on out I just began to let that barrier drop. Anything I can do to help, and support and be a part of, I’ve been dedicated to the school.

The home visit program definitely has given parents like myself a voice. I feel a lot more confidence to voice what I feel is best for my child’s education, and I also feel like when I voice that opinion that I’m actually going to be heard and my child’s educational needs will be supported.

For my kids personally, they are both reading much better. My children are both English language learners -when they started school they didn’t speak any English. By the end of kindergarten, my oldest still didn’t know much English, and that was scary for me. After my first home visit, in first grade, we got the help she needed and she was reading at grade level by the end of the year.

Not just us but also with other children, one of the biggest supports of that is combining the home visits with Academic Parent Teacher Teams, because a lot of parents like me don’t know how to help their children with subjects they are struggling in.

The home visit project has definitely built a relationship between myself and the school, and it’s grown into a community thing. It’s not just building relationships between the teacher and home, but also building relationships parent to parent, in the community, and I think that’s pretty cool.

I think it helps teachers see that a lot of times we are just misunderstood parents. And for parents, they see there are teachers out there that really do care about the education of our children, and not just there to collect a paycheck, which is what I used to believe. Now I know that’s not like that. I hope more schools do PTHVP. It can really shape the future for this generation of children.

REFERENCES

1. Interview, Deborah Polhemus, Teacher, Wakefield High School, Wakefield, VA, April 1, 2016.
2. Interview, Sarah Johnson, Teacher, St. Paul Federation of Teachers, St. Paul, MN, March 30, 2016.
3. Seth Gershenson, Stephen B. Holtz, and Nicholas W. Papageorge (2016), "Who believes in me? The effect of student–teacher demographic match on teacher expectations." *Economics of Education Review*.
4. Morris, Edward, & Brea L. Perry (2016), "The Punishment Gap: School Suspension and Racial Disparities." *Social Problems*.
5. Interview, Jena Anderson, Title 1 Teacher, Warren Elementary, Helena, MT, March 15, 2016.
6. Interview, Cory Jones, Principal, Earl Warren Elementary School, Sacramento, CA, February 11, 2016.
7. Interview, Paul Lumpkin, Parent Trainer, Pioneer Valley Project, Springfield, MA, February 11, 2016.
8. Training, Yesenia Gonzalez, Leataata Floyd Elementary School, Sacramento, CA November 6, 2015.
9. Parent/Teacher Home Visiting Project Evaluation (2014), St. Paul Federation of Teachers, Goff, Peja & Associates report.
10. Kids Count (2014), "Race for Results," Annie E. Casey Foundation report.
11. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) (2014), "Student Diversity Is Up But Teachers Are Mostly White."
12. Smith, Stephanie (2013). "Would You Step Through My Door? Visiting low-income kids in their homes often sheds light on their hidden strengths," *Educational Leadership*, May, 76-80.
13. National Center for Education Statistics (2012).
14. Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C. G., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (2011). "Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline." *School Psychology Review*, 40, 85-107.
15. Welch, K, and Allison Ann Payne (2010), "Racial Threat and Punitive School Discipline," *Social Problems*, Vol. 57, No. 1, pp. 25-48.
16. Boske, C., & Benavente-McEnery, L. (2010). Taking it to the streets: A new line of inquiry for households, schools, and communities. *Journal of School Leadership*, 20(3), 369-398.
17. Lin, Miranda, and Bates, Alan B. (2010), "Home Visits: How Do They Affect Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching and Diversity?" *Early Childhood Education Journal*, v38 n3 p179-185.
18. McKown, C., & Weinstein, R. (2008). "Teacher expectations, classroom context, and the achievement gap." *Journal of School Psychology*, 46, 235-261.
19. Bakker, J., Denessen, E., & Brus-Laeven, M. (2007) "Socio-economic background, parental involvement and teacher perceptions of these in relation to pupil achievement." *Educational Studies*, 33(2), 177-192.



Parent Teacher Home Visits

www.pthvp.org

