



## Family diversity in urban schools

By Wendy Schwartz

From 30 to 60 per cent of students in urban schools live with caregivers other than their biological parents. Although these children usually have a nurturing home life, they seek reassurance that they and their families are valued. The parents of some of these children, such as multi-racial and gay and lesbian parents, require acceptance and inclusion. The families of others, such as foster parents and grand-parent guardians, may need more services.

This article identifies several common types of “nontraditional” families, and presents a few of their characteristics relevant to their children’s education. It also offers some recommendations to help schools provide support for the families to ensure their inclusion in all aspects of schooling.

### Types of families

While some social critics assert that the institution of the family is crumbling, in fact, new types of families are emerging. Therefore, using traditional criteria to define families may leave many children feeling unlike others. A recommended alternative definition of family is that it is “any group of individuals that forms a household based on respect, the meeting of basic needs, as well as those of love and affection, and one in which assistance is freely given to maintain social, spiritual, psychological,

and physical health.” Today’s schools are increasingly likely to include the following types of families:

#### Multiracial families

This family group comprises both children whose parents have different ethnic heritages and those who themselves are different ethnically from their parents. The development of a multiracial identity of such children is mediated by parental attitudes about personal classification and ethnicity in general. Society’s attitudes, particularly racist attitudes, toward multi-racial individuals also influence the identity of these children.

Educators can promote the positive development of multiracial students by treating each child according to his or her unique characteristics instead of lumping together children of various ethnicities as generically multiracial. They can also learn and honor how the family wants the children to be identified.

#### Families with gay or lesbian parents

Children who live with gay or lesbian parents may be either adopted or the biological offspring of one parent. They have no more socio-emotional problems and are no more likely to be homosexual than children raised by heterosexuals. However, some may be victimized by homophobic peer ridicule.

To respect family decisions about disclosure, teachers should refrain from publicly asking children very specific questions about their home life, and support the child and parents with any logistical or emotional issues that result from the need for family privacy.

#### Foster families

Some foster children have developed crucial survival skills and exhibit minimal behavior and adjustment problems. Others demonstrate the effects of past neglect and abuse, grief, and trauma. Repeated school transfers force foster children to adjust to



different learning environments. And they may not have developed learning skills, may never have received educational supports at home, and may be more concerned about meeting their survival needs than their educational needs.

*‘Family Diversity’ continued on page 4*

### Global trends in families



#### 1. Changes in family structures:

- Shift away from extended families, rise of one person households, and rise of cohabitation.
- Smaller households due to fewer children, migration, rise in divorce, more older persons heading households.
- Age of first marriage up due to better education and employment opportunities for women.
- Women bear fewer children later in life.

**2. Demographic ageing:** Larger share of older people due to increased life expectancy and decreased fertility rates.

**3. Rise of migration:** Caused by violence, discrimination, natural disasters, economic opportunities.

**4. HIV/AIDS pandemic:** 42 million live with HIV/AIDS. Care of the ill, loss of loved ones and HIV/AIDS orphans cause major stress on families and societies.

*(Source: Division for Social Policy and Development. United Nations 2003.)*

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## Director's column

Mary Ann Bradley, MSW, MA

*"All families matter! All families matter!  
All families matter!"*

Imagine 750 strong and united voices chanting this empowering phrase over and over again in an enthusiastic neighborhood theater packed with families of all kinds and children in bunny ears. It was a stunning moment when AMAZE welcomed Buster Baxter (the rabbit from WGBH's children's program *Postcards From Buster*) to the stage of Riverview Theater for the Twin Cities premiere of the *Sugartime!* episode. U.S. Department of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings and PBS National criticized the episode, shown locally by Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) for its inclusion of a family with two moms. But for the hundreds in attendance, the show was a cause for celebration, and what a celebration it was! The jammed foyer of the theatre held scores of animated conversations, small moments where neighbor met neighbor, people met up from church or temple, new friendships were begun by child and adult alike. The excitement was palpable. This entire ruckus was created by a clash of values and an ever-changing definition of family.

And who gets to decide what constitutes a family anyway? Does Bush's Secretary of Education have the right to define what's an "acceptable" American family, as she tried to do when she wrote to PBS to suppress the *Buster Sugartime!* episode and threatened the program's future funding? Or should the Minnesota Family Council decide? They denounced the *Sugartime!* episode saying it was "inappropriate to depict gay families as though they were the same as those with a mother and father" and further wrote to urge the legislature to quit tax subsidy of TPT "if it chooses to continue funding propaganda efforts targeted at unsuspecting, impressionable young children." Though gay and lesbian families are the current target of ostracism and hate, other families have been the focus of confusion, disdain, and fear in the past. Forty years ago many states still outlawed inter-racial marriages, thirty years ago it was considered taboo to talk about adoption openly, and less than fifteen years ago Vice President Dan Quayle criticized all single women



*aMaze's Mary Ann Bradley with daughter Mikaela  
and "Buster Baxter"*

who choose to become parents when he attacked the sitcom character Murphy Brown (portrayed by Candice Bergen) for "mocking the importance of a father, by bearing a child alone, and calling it just another "lifestyle choice." If we are really a country that values families, don't we need to embrace and support them in all their complexity rather than stigmatize and ostracize them?

Instead of trying to legislate who has the right to be a family and passing judgment on family composition, we need to focus on the health and well-being of the families that are in our midst. When people feel safe, respected, included, loved, and valued they are more likely to become fully engaged in the betterment of their community, less likely to be an apathetic, angry, or destructive force. Our schools, places of worship, community centers, parks, and clubs need to be fully inclusive and responsive to the social, physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional well-being of everyone.

Families will continue to evolve and change to meet the changing needs and resources of our society; we need our social institutions to be adaptable, flexible, and capable in meeting *all families'* needs because *all families matter*.

The AMAZE family is changing too. We've added three new board members since last fall and we're losing our valued administrative and program assistant, Brendan Kruse at the end of May. Brendan has been instrumental in the design and maintenance of our website, has managed

our database and accounting software, arranged FAM Reader Trainings, and a dozen other unheralded tasks that are so important to the daily operations of AMAZE. We welcome our newest board members and wish Brendan well in his new life in San Francisco.

AMAZE has entered a time of reflection and planning. We completed a new organizational strategic

plan in March, and we will begin development of our first ever business plan later this summer. One of the most exciting changes to come out of our strategic plan is a new mission statement: **AMAZE champions safety and belonging for all children and families!** We love its brevity (much easier to remember for those impromptu elevator conversations,) clarity, and power. Our business plan will guide us as we search for ways to have a greater impact with all of the children and families we serve.

If you appreciate our work and support our mission, I hope you will consider donating your time, resources and finances to AMAZE. We are a grass-roots organization in the truest sense; we rely on the support of hundreds of individuals to do our work. Volunteers screen books, develop new product and service offerings, conduct trainings, help with fundraisers, and bring many other skills that keep AMAZE thriving. Your financial contributions are essential in these challenging political times when some foundations and corporations are not willing to support "controversial" organizations like ours. I encourage you to give generously so we can continue being champions for *all* children and families in *all* communities!

### Be an ally!

An ally [al' -eye] is "a member of a historically more powerful identity group who stands up against bigotry."

Safe Schools Coalition (<http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/glossary.pdf>)

## Resources on family diversity

1. **“America’s Families and Living Arrangements.”** U.S. Census Bureau’s reports trends about households, families, and living arrangements. [www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam.html)

2. **Children’s Defense Fund.** The mission of the Children’s Defense Fund is to “leave no child behind” with the help of caring families and communities. [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)

3. **Connect for Kids.** Internet resources to address social issues and policy issues that affect children and their families [www.connectforkids.org](http://www.connectforkids.org)

4. **Council on Contemporary Families.** Dedicated to enhancing the national conversation about what contemporary families need and how these needs can best be met. Many resources listed. [www.contemporaryfamilies.org](http://www.contemporaryfamilies.org)

5. **“Family Diversity, Continuity and change in the contemporary family”** by Pauline Irit Erera . Sage Publications, Inc. Thousand Oaks, CA. 2001.

6. **Family Diversity Projects.** Four award-winning traveling photo exhibits on diverse families [www.love-makesafamily.org/index.php](http://www.love-makesafamily.org/index.php)

7. **“Framing the Family Tree: How teachers can be sensitive to students’ family situations.”** By Sudie Hofmann, *Rethinking Schools*, Vol.19:3, Spring 2005. [www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/19\\_03/fram193.shtml](http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/19_03/fram193.shtml)

8. **“That’s a Family: A film for kids about family diversity.”** By Women’s Educational Media. For grades K-8, Spanish and English versions. Explores family through voices of children. Teacher’s guide available. [www.womedia.org](http://www.womedia.org)



## Enhancing collaborative partnerships with culturally diverse families

By Deborah L. Voltz and Sherron Hardy Morrowin

Attention to the task of developing effective partnerships with families is important for all students. Schools have often been most challenged in developing effective collaborative relationships with families whose home cultures differ significantly from that of the school.

### Understanding factors that contribute to the challenge

Educators often engage in a number of practices that are counterproductive to their efforts. For example, school personnel sometimes implicitly “track” families; they may make an a priori decision—consciously or subconsciously—that certain families are “concerned families” who want to be involved in the education of their children, while others are usually “unconcerned families.” Based on preconceived notions, greater effort may be exerted to involve the families who are assumed to be concerned, and their input is more highly valued and taken more seriously.

Another practice that can sometimes thwart efforts to develop collaborative partnerships with culturally diverse families is the use of a “one-size-fits-all” approach to family involvement. When school personnel unilaterally designate a prescribed set of behaviors that are offered to families as the way to interact with school, families whose cultural frameworks and life circumstances are similar to those of school personnel may be more likely to embrace these roles. If families feel uncomfortable with the school’s conceptualization of family involvement, they may be inclined to abstain from it. Unfortunately, such abstention is often misinterpreted as lack of interest or caring.

Other factors beyond the control of educators also can adversely affect interactions with families. For example, families themselves may harbor unhelpful preconceived notions about schools and school personnel. This may occur for several reasons. Historically, schools have not served diverse populations well. Attitudes toward schools may be influenced by past negative experiences. Families may see schools as extensions of a culture that they find oppressive, and from which they feel alienated.



Socioeconomic realities can negatively impact the development of partnerships with families. Families who find themselves economically challenged and struggling for survival may not have as much physical, mental, or emotional energy to devote to home-school relationships as would be desired. Unfortunately, this has sometimes led to the misconception that these families don’t care about the educational well-being of their children.

### Strategies for enhancing collaborative partnerships

1. *Developing helpful communication styles—create an atmosphere of respect:*

- Use titles such as Mr., Mrs., or Ms. when addressing adult family members, unless prompted not to do so. Use of first names can be viewed as disrespectful or overly forward.
- Interact with family members as competent individuals who care. Tone of voice, rate of speech, facial expressions, and body language often convey more than words themselves.
- Listen to and learn from parents, and respect their contributions or concerns. When at all possible, act on the suggestions of family members—Give families every reason to believe that they are taken seriously.
- Treat family members as individuals. Resist stereotyping based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, or any other characteristic. Recognize that more diversity may exist within any particular group than exists between various groups.

2. *Fostering a collaborative style:*

- Avoid “one-size-fits-all” approaches to family involvement. Work together to define roles.
- Make special efforts to establish ongoing rapport. Personally contact families. Focus on positive, non-threatening issues and avoid crisis-only relationships with families.
- Consider alternate settings for in-person meetings and school events.

*Partnerships’ continued on page 6*

*'Family Diversity' continued from page 1*

To help foster children feel welcome in the new school, administrators need a specific plan for educational supports that not only increase their skills but also their self-esteem and commitment to school; therefore, retention and special education classes may further alienate them from school.

### **Families with grandparents and relatives as parents**

A growing segment of foster parents consists of grandparents or other relatives of children. Frequently, they must assume responsibility for children with little notice and while they are all in the throes of grief. Grandparents may be concerned about having too little energy for parenting again, but they nevertheless usually thrive in their role.

Children residing with relatives need most of the same services from schools and social service agencies as do other foster children. It is especially helpful for schools to collect and provide information about after-school, weekend, and summer activities for children residing with grandparents.

### **School strategies for family inclusiveness**

To promote the positive development of all students, and especially those with "nontraditional" families, it is crucial for schools to establish high universal performance standards, celebrate family diversity, and extend equal respect and support to all members of the school community. Schools also need to affirm students' feelings, take their concerns seriously, and enforce regulations against hate bullying, especially when students perceived as different are targeted.

### **Staff development – provide in-service training that includes the following information:**

- The great variety of lifestyles that promote children's ability to achieve academically, and develop into personally satisfied and productive adults.
- Ways to identify, understand, and overcome personal feelings of bias.
- Legal issues related to family composition, including custody, consent, confidentiality, and the rights of non-custodial and non-related caregivers.

- Ways to respond effectively and sensitively to student misbehavior.
- The characteristics of individual students and their families, as the information relates to their education and to behavior and communication with their family.

### **School-wide practices – promote inclusion of diverse families:**

- Provide library and classroom resources that reflect family diversity.
- Select and use inclusive terms for caregivers in all family communications.
- Use contact forms that allow families to identify themselves in the way that they choose and to report all the information they believe is important.
- Give families the opportunity to provide relevant information, such as the way interracial children want to be identified; to express concerns; and to review the school's handling of diversity issues.
- Develop a curriculum strand to increase student knowledge of the various types of families that exist both in their school and in general, and invite family input.

### **Curriculum and classroom activities**

As children learn, particularly through reading, they develop paradigms of what is good and bad, correct and incorrect. Therefore, reading engaging stories about different types of families and successful individuals with "nontraditional" families develops literacy skills, encourages appreciation of diversity in all children, and validates the home life of individual children. Books can also be therapeutic as they help children relate their own problems to those of the characters. Teachers can further promote students' appreciation of family diversity in the following ways:

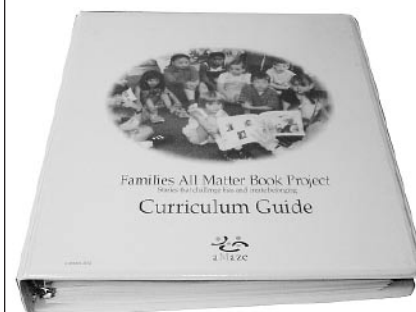
- Identify, or invite for a presentation, role models from "nontraditional" families and a variety of cultures.
- Provide examples of several types of families, identifying the unique strengths of each, and encourage students to talk about their own families (if they feel comfortable doing so.)
- Use language that indicates acceptance of family diversity, such as "co-parent," "caregiver," "person you live with," as well as "mother" or "father."

### **Conclusion**

Whereas some children growing up in "nontraditional" families have reference groups comprised of relatives or friends, others may not and feel isolated, marginalized, and even rejected by society. Therefore, to be fully inclusive, schools need to maintain an environment where all children and families feel a sense of belonging, acceptance, and support from peers and school personnel. Further, all children need to be treated equitably. Schools must focus on the health of families instead of passing judgment on their composition.

*(Schwartz, Wendy. "Family Diversity in Urban Schools." ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. New York, NY. ERIC Identifier: ED434188 Publication Date: 1999-09-00.)*

aMaze's outstanding tool to create safety and belonging for all children and families



## **Families All Matter Book Project**

*Contact aMaze today to order your:*

- Curriculum Guide
- FAM materials and
- aMaze training

612-724-4323



## Sh-h-h!

**Stigma about family: a disservice to children, then and now**

By Deb Clemmensen, aMaze board

I have a vivid memory from when I was five years old, an age when the intense urge to understand the world occupies a child's every waking moment. My family had invited our neighbors over for dinner, including their grown son Byron. I overheard my parents discussing in hushed tones that Byron had just gotten divorced. I asked what 'divorced' meant. My parents were clearly at a loss.

This was the 1950's, a time when divorce carried a significant social stigma. It violated prevailing societal norms upholding the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman. The Church's opposition was absolute; divorced people were not allowed to remarry in the Church. I was told I was too little to understand about divorce and not to mention it in front of Byron. I noticed my parents' nonverbal cues of discomfort and unease. The message, as decoded by my five-year-old self, was that being divorced must be very bad. I worried about Byron coming into my house.

Later that evening, I met and scrutinized our neighbor's son. He was a polite young man who looked perfectly normal. At dinner, I looked straight at Byron and said, "You're divorced. What's wrong with you?" My chagrined parents apologized to Byron and chastised me. Later they sat me down and explained divorce in terms I could understand; fortunately, I did not grow up believing that there was something unspeakably wrong with divorced people. Had my parents opted for silence rather than explanation, the seeds of ignorance and prejudice might have taken root. There are times when silence is a mistake.

One of U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings' first actions was an attempt to mandate silence. The Public Broadcasting Service was ordered to censor an episode of the educational cartoon series "Postcards from Buster," designed to teach young children respect for diversity. The *Sugartime!* episode introduces Buster to Vermont children with two mothers who help him learn how maple syrup is made. Spellings opined, "many parents would not want their young children ex-

posed to the lifestyles portrayed in the episode." These same young children go to preschool and kindergarten with other children whose lesbian or gay parents arrive to pick up their children, volunteer in the classroom, host birthday parties, fix "owies" and laugh appreciatively at silly little kid jokes. Those parents and their children are not invisible.

The more we understand child development, the more important we consider early childhood education. Young children's brains are organized to recognize patterns and ascribe meaning to experiences. Children learn what we model, what we teach, what we say and how we say it, by our words and by our silence. Imagine teaching preschoolers all the letters of the alphabet except G and L which are omitted for being too controversial. Children with those letters in their names would not be able to learn to write them. Even if their teacher chose to say nothing about this exclusion, do we believe that the children would not notice and draw conclusions? Academic mastery is difficult when children feel excluded or unsafe.

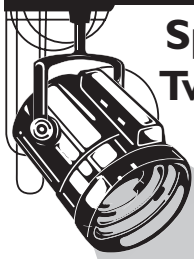
The Families All Matter (FAM) book project is based on the belief that all children deserve to experience safety and belonging at school. FAM was developed by a coalition of parents and educators in response to a startling incident of bias in a second grade classroom at Windom Elementary School, my children's school. FAM invites children to learn respect for each other by reading, discussing and journaling about stories of diverse families, with units on race, socioeconomic status, immigration, adoption, divorce/break-up, disabilities, gay and lesbian families, aging family members and families with different religious traditions. FAM provides children with an opportunity to learn about family diversity without being told what to think. The project, now part of a larger nonprofit called aMaze, is linked to state educational standards, and has been presented in over 800 public and nonpublic elementary school classrooms and religious education programs in Minnesota over the past eight years.



It might alleviate Spellings' anxiety and open her mind if she could sit in on some FAM classroom discussions and hear from the children. Like the third grader who spoke aloud in a class discussion for the very first time to share his story of being adopted by his grandmother, and learned that other classmates were adopted as well. Or the biracial child who responded with empathy to a story about a girl whose gay uncle and partner were excluded from a family celebration, because she had experienced a similar rejection in her extended family. Or the girl whose father asked how she felt about the FAM project in her classroom. This girl responded, "It was cool. And here's the big, important thing, Papa. All families love their children."

Which I'm certain is also what Buster would say. aMaze applauds Twin Cities Public Television for its wisdom and courage in deciding not to remain silent when Buster goes to Vermont on April 4th.

*(Deb Clemmensen helped create Love Makes a Family/Families All Matter Book Project and has served as a reader, trainer, speaker, writer, and board member of aMaze for the past 10 years. She is a longtime member of Women Against Military Madness and co-founded Parents for Peaceful Play to address the effects of violent media on children. A psychologist by profession, Deb has worked with kids, adults and families in many settings, embedding principles of social justice and nonviolent conflict resolution. At Washburn Child Guidance Center, she researched mental health care disparities in the African American community and developed a multicultural teen suicide prevention training program for gatekeepers who work with youth. She currently works as a psychotherapist, consultant, and Child/Family specialist in collaborative divorce. Deb lives with her life partner, Jon Pratt, Executive Director of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, and her dog. She has two socially-conscious, politically progressive grown kids, Thea and Ian. Thanks to Deb for her aMazing contributions!)*



## Spotlight on community builders: Twin Cities Public Television



Earlier this spring, aMaze honored Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) with a “Families All Matter Award” for a principled decision to air *Postcards From Buster: Sugartime!*

In a strong stand for an inclusive view of our community, TPT decided to broadcast *Sugartime!* in its regular after-school timeslot and at two evening times to allow for parents and families to view the show together. (*Sugartime!* is the episode of the WGBH-produced children’s educational show which matter-of-factly shows Vermont kids in two-mom families.) Immediately after TPT’s announcement, the Minnesota Family Council petitioned Minnesota lawmakers for an “ending of state funding of Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) for its plan to air a controversial episode of the PBS’ *Postcards from Buster* cartoon series which targets impressionable young children with a pro-homosexual message.” (As of March 22, TPT was one of 58 public television stations that decided to air *Sugartime!* Together they reach 57.21% of U.S. households.)

Jim Pagliarini, CEO and President of TPT, accepted aMaze’s Families All Matter award at the Riverview Theater on March 23 in front of a packed theater of supporters. He spoke of TPT’s decision and said, “One of my heroes, Fred Rogers, talked about that the things that are most important are invisible to the eye. It’s not how you look, it’s not how you comb your hair. It’s not what a family looks like, it’s what’s inside of that family. And when we (at TPT) watched this program, what transcended everything was the love that the show showed. It really did show that all families matter and that they come in all different shapes and sizes. We appreciate your support. It means a great deal to us that you’ve given us this Families All Matter award.”

With its commitment to reflect and respect the diversity of the community it serves, TPT creates many award-winning



Photo by Sophia Hantzes

TPT’s Jim Pagliarini with Families All Matter award and aMaze board members Mark French and Marguerite Butler

productions that share important and often untold stories. Some of these programs are: Don’t Believe the Hype (created of and about youth of color to educate and empower); The North Star: stories of Minnesota’s Black pioneers; The Forgetting: a portrait of Alzheimer’s; Dakota exile; First Person Plural: local connect (on adoption, identity and family); Small World, population in perspective; the annual MLK Breakfast; Wacipi PowWow, and more. Membership is TPT’s largest source of support. Please thank TPT for its commitment to reflect and respect diversity. Well done, Twin Cities Public Television!

**Spotlight on Community Builders** is our regular column to highlight organizations that make a difference in our community by challenging bias and creating community. Please tell us if you have ideas for future **Spotlights**.

*Partnerships’ continued from page 3*

### 3. Responding appropriately to cultural difference

- **Family constellations.** Extended families may play a significant role with the children; seeking only parent involvement may lead to the exclusion of persons who would prove helpful with home-school ties.
- **Language of the home.** When family members are not fluent speakers of English, hire bilingual office staff and translate written communications to the home.
- **Interactional styles.** There is cultural variance in the preferred level of directness used in communication. Some cultures may discourage overt confrontation of authority figures, such as school personnel.

- **Perceptions regarding the role of the school.** Family members may feel it intrusive for them to collaborate on matters they view as strictly the purview of the school (e.g., student performance and behavior while at school.) Likewise, they feel uncomfortable with the notion of school personnel making recommendations regarding what occurs at home (e.g., specific recommendations regarding time or place for homework).
- **Perceptions regarding the acceptable limits of behavior.** The concept of unacceptable behavior is socially constructed and, to some extent, varies from culture to culture. Consequently, behaviors that may be viewed as problematic by educators may not be seen as such by families.

### Conclusion

The development of effective collaborative partnerships with families of culturally diverse learners is integral to the task of delivering appropriate educational services to all students. Families—regardless of cultural or socio-economic group—generally are concerned about the educational well-being of their children. It is up to educators to find ways to connect with these families and build effective educational partnerships with them.

*(Adapted and reprinted with ASCD permission from Voltz, Deborah L. and Morrowin, Sherron Hardy. “Enhancing collaborative partnerships with culturally diverse families.” Classroom Leadership, Vol. 2.7, April 1999.)*

# Kids Corner

## Be part of aMaze's Families All Matter online quilt: "What does family mean to you?"

aMaze invites you to submit a "quilt square"-your artwork and your thoughts about family. Please send us drawings, paintings, collages or words (poem, sentence, etc.) about what family means to you. We will assemble these into a beautiful "patchwork quilt" about family on our website. You'll see your own square and many more created by other kids.

Some ideas to get you started:

- What do you like about your family?
- What is your favorite family tradition, celebration, or activity?
- Share what you would like people to know about your family.
- What makes your family special, or what makes it different from all others?
- What do families and their kids need in order to be strong?
- Share what you want for all families.

To contribute to the Family Quilt:

1. Via email:

Send your pictures/words to: [info@amazeworks.org](mailto:info@amazeworks.org)

Include your first name, age, city and state in the text of your e-mail.

Please send attachments in gif and jpg formats only.

2. Via U.S. Mail:

Mail to: Family Quilt, aMaze

P.O. Box 17417,

Minneapolis MN 55417

Include with your submission:

Your first name

City, State

Your age or grade

### aMaze needs your help

#### People power:

Assembling and copying FAM materials

Computer/technical support (PC, Mac)

Copy editor

Graphic designers

Mailing assemblers

Marketing and promotion advisors

Pre-school project advisors

#### Materials:

Computer projector

Groceries for refreshments



Photo by Sal Skog

Quilt artwork must not be larger than 8 ½" x 11." aMaze cannot return your work to you. Visit our website to see the kids' Families All Matter Quilt at [www.amazeworks.org](http://www.amazeworks.org)

*(Educators: this can be an activity to use with the Families All Matter Book Project, perhaps during the closing session. Your class will enjoy expressing themselves about family and later seeing their work on aMaze's website.)*

## We're making news!

aMaze and Families All Matter Book Project is featured in Jacqueline White's article: "Family Pride: despite political Pressures, some still believe tolerance is worth teaching." Lyn Mitchell, aMaze Outreach and Education Coordinator is quoted, "What we're promoting is tolerance, pluralism, respect and unity- what used to be thought of as common American values." See Utne magazine May / June 2005, p.16-17.

## Welcoming Buster! An amazing success

Go see more about aMaze's *Welcoming Buster!* event at our website, [www.amazeworks.org](http://www.amazeworks.org), where you will find more photos, the mayoral proclamation of *Welcoming Buster Day*, and the materials that we prepared to help adults talk with children about *Sugartime!* and about GLBT people and prejudice. While there, download postcards to send to TPT and WGBH, thanking them for *Postcards From Buster: Sugartime!!* and postcards to mail to U.S. Department of Education and PBS urging them to recognize that ALL Families Matter!

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**Party hosts:** Basilia Bryand, Marguerite Butler, Monica Bryand, Tess Rizzardi; **volunteers:** Candace Margulies, Cori Bryand, Deb Clemmensen, Elaine Johnson, Janet Dahlem, Jay Montpetit, Kathy Stennes, Lyn Mitchell, Paul Spritzer, Paul Swietzer, Ron McKinley, Sally Heuer, Susan Benjamin, Terese Pritschet, and Zoe Nicholie.

**Bound to Be Read Bookstore:** staff and proprietor

**Rainbow Family Conference workshop panelists:** Elizabeth Hoodecheck, Jeffrey Easter, Katie Oberle, Marsha Seltz, Rachel Gilbert, and Tessa Billman

**Welcoming Buster! co-sponsors:** Alliance of Early Childhood Professionals, Annex Teen Clinic, Bethany Lutheran Church, COLAGE: Children of Lesbians & Gays Everywhere, DFL Progressive Caucus, Family and Children’s Service, First Unitarian Society, First Universalist Church, GMDCA: Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association, Lutherans Concerned - Twin Cities, Lyndale United Church of Christ, Mayflower UCC Church, Minneapolis Board of Education, Minnesota Psychological Association, Minnesota School OUTreach Coalition (MSOC), Out for Equity, OutFront Minnesota, PACER: Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights, People of Faith in Action, Plymouth Congregational Church Outreach Board, Rainbow Families, RainbowMagazine.org, Shir Tikvah Congregation, Southside Family School, St. Paul-Ramsey County Dept. of Public Health, St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church/Wingspan Ministry, The Naming Project, Tolerance Minnesota: a program of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC,) Unity Church-Unitarian of St. Paul, Unity South Church, Washburn Child Guidance Center, & YWCA Minneapolis.

**Welcoming Buster! event helpers:** aMaze Board, Amber Hawkins, Amy Lange, Ann deGroot, Anne Addison, Anne Phibbs, Barbra Wiener, Betty Tisel, Bill Koch, Billy Perkiss, Brendan Kruse, Case-Allan family, Catherine Jordan, Catharine Reid, Claire Chamberlin, Don Portwood, Elizabeth Coté, Ellen Lepinski, Eric Hawkins, Geri Graham, Heart of the Beast, Jacqueline White, Jessie Tebben, Jim Pagliarini, Judy Farmer, Karen Pike and family, Kate Stanley, Lake Country School, Laura Smidzik, Leigh Combs, Linden Hills Co-op, Loren Williams, Margo McCreary, Mary Jean Mulherin, Meg Riley, Minnehaha United Methodist Church, Nanci Olesen, Nate Gottfried, Nick Nathan, Pam Colby, Pam Marguerite, Paul Lennander, Paula Gilbertson, Paulette Zoë, Phillip Jares, R.T. Rybak, Riverside Theater, Sarah Farley, Scott Fearing, Sean Gavere, Shawna Gibson, Shirley Hanson, Sophia Hantzes, Steve Anthony, Sydney Evans, Tou Tou Khamsot, & Twin Cities Public Television.



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