

**Latine Children in Early
Childhood Education *Research
and Practice***

Edited by

Raquel Plotka and Ruth Guirguis

Latine Children in Early Childhood Education: Research and Practice

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Raquel Plotka and Ruth Guirguis have collaborated on several research projects, publications, and grants.

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Introduction:

Latine Children in Early Childhood Education, Challenges, and Opportunities

Latine children represent the largest and fastest-growing demographic of young learners in the country, yet they continue to face significant disparities in access to high-quality early learning opportunities. These disparities are shaped by intersecting factors such as language barriers, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and systemic inequities in public education systems (Alegría et al., 2010; Perreira & Ornelas, 2011). Despite these challenges, much of the existing literature on early childhood education either marginalizes or generalizes the experiences of Latine children, failing to account for the rich cultural, linguistic, and familial assets they bring to the classroom. The present book attempts to fill this gap and provide educators, researchers, and policymakers with actionable, evidence-based strategies to better support this population. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive resource that synthesizes research, policy, and practice to address the educational experiences of Latine children in early childhood settings across the United States.

The present book illuminates the specific barriers Latine families encounter, such as limited access to affordable programs, lack of bilingual educators, and culturally unresponsive curricula and highlights the promising practices that can make a difference in schools and communities across the country (Briggs-Gowan &

Carter, 2008; Egger & Angold, 2006). These include supporting dual-language acquisition, family engagement models rooted in Latine cultural values, and the integration of culturally relevant pedagogies that affirm children's identities. Grounding the chapters of this book in both research and lived experiences ensures that it speaks directly to the needs of practitioners while also contributing to the scholarly conversation about equity in early childhood education.

In addition, this book could serve as a critical tool for teacher preparation and professional development. Many early childhood educators report feeling unprepared to meet the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse learners, particularly in communities where Latine children make up a substantial portion of the student population (Alvarez et al., 2014). By offering practical guidance, reflective questions, and real-world examples, the chapters of this book attempt to empower educators to implement inclusive and developmentally appropriate practices that support both academic and social-emotional development. Importantly, the book aims at elevating the voices of Latine families and communities, positioning them as active partners in their children's education rather than passive recipients of services (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

Ultimately, a book focused on best practices for Latine children in early childhood education would be a timely and necessary contribution to the field. As calls for equity, inclusion, and culturally sustaining education continue to grow, there is a clear demand for resources that are specific, community-centered, and grounded in both research and practice. By centering Latine children's unique experiences and strengths, such a book could

help transform early childhood education into a more just and responsive system for all learners.

Why the Use of “Latine” Instead of “Latinx”?

In recent years, there has been a growing effort to adopt gender-inclusive language when referring to people of Latin American descent. Among the terms that have gained attention are *Latinx* and *Latine*, both proposed as gender-neutral alternatives to *Latino* (masculine) and *Latina* (feminine). While *Latinx* emerged earlier and gained prominence in academic, activist, and media circles in the United States, it has also been met with criticism, particularly from within the communities it aims to represent. Increasingly, many scholars, educators, and community members are turning to *Latine* as a more culturally and linguistically grounded option (Miranda et al., 2023).

Latine is a term that originated in Spanish-speaking communities and is considered more compatible with the grammatical structure of the Spanish language. Unlike *Latinx*, which inserts an “x” that is unfamiliar and often unpronounceable in Spanish, *Latine* uses the “e” vowel ending, which is consistent with Spanish linguistic norms and more easily integrated into speech. For example, where *Latinx* can create awkward constructions like “Latinxos,” *Latine* naturally allows for inclusive plurals like “Latines.” This linguistic adaptability has made *Latine* more accessible to Spanish speakers, including those in Latin America, and has led to its broader acceptance in some circles advocating for inclusive language that respects cultural and linguistic traditions.

Criticism of *Latinx* often centers on its limited uptake among the broader U.S. Latine population. Surveys have found that while the term is widely used in academic and activist contexts, only a small percentage of Latines in the U.S. actually use or recognize the term. Many view it as elitist, imposed, or disconnected from the lived realities and language practices of everyday people. *Latine*, by contrast, has been adopted more organically in some Spanish-speaking communities and is increasingly used by educators, students, and advocates who seek to be inclusive while also honoring the linguistic heritage of the people they serve.

The move toward using *Latine* reflects a broader commitment to cultural responsiveness and linguistic justice in education and scholarship. For those working in early childhood education, for example, using terms like *Latine* can signal respect for children's home languages and identities, while also modeling inclusive and affirming language practices. It is a term that acknowledges the diversity of gender identities within the Latin American diaspora, without disregarding the linguistic and cultural realities of Spanish-speaking communities. As language continues to evolve, the adoption of *Latine* represents a thoughtful, community-informed approach to inclusion—one that prioritizes both linguistic accessibility and social equity (María del Río-González, 2021).

Barriers to Latine Children Participation in Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education (ECE) is widely recognized as a critical foundation for children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. In the United States, however, access to high-quality

early education is not equitably distributed. Latine children, now one of the fastest-growing child populations in the country, continue to face disparities in enrollment and participation. While preschool enrollment for Latine children has rebounded since the COVID-19 pandemic, it still lags behind that of White and Asian children. In 2022, for example, approximately 47.4% of Latine 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in preschool, compared to 54% nationally for 4-year-olds and more than 60% for some other racial/ethnic groups (Ansari, 2017). Head Start programs, which are designed to support low-income families, reach some Latine children, but not at levels proportionate to need. As a result, many Latine children begin kindergarten without the same early learning experiences as their peers, contributing to persistent achievement gaps throughout their school years.

Multiple, interrelated barriers contribute to the underrepresentation of Latine children in early childhood education. One significant obstacle is the cost of care. High-quality preschool and child care remain unaffordable for many families, and although programs such as the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and Head Start offer subsidies or free care, eligibility requirements and limited capacity restrict their reach. For undocumented or mixed-status families, concerns about immigration status often deter them from applying for public programs, even when their children are eligible. Moreover, structural inequalities mean that Latine communities are more likely to be located in “child care deserts,” where few affordable or quality providers exist. This geographic inequity further limits families’ options.

Language and cultural barriers also play a prominent role. Many Latine families speak Spanish as their primary language and may

face challenges navigating ECE systems that lack bilingual staff, translated materials, or culturally responsive environments. As a result, families may feel misunderstood or unwelcome, leading them to rely instead on family-based or informal child care (Prusinski et al., 2022).

Cultural values such as *familismo*, the prioritization of family connections and caregiving, also influence decisions to keep young children at home under the care of relatives (Calzada et al., 2010; Zayas et al., 2005). While these arrangements can be nurturing, they often lack the structured learning environments provided in formal early education settings. A lack of representation among ECE educators and administrators further compounds these challenges. Latine families are more likely to engage with programs where they see their values, language, and identities reflected, but the current ECE workforce remains disproportionately White and monolingual (Lopez et al., 2012).

These challenges must be understood within the broader context of the U.S. early childhood education system, which is deeply fragmented. Rather than operating as a cohesive, nationally funded and standardized system, ECE in the U.S. is delivered through a patchwork of federal, state, local, private, and community-based programs. At the federal level, programs like Head Start, Early Head Start, and the CCDF provide targeted support for low-income families (Child Care State Systems Specialist Network, 2014). Other programs, such as IDEA Part C and Section 619, serve children with disabilities from birth through age five (First Five Years Fund, 2019). States also fund their own public pre-K programs, with significant variation in eligibility criteria, funding levels, teacher qualifications, and curriculum

standards. Some states offer universal access to preschool, while others restrict programs to specific populations or geographic areas.

Private and community-based providers, including faith-based centers, family child care homes, and non-profits fill in the gaps, but these providers vary widely in quality and accessibility. The decentralized nature of the system means that families must navigate a complex web of applications, eligibility requirements, and funding streams. This complexity disproportionately affects families with fewer resources or limited English proficiency (Weixler et al., 2024). In addition, despite growing recognition of the value of early education, public investment in the ECE sector remains relatively low compared to other developed nations. The result is a system where access and quality are closely tied to race, income, and geography, leaving Latine families with fewer opportunities to benefit from early learning programs.

To reduce disparities in early childhood education, a more integrated and equitable system is needed, one that addresses both structural and cultural barriers to participation (Forcén et al., 2023). This includes expanding bilingual and culturally responsive programming, increasing outreach and enrollment support in Latine communities, and ensuring greater representation of Latine educators in early education settings. Additionally, policy solutions must focus on affordability, accessibility, and trust-building, particularly for mixed-status families who may be hesitant to engage with public systems. Recognizing the unique needs and strengths of Latine families is critical to designing early childhood systems that are inclusive, just, and effective (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

The Early Childhood Education System in the United States: Structure, Challenges, and Opportunities

The early childhood education (ECE) system in the United States plays a foundational role in preparing young children for lifelong learning, health, and well-being. Unlike the K–12 education system, however, which is publicly funded and universally accessible, early childhood education in the U.S. is a fragmented and largely decentralized system. It consists of a patchwork of federal, state, local, private, and community-based programs, each with its own funding sources, regulations, and eligibility requirements. As a result, access to early learning opportunities is highly inconsistent and often depends on a family's geographic location, income level, and awareness of available services (Weixler et al., 2024).

At the federal level, several major programs anchor the public early childhood system. Head Start and Early Head Start are the most comprehensive federally funded programs, offering early education, health, nutrition, and family support services to low-income children and their families. These programs have long focused on addressing the needs of marginalized communities but are limited in reach due to funding constraints. The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) provides subsidies to help low-income families pay for child care, though subsidy availability and access vary widely by state (Office of Children and Family Services, 2014). Additionally, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supports early intervention services (Part C) for infants and toddlers with developmental delays and preschool special education (Section 619) for children ages three to five (First Five Years Fund, 2019).

In addition to federal programs, nearly every state offers some form of publicly funded pre-kindergarten, though the scope and quality differ significantly. Some states, such as Florida, Georgia, and Oklahoma, offer universal pre-K to all four-year-olds, while others target services to children from low-income families or those deemed at risk (Rockefeller Institute of Government, 2023). States also administer their own Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), which aim to assess and enhance the quality of early learning programs, though participation in these systems is often voluntary. Moreover, state-funded home visiting initiatives and early intervention services expand support for young children and their families during the critical prenatal-to-five window (Faria, 2017).

Alongside public programs, a large portion of ECE services in the U.S. is delivered through private and community-based providers. These include nonprofit organizations, faith-based programs, family child care homes, and for-profit child care centers. While these providers increase the diversity of program offerings, they also contribute to wide variability in quality and affordability. Private programs are often expensive and unaffordable for many working families, especially those who do not qualify for subsidies. Family child care homes are often more flexible and culturally responsive but may lack access to professional development and oversight. The lack of a unified system results in considerable gaps in access and quality, especially for low-income, rural, and racially minoritized communities (Allen & Hutton, 2023).

Several systemic challenges further complicate the delivery of early childhood services in the U.S. First, public investment in ECE

is significantly lower than in other developed nations, resulting in underfunded programs, long waitlists, and workforce instability. Second, the early childhood workforce is undervalued, with many educators earning poverty-level wages despite the complexity and importance of their work. Third, the lack of coordination among agencies and funding streams creates confusion for families navigating the system. Finally, inequities persist in access, with children from marginalized backgrounds, including those who are Latine, Black, Indigenous, or from immigrant families, less likely to attend high-quality early learning programs (Assari et al., 2025).

Despite these challenges, there are promising efforts underway to strengthen the U.S. early childhood education system. Local initiatives, such as New York City's universal pre-K (New York State Education Department, 2025) and Washington, D.C.'s investments in early education demonstrate the potential of publicly funded, accessible programs (District of Columbia Public Schools, 2025). At the federal level, recent policy proposals have called for expanded access to universal pre-K, increased funding for child care, and wage improvements for the early childhood workforce. Although comprehensive reform has yet to be realized, momentum continues to build around the need for a more equitable, accessible, and high-quality early learning system.

In sum, the early childhood education system in the United States is a complex and evolving landscape. While it offers a variety of services to support young children and their families, its decentralized structure, uneven quality, and affordability barriers limit its effectiveness and equity. A more cohesive and adequately funded system, one that prioritizes the needs of all children and supports the educators who serve them, is essential for realizing

the full potential of early childhood education for all young children.

Organization of this Book

This book attempts to serve as a resource to educators working with young Latine children in the context of early childhood education in the U.S. It also aims to further scholarly conversation, research, and theoretical understanding of equity in early childhood through the use of inclusive and evidence-based practices. Finally, this book will prove informative to teacher education programs, policymakers, and early childhood education leaders.

This book consists of three sections. The first section of the book presents research-based considerations for inclusive practice in early childhood education, including engaging Latine families in early childhood education programs, supporting emotional development and self-regulation in young Latine children, understanding the needs of young Latine children with disabilities, and exploring mental health considerations for Latine children and families in early childhood.

The second section presents research-based practices for implementation in early childhood education classrooms, including transforming instruction by incorporating culturally relevant play, supporting young Latine children through aesthetic education by connecting the creative arts and literacy, and strategies for supporting dual language acquisition in young Latine children in early childhood education settings.

Lastly, the third section focuses on considerations for higher education and teacher education programs including preparing early childhood educators to support the cultural and linguistic needs of Latine children through aesthetic education, as well as the use of global *concientización* lens and radical play in order to develop STEAM identities in pre-service teachers.

Section I: Considerations for Inclusive Practices

Chapter 1 explores strategies for meaningfully engaging Latine families in early childhood education by recognizing and building upon their cultural, linguistic, and social assets. Grounded in sociocultural and family engagement frameworks, it examines the central role of family–school partnerships in supporting children’s learning and development. The chapter highlights challenges that Latine families often face, including systemic inequities, language barriers, and deficit-based assumptions, while emphasizing the strengths they contribute, such as strong community ties, bilingualism, and cultural traditions. Research and practice examples illustrate how educators can create inclusive, reciprocal partnerships through culturally responsive communication, shared decision-making, and opportunities for family leadership. By reframing family engagement as a collaborative, strengths-based process, the chapter calls for policies and practices that affirm Latine families’ identities and foster equitable educational outcomes.

Chapter 2 examines the development of self-regulation in Latine preschoolers and its implications for early childhood education. Drawing on Vygotskian and sociocultural frameworks, it highlights how language, socialization, and classroom interactions

shape emotional, behavioral, and cognitive regulation during the preschool years. The chapter reviews research showing that Latine children, particularly dual language learners, often face systemic barriers such as poverty, under-resourced schools, and curricula that overlook their cultural and linguistic strengths. These inequities contribute to disparities in self-regulation, school readiness, and later academic achievement. Evidence suggests that bilingual development and culturally responsive practices, such as incorporating private speech, guided play, and strong teacher–child interactions can foster self-regulatory growth and support literacy and numeracy outcomes. The chapter argues for systemic reforms that move beyond test-driven accountability to emphasize whole-child development, bilingual education, and culturally affirming pedagogy. Finally, the chapter focuses on practices that focus on self-regulation to better prepare Latine children for academic and social success, while also valuing the rich linguistic and cultural resources they bring to the classroom.

Chapter 3 explores the systemic challenges faced by young Latine children with disabilities in U.S. educational systems. It examines the overrepresentation of young English-speaking and dual language learners Latine students in special education, highlighting contributing factors such as socioeconomic disparities, cultural misunderstandings, and implicit biases. The chapter emphasizes the critical role of culturally and linguistically responsive assessments and the shortage of bilingual educators and assessors, and the complexities of distinguishing between language acquisition and learning disabilities among Dual Language Learners (DLLs). Recommendations include professional development in cultural competence, recruitment of bilingual professionals, and policy reforms to ensure equitable

identification and support. These strategies aim to foster inclusive, accurate, and just educational practices for young Latine children.

Chapter 4 examines the intersection of education and mental health in Latine families. This chapter highlights both the challenges and resilience of this community and how they influence early childhood outcomes. Acculturation stress, socioeconomic disparities, and discrimination is shown to heighten risks for anxiety, depression, behaviors disorders, and trauma in Latine youth; these elements, paired with limited access to culturally competent care, compound these issues in this community. Values such as *familismo* and *respeto*, strong community networks, and bilingualism promote resilience and positive identity formation. This chapter explores how mental health professionals and educators can work together to recognize early signs of distress, integrate culturally responsive practices, and employ trauma-informed, family-centered interventions. School-based approaches, such as Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and accessible bilingual mental health services are shown to be effective strategies for addressing disparities and fostering growth both socially and emotionally. The chapter highlights systemic changes that will equip educators with multicultural competence and strengthen the partnership between schools, families, and their communities. When culturally responsive care is prioritized alongside developmentally appropriate mental health practice, early childhood education can nurture resilience, equity, and long-term well-being for Latine children; this, in turn, advances both individual success and community health.

Section II: Classroom Practices that Support the Needs of Young Latine Children

Chapter 5 explores ways to incorporate cultural relevance into early childhood instruction through play and discovery-based learning. It highlights how embedding culturally relevant pedagogy within play and discovery learning affirms identity and promotes belonging - all while enhancing engagement, academic achievement, and language development. Grounded in asset-based approaches, the chapter highlights how embedding students' cultural identities, lived experiences, and community cultural wealth into playful learning environments enhances engagement, belonging, academic achievement, and language development. Drawing on research in culturally relevant pedagogy, playful learning, and discovery-based instruction, the chapter illustrates how play serves as a gateway to deeper cognitive exploration while affirming cultural identity. Practical strategies for creating inclusive play spaces and embedding cultural knowledge through guided inquiry are presented to support educators in fostering equitable and meaningful learning experiences.

Chapter 6 explores the role that aesthetic education plays in early childhood classrooms in supporting the multicontextual identities of Latine children, centering their stories and the diverse funds of knowledge and literacy experiences they bring to the classroom while developing their language and literacy skills. This chapter discusses the benefits of using high-quality multicultural picture books as works of art and provides a selection of books that can spark conversations and engage young Latine children in creative arts experiences. Aesthetic education experiences awaken children

to new ways of understanding the world and provide multisensory and multimodal opportunities for Latine children to build knowledge based upon their lived experiences. The creative arts provide opportunities for self-expression, as well as exploration of diverse cultural values, traditions, and beliefs. The inquiry-based process of engaging with works of art, followed by creating original artwork, develops children's analytical thinking skills and plays an essential role in young children's language and literacy development.

Chapter 7 focuses on language development and dual language acquisition. The growing number of dual language learners (DLLs) in U.S. early childhood classrooms, the majority of whom are Latine and Spanish-speaking, highlights the need for research-based strategies to support their language development. Chapter 7 reviews the developmental processes of first (L1) and second language (L2) acquisition during early childhood, outlines common myths about bilingualism, and presents practical recommendations for educators working with Latine DLLs. Findings indicate that language acquisition is shaped by both universal developmental processes and individual differences, and that strong L1 development is foundational for successful L2 learning. The paper emphasizes the importance of family engagement, supportive classroom environments, and communication strategies that foster multilingual growth. Special attention is given to infants and toddlers, for whom continuity of the home language is critical. This work provides educators with tools to promote healthy language development, cultural affirmation, and positive school adjustment among young Latine DLLs, by debunking misconceptions and offering evidence-based practices.

Section III: Considerations for Teacher Education Programs

Chapter 8 explores how early childhood teacher preparation programs support future teachers in creating culturally sustaining curriculum by engaging them in a variety of aesthetic education experiences that integrate creative arts and literacy. Aesthetic education provides rich opportunities to engage with curricular topics through multisensory and multimodal encounters with works of art. This nurtures analytical and creative thinking and supports the cultural and linguistic needs of Latine students. Reflective, inquiry-based creative arts experiences build future teachers' capacities to incorporate aesthetic education into their teaching practices, while centering their lived experiences in their emerging identity as teachers. The chapter presents a case for embedding aesthetic experiences into curriculum courses in early childhood teacher preparation programs as an assets-centered methodology for designing learning experiences rooted in Latine students' lived experiences and strengths. In the following sections, the chapter describes a variety of creative arts experiences woven into early childhood curriculum classes to build on future teachers' funds of knowledge, engage their curiosity, and demonstrate the pedagogy of aesthetic education. While early childhood curriculum courses are primarily focused on teaching practices, students in teacher preparation programs afforded the opportunity to engage with experiences of exploring, creating, and reflecting upon works of art can find connections with one another and discover that learning through creative experiences invites students of all ages to positively engage with content. They also find that it will invite their future students to strengthen the skills and dispositions required to be curious, self-initiated, lifelong learners.

Finally, Chapter 9 reevaluates the potential of radical play as a counter-hegemonic practice. This culturally responsive approach aims to teach science concepts while fostering strong STEAM identities among pre-service teachers (PSTs) through playful learning experiences. This approach, centered on playful learning, addresses the crucial need to advance scientific literacy, educational equity, and creative thinking for underrepresented communities. A key aspect of this approach includes intentional replays through experiential learning, realized through PSTs' engagement in socially mediated activities such as Community Play Days. These playful *vivencias* are designed to empower PSTs to recognize and reaffirm their value as knowledge holders, to promote the transformative power of playful learning, and empower future educators with the skills and confidence to foster more conscious and positive STEAM identity/ies. These elements help to create equitable educational experiences for all students, especially those in underrepresented Latine communities. The chapter is stylistically formatted in a way that highlights and emphasizes the impacts of revisiting varying elements of play in educational experiences.

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Section I: Considerations for Inclusive Practices

Chapter 1

Engaging Latine Families in Early Childhood Education Programs

Raquel Plotka and Ruth Guirguis

Changing demographics have important implications for how educators prepare to engage and work with families. Latines are the fastest growing population of children in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). A decade ago, one in every five children in kindergarten is of Latine descent (McCabe et al., 2013); currently, one in every four children are Latine (Guevara, 2023). Latines are all people who live in the U.S. and whose origins are traced to Spanish-speaking regions of Latin America, including the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, and South America (Flores, Abreu, Olivar, & Kastner, 1998; Turner-Trujillo, Del Toro, & Ramos, 2017). While Latine groups from different areas vary in the unique traditions of their respective home countries, Latines tend to share similar qualities regarding cultural values. One of the strongest and most evident commonalities among all Latine groups is the idea of collectivism in the household and in Latine culture in and of itself.

Latines demonstrate a strong connection to their immediate and extended families, often making individual sacrifices for the betterment of the larger whole (Rinderle & Montoya, 2008; Marquez et al., 2020). Cultural collectivism and the sense of sacrifice for the greater good is a key factor in how students of

Latine descent and their respective families engage not only in the household, but in the American educational system as well. Because Latine families follow a collectivist culture, student performance is interpreted not as a child's individual achievement, but a reflection of family values, implications, and engagement (Hofstede, 2011; Updegraff et al., 2021). While American educators are made aware of the "multiculturalism" in their classroom, teacher preparation programs must and should be enhanced to improve the means in which future teachers are trained to engage with families in a culturally relevant and sensitive manner.

Family engagement has been found to be predictive of children's academic achievement, as well as social and emotional development. During preschool, family engagement can have a positive effect on future grades (McWayne, Melzi, Limlingan, & Schick, 2016).

It has been noted that it is more challenging to engage Latine families in schools and programs than non-minority families (Moody & Ramos, 2014). Certain cultural beliefs contribute to "barriers" that impact the level of family engagement in the education of young children; these "barriers" could range from families' unfamiliarity with the American school system, family educational levels, and lack of English proficiency may influence the extent of family engagement (Flores, Abreu, Olivar, & Kastner, 1998; Grosso et al., 2021) to a desire to encourage educational values that may vary from those instilled in the classroom. Families who do not speak English, may feel a sense of insecurity or intimidation about their ability or inability to help their children academically. Because the American classroom is student-centered, the Latine culture tends to rely on a teacher-centered

classroom (Hofstede, 2011). This leads to a disparity in the manner in which the relations between parent/teacher are interpreted. Many Latine families view teachers as authoritative figures and believe that educators have knowledge to guide the students in the classroom as opposed to the families. Furthermore, an unwelcoming school environment, socioeconomic, and family structure are factors that influence family engagement.

In actuality, there is a dissonance in the way Latine families engage in education and the way educators expect families to engage (Oztürk, 2013; Partovi et al., 2022). Thus, it is important to identify key beliefs not just in the Latine culture, but in other minorities as well, that can help educators support engagement (Mendez Smith & Vega, 2015; Grosso et al., 2021). With adequate teacher preparation programs future educators can develop ways to facilitate understanding of the families' cultural values that can inform recommendations to assist families in engaging early on in students' education.

Family Engagement

Family engagement refers to the active participation of significant caregivers and school staff working together to improve the education process of the child in the home, early education program, and the community (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). According to Epstein's typology, family engagement includes: (a) parenting, providing basic needs, emotional support; (b) communication with educators; (c) supporting learning at home, (d) attending school/center events; (e) participating in community connections, such as a parent collaborating with community institutions and agencies to