

## Heather Weiss

Heather Weiss, Ed.D., is the Founder and Director of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) and Senior Research Associate and Lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. From its beginning in 1983, HFRP's mission has been to support the creation of more effective practices, interventions, and policies to promote children's successful development from birth to adulthood. To achieve this mission, Dr. Weiss and her colleagues conduct, synthesize, and disseminate research and evaluation information, developing tools that encourage professional and organizational learning; that spark innovation; and that promote and support evaluation, continuous improvement, and accountability. A key emphasis of HFRP's work is the promotion, documentation, and assessment of complementary learning, or strategies that support children's learning and development in non-school as well as school settings.

Well known for her work promoting family engagement in children's education, Dr. Weiss is a founding member of the National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group, recently created to inform educational policy on family engagement and in so doing, to increase educational opportunities for all children, from cradle to career. Dr. Weiss co-led the Home Visit Forum, a community of practice designed to build the knowledge base for the home visitation field; she writes, speaks, and advises on programs and policies for children and families and is a consultant and advisor to numerous foundations on strategic grantmaking and evaluation. Her recent publications include "Reframing Family Involvement in Education: Supporting Families to Support Educational Equity" for the Campaign for Educational Equity; "From Periphery to Center: A New Vision and Strategy for Family, School, and Community Partnerships" in *The Handbook of School-Family Partnerships*; and "The Federal Role in Out-of-School Learning: After-School, Summer Learning, and Family Involvement as Critical Learning Supports" for the Center on Education Policy.

A flagship enterprise of HFRP is The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE, <http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/fine-family-involvement-network-of-educators>), a community of thousands of educators, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers dedicated to strengthening family-school-community partnerships.

As part of their efforts to build the demand for and use of evaluation as a cornerstone of social change, Dr. Weiss and her colleagues publish *The Evaluation Exchange*, a periodical national review of the latest evaluation theory and practice in key areas of child and family policy, and create tools to build community and foundation evaluation capacity. HFRP also provides strategic planning and evaluation services for foundations and communities. Their current evaluation portfolio includes evaluating national foundation efforts to scale up universal pre-kindergarten services and extended learning opportunities. Recent publications focus on reframing research and evaluation to support continuous improvement and results-based decision-making; examining the case for complementary learning from a research and policy perspective; and assessing new ways of providing and evaluating professional development.

Heather Weiss received her doctorate in Education and Social Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and she was a postdoctoral research fellow at the Yale Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy.