

# FAMILIES IN ACTION

Report for Academic Year: 2008-2009

Friendship Student & Family Group Rough Rock Elementary School

Chinle, AZ Tribal Affiliation: Navajo

Facilitator: Lucie Begay & Cleo Mitchell

Regional Coordinator: James McKenzie

The purpose of the Rough Rock Elementary School is to educate, enlighten, motivate, challenge, and assist in the cultural education of Navajo children in order to be self-respecting, respectful of others, speak and practice their language and culture, and be functional in the mainstream society. The Families in Action Program is utilized as a means of bringing Friendship Program students' families together and to encourage their children to achieve academic success.



## COMMUNITY PROJECT:

### ◆ FACING CHALLENGES

Although the Lead Facilitators planned to focus on guiding their group in a community project, they were not able to meet consistently enough to devote time to a project.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

◆ After facing numerous challenges, the Lead Facilitators at Rough Rock Elementary School demonstrated noticeable accomplishments. Lucie Begay and Cleo Mitchell have become more familiar with and comfortable leading their group in activities from the Families in Action curriculum after attending two FA trainings.

◆ Not only were the facilitators more confident at leading activities directly from the Families in Action curriculum, but they took their use of the program to another level by translating the activities into the Navajo language and modifying activities to more closely apply to the families in the community of Rough Rock. This effort made the Families in Action meetings more meaningful to participants in the community, where the majority of the family members grew up with Navajo as their first language.



## CHALLENGES:

## FAMILIES IN ACTION PROGRAM

*In the Families in Action Program, parents and family members are encouraged to identify barriers, in their communities, to academic success and to proactively develop solutions that will assist their student in overcoming these barriers.*

- ◆ In the community of Rough Rock, Lead Facilitators, Lucie Begay and Cleo Mitchell, chose to implement Families in Action with Futures for Children Friendship student families. They sent flyers home with students announcing meetings. However, attendance for the meetings is voluntary and sometimes only a few parents would show up for the meetings. As the Friendship Volunteer for Rough Rock schools, Lucie tried to tie Families in Action meetings to Student Updates and Student Incentive Check distribution as a way to maximize participation. When meetings were not scheduled based on Friendship requirements, attendance was low, drastically affecting the group's dynamic and making it difficult for Lucie and Cleo to facilitate activities.
- ◆ Lucie and Cleo were very busy with their work and other forms of community involvement. They found it difficult to plan Families in Action meetings because of their busy schedules. They hoped to meet two to three times per semester, but had to settle for one to two meetings per semester.



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