

AP-OD Family Connections

Message from AP-OD

A new school year is here! Whether your family is already back in the routine or getting ready to start, this issue is here to help you feel prepared, supported, and confident. We are sharing practical resources to help you choose the right early care and education program or school for your child, including a kindergarten readiness checklist and a Sesame Workshop video on building bridges between home and school.

We are also honoring Lucy Diaz, a mother whose experiences seeking support for her family led her to become a leader in her community. Through her journey with AP-OD, Lucy found resources, connections, and opportunities to use her voice. Her story reflects what can happen when parents are supported, and their voices are valued.

And we want to hear from you! Join our community conversation on Instagram and Facebook and share one thing you wish someone had told you before your first day of school. Your experience could be exactly what another parent needs to hear.



AP-OD Parent Spotlight



From Participant to Leader

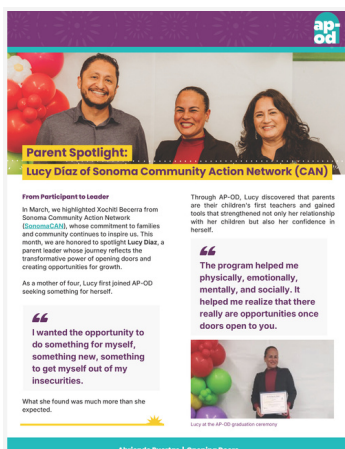
Lucy joined AP-OD looking for an opportunity to try something new and grow. Through the parent program, she gained valuable tools to help strengthen her relationship with her children, deepened her understanding of the important role parents play as their children's first teachers, and discovered new opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Inspired by her experience, Lucy began supporting other families in her community to take their first steps towards leadership. Today, she helps create opportunities for parents to learn, connect, and strengthen their voices.

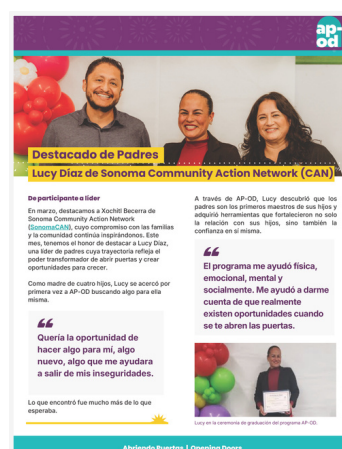
Lucy continues to open doors for others, showing how parent leadership can help create lasting change for families and communities.

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Don't be afraid. Give yourself the opportunity to learn and grow. You never know where that first step can lead.



**Read Lucy's full story
(English)**



**Read Lucy's full story
(Spanish)**

Tip of the Month



Choosing the Right Program for Your Family

Choosing an early care and education program or school is an important decision for every family. In Session 8 of the AP-OD program, parents explore how to find options and choose a quality program that meets the needs of both their children and their family. As you begin your search, below are some key things to keep in mind.

What to Look for in a Quality Program

When choosing a daycare, preschool, or kindergarten, here are some important questions to think about:

- ☀ Does the staff genuinely engage with children, talk to them at their level, and really listen to them?
- ☀ What is the child-to-provider ratio?
- ☀ Are the daily schedule, activities, and policies clearly communicated?
- ☀ Is bilingual staff available if your family needs it and how are children who are English language learners supported?
- ☀ What documents are required, and what is the enrollment deadline?
- ☀ Does the school have a special procedure, such as a waitlist, lottery, or permit?
- ☀ What does a typical day look like?

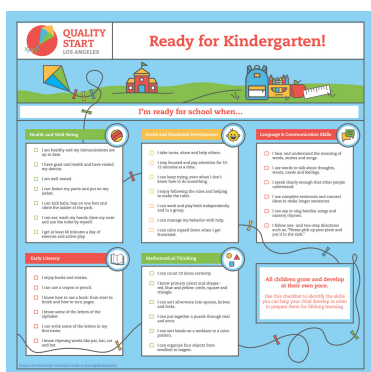
And most importantly: What are the top 3 things that matter most to your family? That is a great place to start!

Tip of the Month



Ready for Kindergarten!

Every child grows and develops at their own pace, and school readiness looks different for every family. [The Quality Start LA Parent Readiness Checklist](#) is a wonderful free tool to help you identify the skills your child is building and areas where you can offer support at home.



The checklist covers five key areas: health and well-being, language and communication, early literacy, mathematical thinking, and social-emotional development.

[Download the Kindergarten Readiness Checklist by Quality Start LA](#)



Bridging Home and School with Sesame Workshop

Children benefit when the important adults in their lives stay connected. Building a strong relationship between home and school can help children feel supported as they adjust to new routines, teachers, and environments. Watch this short [Sesame Workshop video](#) to see how one dad stays connected and involved in his child's school experience, and get inspired to do the same!

[Watch: Back to School with Sesame Workshop](#)

Choosing a school or program is a big decision, but you don't have to figure it out alone. Talk with other parents, visit programs in person, ask questions, and trust your instincts as you consider what feels right for your child. You are your child's greatest advocate.

Upcoming Events and Workshops



Family-to-Family Real Talk Series: Somos Familias Latinas

A free virtual conversation series from the Brazelton Touchpoints Center and The Children's Partnership that celebrates the strength, wisdom, and lived experiences of Latino families. Attendees will discuss the important roles that faith, solidarity, community care, and love play in familias latinas living in uncertain times. All conversations are offered in English and Spanish.

- ☀ September 28, 2026 – [Holding Our Families Together in Uncertain Times](#)
- ☀ October 19, 2026 – [Fe y Familia: Faith as a Foundation](#)
- ☀ November 9, 2026 – [Dime Con Quien Andas: Solidarity in Community and Collective Power](#)
- ☀ November 30, 2026 – [Con Amor y Sacrificio: The Guilt, Dignity, and Deep Love of Caring for Our Elders while Raising Our Children](#)

Register

Upcoming Events and Workshops



Family-to-Family Real Talk Series: Parents Rising to Child Developmental Challenges

A free virtual conversation series from the Brazelton Touchpoints Center that offers a warm and inviting opportunity for parents and families of children with differences in or challenges to their development to connect with each other. Through four engaging conversations with parents who know what it's like to raise children with developmental differences, challenges, delays, or disabilities, we share the unique and common experiences of loving and raising children whose developmental journey is delayed or atypical. All episodes have live Spanish translation and captioning available.

- ☀ September 14, 2026 – [Stepping Up: Kinship Care and Family Resilience](#)
- ☀ October 26, 2026 – [A Three-Perspective Approach: One Provider's Story of Neurodivergence, Parenting, and Practice](#)
- ☀ November 2, 2026 – [When the Personal Is the Professional: A Mother's Journey with Autism](#)
- ☀ December 7, 2026 – [This Is What I See, What Do You See? A Family's Journey through Complex Diagnoses](#)

Register

August 15, 2026



Community Building

In Their Shoes

Do you remember your first day of school? Take a moment to think back. What happened? How did you feel walking through those doors for the very first time? Were you excited, nervous, or maybe a little of both?

Remembering our own experiences can help us better understand what our children might be feeling as they start a new school year, begin daycare, or take that big first step into kindergarten. And sometimes, just knowing that someone else felt the same way makes all the difference.

This month, we're continuing the conversation and inviting you to share with our community: "One thing I wish someone had told me before my first day of school is ____."

Share your response on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) and tag us @AP_OD_National. Your story could help another parent as they navigate this new chapter together with their little one.



Saying "The future belongs to those who prepare for it today."