



How Remake Learning Days Build Family Engagement, Create Demand for More STEAM Learning Opportunities, and Contribute to a More Equitable STEAM Learning Ecology

“
Events like this continue to provide students and their families opportunities to learn and grow together. The cross-generational teaching and learning is always amazing to witness.”

— 2019 Remake Learning Days host

What happens when hundreds of Remake Learning host organizations, including many of the places children learn—schools, libraries, afterschool and early childhood programs, museums, tech start-ups, media, and universities—engage families and children to provide shared STEAM learning experiences? And what happens when related resources that update and broaden families’ understanding of how, what, when, and where children and youth learn reinforce the multiple ways families can support such STEAM learning during and beyond Remake Learning Days? A lot.

Over the past year, in partnership with The Grable Foundation, our team at Global Family Research Project has

been examining family engagement in Remake Learning Days (RLD) and sharing our findings in Learning Memos for the Remake community. In this final Learning Memo, we integrate data from the perspectives of all key stakeholders—host organizations, parents and families, and children and youth—to tell a story of the multiple benefits, challenges, and new possibilities that arise when many of the places where children learn reach out to engage their families.

From the beginning, Remake Learning has recognized the power of family engagement and prioritized it as an essential component of the Remake Learning Days strategy. Remake Learning understands and appreciates that

families play multiple crucial and enduring roles in creating their children's learning pathways. They spark and help to identify and support children's interests. They connect their children to learning opportunities and experiences in and out of school and reinforce the importance of learning for life success. They are teachers, co-learners, partners with educators, and advocates. Thus, Remake Learning's family engagement strategy is grounded in the recognition that family engagement is a shared responsibility among families and organizations supporting children's learning. When these organizations reach out and welcome families, they engage to partner and support children's learning and development.

Today, families and educators are faced with the uncertainties and challenges of helping young people prepare for the future and for jobs, many of which do not yet exist, and all of which will require the new ways of learning reflected in STEAM. Remake Learning Days efforts to increase family engagement around STEAM have the potential to support families in their immediate roles as connectors and facilitators and in their longer-term efforts to ensure their children have

the learning opportunities and are on learning pathways that enable them to succeed. By design, Remake Learning operates at the community level to build a more equitable STEAM learning ecology by integrating in- and out-of-school learning for children and youth of all ages, and by bringing together different types of families and learners to pave the way for more young people to explore their personalized learning pathways.

From the outset in 2016, Remake Learning has collected yearly survey data from both Remake Learning Days host organizations and from participating parents, families, children, and youth. We have analyzed and used the data, as well as information from a 2019 survey of host organizations and over 20 in-depth interviews with a sample of host organizations, as the basis for this Learning Memo. Not all who participated in Remake Learning Days completed the surveys, and while our analysis suggests a cross section did, our findings are suggestive and designed to stimulate reflection and discussion across the Remake community.

Findings at a Glance

Finding 1: Host organizations prioritize family engagement in new ways of learning around STEAM in the immediate Remake Learning Days experience, and provide information and support for continued family engagement and STEAM experiences for children and youth in and out of school across the year.

Finding 2: Over time, families have steadily indicated an increase in their familiarity with the concept of STEAM and an increased understanding of new ways of learning.

Finding 3: Increasing equitable access to STEAM learning opportunities for families, children, and youth is a key goal for Remake Learning Days, and our analysis indicates the payoffs of efforts to ensure that families are not left out due to their racial, cultural, linguistic, or economic status.

Finding 4: The data from parents and families about their RLD experiences align with the hosts' goals and priorities, and confirm that Remake Learning and its host organizations are making substantial progress toward achieving the family engagement goals and priorities, as shown in Table 1. The data, supported by additional findings, indicate hosts are successfully using Remake Learning Days experiences to catalyze strong interest in and demand for more STEAM learning opportunities for families and their children throughout the year.

Finding 5: Remake Learning Days STEAM experiences are creating interest in and demand for more in- and out-of-school STEAM learning opportunities from kids as well as from families.

Finding 6: Family participation in Remake Learning Days increases the likelihood that children and youth will really enjoy the experience and indicate that they want more of them.

Conclusion: Remake Learning Days are a prime example of how to build family engagement for a more equitable STEAM learning ecology, one working to ensure all children receive the opportunities, skills, and mindsets necessary for their success.



Finding 1.

Host organizations prioritize family engagement in new ways of learning around STEAM in the immediate Remake Learning Days experience, and provide information and support for continued family engagement and STEAM experiences for children and youth in and out of school across the year.

In order to better understand host organizations' perspectives, goals, and priorities for Remake Learning, we conducted a 2019 pre-event survey and related interviews with a sub-sample of organizations. As Table 1 shows, most host organizations prioritize creating an

enjoyable, enriching, and shared learning experience for children and families to strengthen their understanding of new ways of learning, to support parent-child bonding, and to enable parents to learn more about their children's interests to inform their expectations and aspirations for what's possible. Most organizations also indicate they use their event to catalyze family engagement in STEAM learning across the year, and to provide information and encouragement for families to play their multiple roles in building their children's learning pathways, including reinforcing learning and connecting their children to and sharing new learning opportunities.

“

We are proud of the ways we've seen our activities encourage families to collaborate on projects, learn from one another, and spend time relaxing and being creative together.”

— 2019 Remake Learning Days host

Table 1. Organizations' Family Engagement Goals and Priorities

Proportion of Organizations That Indicated Each Family Engagement Goal as Medium or High Priority

Family Engagement Practices within RLD

Developing families' understanding of new ways of learning	97%
Changing families' aspirations and expectations about what their children can do and how they can succeed	94%
Increasing families' knowledge, confidence, and skills enabling them to support their children's STEAM learning	89%
Building stronger parent-child bonds and interactions through new, shared learning experiences	88%

Family Engagement Practices beyond RLD

Using Remake Learning Days to build continuing family engagement across the year	94%
Creating family networking/community awareness of STEAM and other new learning opportunities	83%
Helping families become advocates for quality STEAM in their community	70%
Increasing families' knowledge about STEAM opportunities outside of school	70%



Finding 2.

Over time, families have steadily indicated an increase in their familiarity with the concept of STEAM and an increased understanding of new ways of learning.

A primary goal and priority of Remake Learning Days and host organizations is to create experiences and opportunities for young people and their families to become more familiar with, engage in, value, and continue their STEAM learning. As Table 2 shows, from 2016 to 2019 the proportion of participating parents and families who reported being “Extremely” or “Very” familiar with STEAM increased by 10%, while the proportion who were “Not at All” familiar has decreased to close to zero. Data from the parent surveys over this period show parents felt that they had increased understanding of the importance of core new learning skills, including problem solving, taking initiative, incorporating multiple viewpoints, and dealing with uncertainty.

“
We are most proud of creating an environment where both parents and children learn by working together in ways that help parents listen and pay attention to youth voice.”

— 2019 Remake Learning Days host



Finding 3.

Increasing equitable access to STEAM learning opportunities for families, children, and youth is a key goal for Remake Learning Days, and our analysis indicates the payoffs of efforts to ensure that families are not left out due to their racial, cultural, linguistic, or economic status.

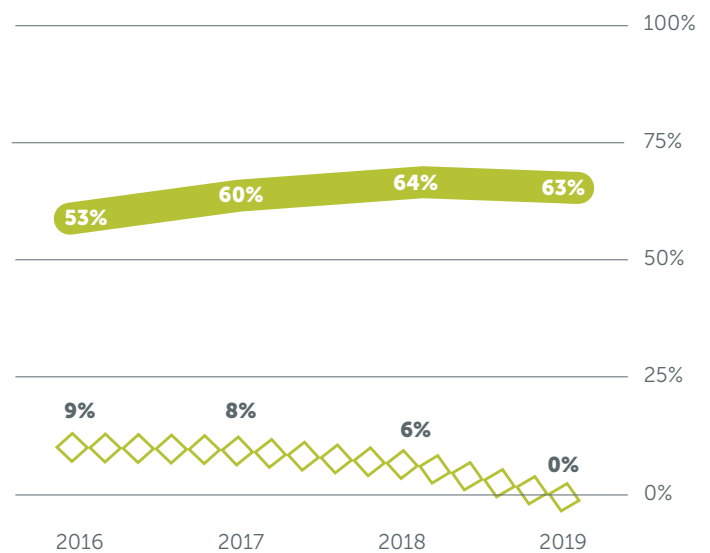
Remake Learning Days events are free or low cost to enable all families to participate. Looking at the family participation data, we found that participants generally reflect the demographics of their communities in terms of race and economic status. For example, adult participation data collected from 2016 to 2019 indicate that around 72% of adults who attended in Allegheny County were Caucasian/white, which is similar to the racial/ethnic breakdown of the area, in which approximately 78% of residents are Caucasian/white. Families have busy lives and face a range of barriers around participation and family engagement. And as we shared in our previous Learning Memo, event hosts are doing many things to reduce Remake Learning Days attendance barriers, including providing outreach and a welcoming environment; food, child care, transportation, and materials in multiple languages; and accessible event locations and timing.

“
I would love to see more of these free/low-cost events for the public all year for STEM and STEAM.”

— 2019 family participant

Table 2. Familiarity with STEAM Is Increasing over Time (N=5,335)

Over Time, High Familiarity with STEAM Is Increasing, and No Familiarity Is Decreasing



Finding 4.

The data from parents and families about their RLD experiences align with the hosts' goals and priorities, and confirm that Remake Learning and its host organizations are making substantial progress toward achieving the family engagement goals and priorities shown in Table 1. The data, supported by additional findings, indicate hosts are successfully using Remake Learning Days experiences

to catalyze strong interest in and demand for more STEAM learning opportunities for families and their children throughout the year.

As Table 3 shows, families indicated that RLD hosts are creating powerful and enjoyable STEAM experiences to engage them and build their understanding of new ways of learning. The majority of participating families reported they enjoyed learning with their children, experienced new ways of learning, and gleaned something new about their children's interests. The majority also received and want more information to support their continued engagement with STEAM learning throughout the year. Families indicated they want to come back for another Remake Learning Days event and desire more similar activities and information about other such opportunities. It is a powerful indicator

of success when families and attendees want more of what you have to offer. The data show that Remake Learning is supporting families as their children's learning path builders and in playing many of the roles—teacher, connector, co-learner, advocate—that we noted at the outset are important in children's learning, development, and life success.

“

My granddaughter had a great time and learned a lot. She also has asked is it OK to visit every day. The staff was exceptional.”

— 2019 family participant

“

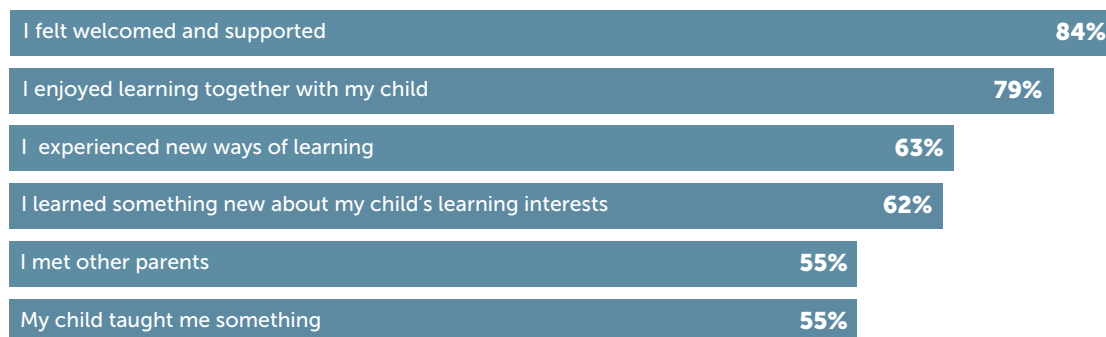
We saw many families laughing, having a good time, enjoying the science connection to something that most people have experienced before—a carnival.”

— 2019 Remake Learning Days host

Table 3. Data from 2019 Parent Survey (N= 1,104)

Parents' and Caregivers' Experiences with Family Engagement Strategies during RLD and Beyond

Family Engagement Practices within RLD



Family Engagement Practices beyond RLD



Finding 5.

Remake Learning Days STEAM experiences are creating interest in and demand for more in- and out-of-school STEAM learning opportunities from kids as well as from families.

“

It was awesome; you should do it a lot more.”

— 2019 youth participant

In the feedback from children and youth, they report that they learned something new at the Remake event, and like their parents and families, they want to participate in more such activities.

Many indicate that the types of hands-on learning opportunities at the center of Remake Learning Days are not available at school or at home. This, along with the families' and kids' interest in having more such learning experiences, underscores the importance of Remake Learning's efforts to engage families and encourage and inform their continued engagement with STEAM. It

“

Every year it gets better and better.”

— 2019 youth participant

also reinforces host organizations' efforts to build on their success by offering more opportunities beyond Remake Learning Days for both children and their families.

Table 4. Data from 2019 Youth Survey (N=2,014)

Youth Are Interested in More RLD-Style Events

I enjoyed learning something new	75%
I would like to participate in more activities like this one	74%
I do hands-on learning like this at school	53%
I have more interest in STEAM careers	52%
I helped family or a friend try and learn something new	41%
I participate in activities like this at home	35%





“
Great thing to have
family and friends
come to!”

— 2019 youth participant

Finding 6.

Family participation in Remake Learning Days increases the likelihood that children and youth will really enjoy the experience and indicate that they want more of them.

As Tables 5 and 6 show, many youth report that participating in Remake Learning Days with another person, and especially a parent or other family member, makes it a more powerful immediate experience, contributes to parent-child bonds, and builds youth interest in and demand for more such learning opportunities. This finding asks us all to question the view sometimes held that children and youth do not want their families engaged, to reflect on all of the previous findings, and to ask, What is it that Remake Learning Days host organizations do that has the children eager to have their families engaged in their learning?

“
The activities were great
and I liked how your
parents could come
and see.”

— 2019 youth participant

Table 5. Youth Who Attend with a Parent or Family Member
Want More Activities (N= 1,895)

Youth Who Attended Events with a Family Member Want More Events Like RLD Than Youth Who Attended without a Family Member

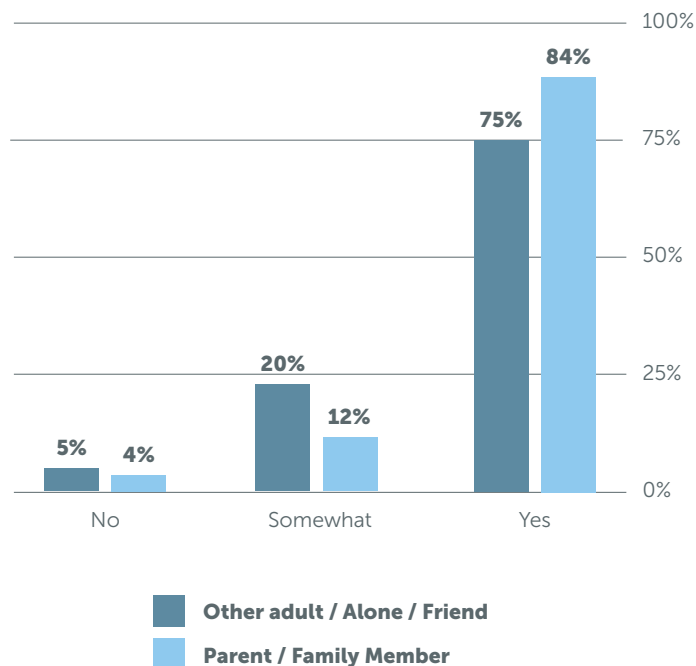
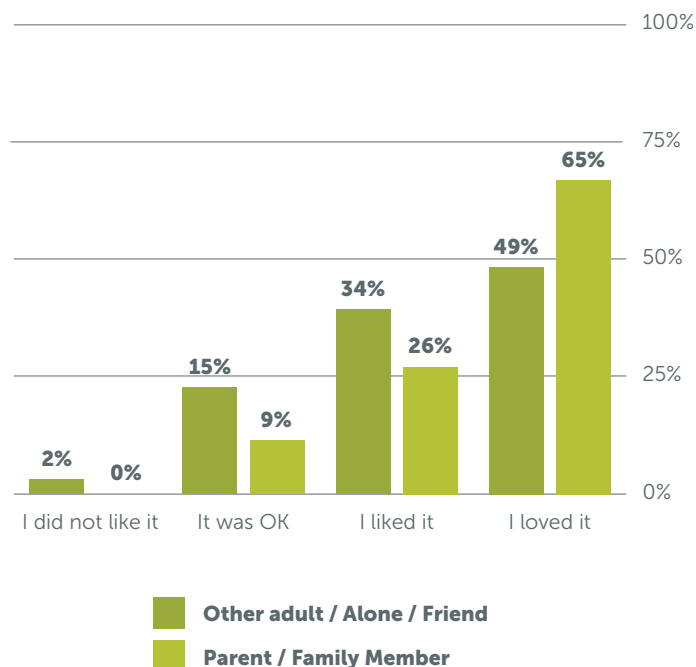


Table 6. Youth Who Attend with Parents or Family Members Love It More (N=1,926)

Breakdown of How Youth Experienced RLD Events by People with Whom They Attended



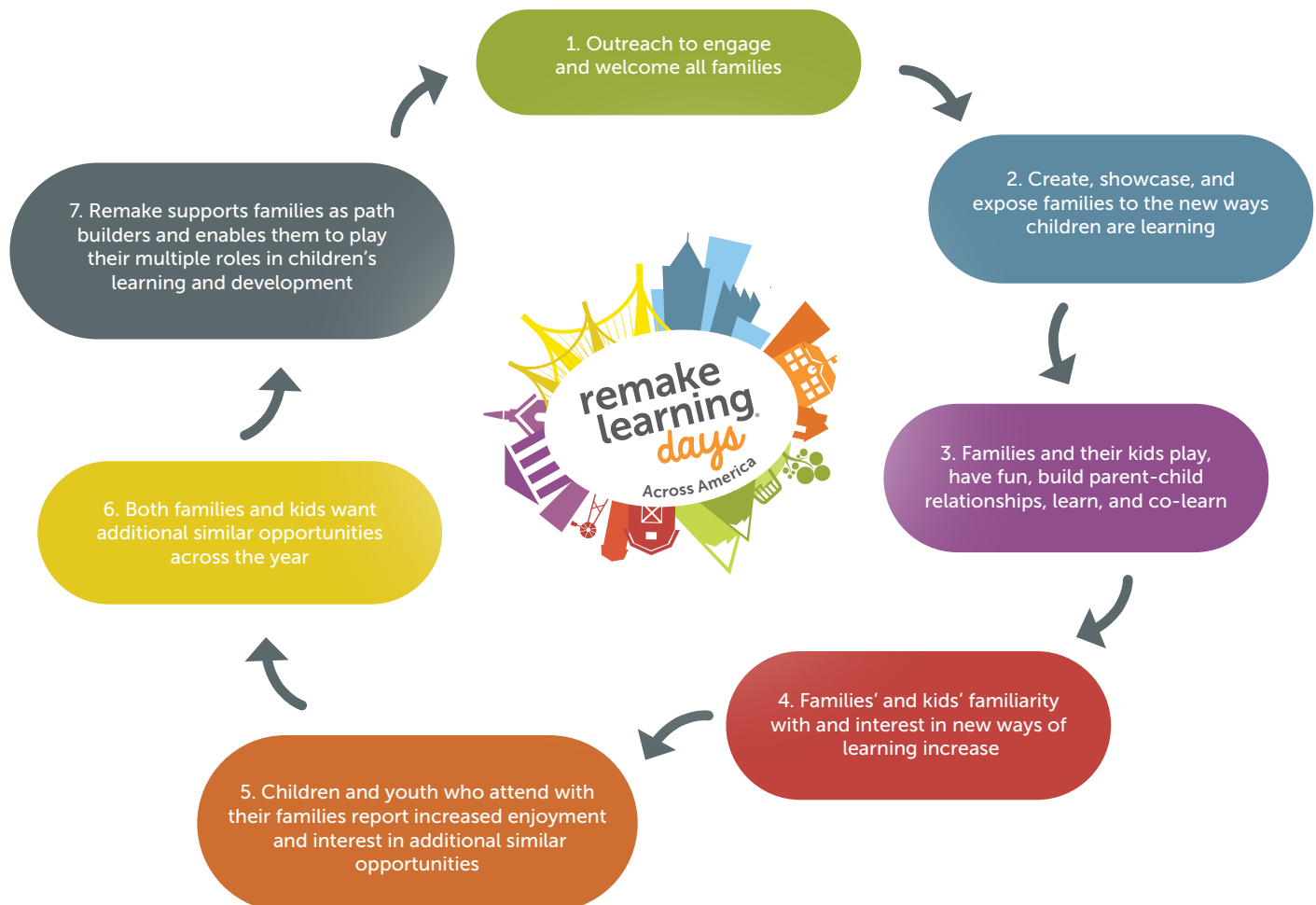
How the Remake Family Engagement Process Contributes to a More Equitable STEAM Learning Ecology

Remake Learning Days are entering their fifth year in 2020 and expanding across the country. Remake Learning Days are a prime example of how to build family engagement for a more equitable STEAM learning ecology, one working to ensure all children get the opportunities, skills, and mindsets necessary for success. Remake Learning Days are demonstrating the powerful ways communities can come together to build strong family engagement along children's learning pathways and thereby contribute to increased educational equity. Through collaborating with event hosts, Remake Learning Days have successfully put a process in motion to build family engagement

in learning anywhere, anytime children learn; create interest and demand for more such learning opportunities from families, children, and youth; and support families as their children's learning path builders.

The Remake Learning Days Family Engagement Process diagram we created from our analysis and findings is our effort to capture the entire process and its associated mechanisms for change. The illustration and questions are offered for the Remake Learning team's and host organizations' reflection, critique, and discussion.

Remake Learning Days Family Engagement Process



Five Questions for Reflection

1. How might we work together to meet the challenges families and children present to go beyond Remake Learning Days to create and connect more STEAM learning opportunities for and with them?

2. How might we increase our efforts to ensure all families can participate, particularly those facing barriers to doing so?

3. How might we add the voices and perspectives of children, youth, and families, get their input, and involve them in increasing family engagement in RLD events and beyond?

4. How might we learn from each other to build our capacity for deeper family engagement in learning at RLD events and beyond, moving from showcasing to more shared learning opportunities for children, youth, and families?

5. How might we improve our data collection and survey response rates, particularly from children, youth, and families, and use the data to support our learning and continuous improvement and build capacity?

Global Family Research Project is an independent, entrepreneurial nonprofit organization that supports effective engagement practices and policies so that all children find success in and out of school. We create a worldwide exchange of ideas that furthers the understanding and implementation of anywhere, anytime learning for all. With more than 30 years of leadership, we provide a research base and proven expertise for capacity building in schools, community-based organizations, philanthropic entities, and other related ventures.

National Co-Hosts



National Sponsors

SCHMIDT FUTURES



For more information visit: www.globalfrp.org

This publication
was supported by:

