

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Lela (Fluffy) Baum

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Education is Key-Alternatives in Education Oral History project

Interview # EA-A-L-2018-021

Fluffy Baum, retired Bond County Prekindergarten-Parenting Birth-to-Three director, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key-Alternatives in Education* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Apr 17, 2018 Location: Bond County Community Unit #2, Greenville, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:37 / 1.62 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on June 15, 2018.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Interview being
processed

Abstract

Lela Baum, *Education is Key-Alternatives in Education*, EA-A-L-2018-021

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Lela (Fluffy) Baum was born in Olney, Illinois in August 1944. She graduated from East Richland High School, in Olney, Illinois in 1962. While in high school, she would be involved with Future Teachers and Future Business Clubs. After high school, Fluffy attended Greenville College in Greenville, Illinois, where she graduated in 1966 with a degree in elementary education. She was then employed by Bond County Unit #2 as a teacher in the district from 1966-1972 and at Sorento Elementary in 1977. She left teaching to raise a family, later returning as a Head Start teacher and operating her own Health Food Store. In 1989 she began working in the newly created Bond-Fayette Counties Pre-Kindergarten At-Risk program serving as a teacher and coordinator. Fluffy continued with the program as it added a parenting education component and a birth-to-three program. Eventually, Fluffy took over as director of two Bond County school districts, Mulberry Grove C.U. #1 and Bond County C.U. #2. Fluffy retired from this position in 2012. During her years with the pre-kindergarten, parenting, and birth-to-three programs, Fluffy received an Early Childhood endorsement through Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville (1993) and a Master's Degree in curriculum and instruction in 1994 from National Lewis University.

Baum discusses the history of the State Board of Education Pre-Kindergarten at Risk, Parenting Education, and Birth-to-Three grant programs that began following passage of the 1985 Education Reform Act. She reviews how Bond County conducted the programs beginning in 1989 through 2018. Topics she discussed include the requirements placed on each program, moving from a home based to center-based service model, challenges in finding space for the programs in the schools and in community buildings, the grant writing process, changing to a full day student model, working with the K-2 grade school teachers, and special education inclusion models. Also discussed were her efforts to involve the parents as well as partnerships with local universities, private day centers, health and mental health providers and Single Parent programs. Today the Pre-School for All program serves over 240 children in the two school districts.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Pre-kindergarten education; Bond County Unit #2; Mulberry Grove C.U. #1; State Board of Education Pre-Kindergarten at Risk; screening process for pre-kindergarten children; pre-kindergarten language development; parental involvement in pre-kindergarten education; typical day for pre-kindergarten children

Notes to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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