

Family Times

NEWSLETTER



A NEWSLETTER FOR ADULTS WITH CHILDREN AGES 5-8

VOL. 2 / NO. 7

Parent-Teacher Communication

In today's world, we have many ways to communicate: mail, phones, cell phones, beepers, voice mail, e-mail, and computers to mention just a few. However, we often choose not to communicate at all.

All relationships need communication, but it is essential for the parent-teacher relationship. To build a positive relationship, adults in the home and at school need to communicate openly. The four Ps will help you build healthy, open communication with teachers.

Positive

Encourage the teachers to send home words of praise and encouragement. Remember, teachers need a pat on the back, too!

Personal

As a parent, you do not like impersonal memos – why send something similar to teachers? Take the time to write a quick personal note to the teacher about your child.

Proactive

Be informed of the class rules, expectations, and current activities. Attend special events.

Partners

Respond to the teacher's notes; ask questions. Tell the teacher about your concerns. Informed parents can work as partners in their children's education, and the child receives the benefits.

All communication should show respect for and appreciation of the teacher, school officials, parents, and families. Talking down to an individual will stop the two-way communication. Let teachers know if you think they are using "teacher talk" – jargon full of acronyms and terminology most people do not understand. Ask teachers to use common terms.

Communication often occurs only when there is a problem with the child's performance in school. As a parent, you may feel uncomfortable talking with the teacher.

Communication Blockers

- Having unpleasant memories of your school days
- Not being active in school events
- Criticizing teacher and school in front of children
- Being unwilling to communicate

You and the teachers share the responsibility for your child's education and socialization. Teamwork is essential for your child's educational welfare.

Children do better in school when parents talk often with teachers and become involved in school activities. Parents and teachers can communicate in many ways. You and the teachers need to determine the best way to communicate in your situation.

Of Value to Child

- Taking the time to talk to your child's teacher shows your child that you value his or her education.
- If you offer support and show your appreciation for the job that your child's teacher does, your child is likely to do the same.
- If you volunteer at your child's school, the parent-teacher relationship will improve and so will the parent-child relationship.
- Staying involved in your child's education takes time and effort. The results are worth it.

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Help at School

Parents who are active in school activities and events have the opportunity to communicate more with teachers and school staff. Volunteering at your child's school is another good investment. You can volunteer to help during lunch hours, to tutor students, or to work at a concession during school events. The possibilities are endless. School staff may not know that you want to volunteer, so let them know.

By being active, parents will have a greater chance to interact with teachers outside the classroom. As a result, parents will have input into decisions that may affect their child's education.



The Book Nook

A good book to read with your child:

The Berenstain Bears Go to School
by Stan & Jan Berenstain

To Make a Difference

- Volunteer at your child's school.
- Plan time to visit with the teacher.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Actively listen to your child.
- Remove communication blockers.
- Model correct behavior.



References

Building Effective Parent-Teacher Partnerships, North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (www.ncrel.org).

Helping Children Succeed in School (www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/succeed/09-communication.html).

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This issue was written by Janice Heavner, Pendleton County WVU Extension Agent. To contact Janice: (304) 358-2286; jeheavner@mail.wvu.edu

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"Remember that your child's teacher is your partner in bringing out your child's strengths!"

– Anonomous Author