

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Presented by:

Tym Smith

Early Care and Education Training and Consulting

www.tymthetrainer.com

Top 10 things teachers do to prevent successful communication

- ◉ Negative body language. People do not want to speak to someone who is disengaged or seems uninterested.
- ◉ Teachers not choosing the right attitude.
- ◉ Teachers having an “I don’t care attitude”, or “not being there” for the parent when they have a concern.
- ◉ Teachers giving the center a bad name. Remember, you never know who is around you. On the weekends and evenings, talking about events or children in your program should be avoided.
- ◉ Lack of knowledge about what is going on in the classrooms. The worst thing we can ever say to a parent is, “I don’t know!”
- ◉ Not following up with the parent.
- ◉ Negative or loud voice tone.
- ◉ Teachers not having fun!
- ◉ Saying things like, “We cannot do that” or “That’s not our policy”.
- ◉ Or saying, “That’s not my job!”
- ◉ Giving our staff, parents and the kids the run around.

*It's Not What
You Say,
It's How
You Say It!*

*Next are 10 things you can do
to help with parent communication:*

You must have a passion for being a teacher.

- Teachers should let staff, parents and kids know you love what you do and are willing and excited to make a difference.
- Become an advocate.

Teachers need to be personable!

- ◉ Teachers must do their best everyday to be friendly. Even when you don't feel like it - FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT!
- ◉ Make their day!

A Smile is the universal language of friendship.

Teachers must have a positive attitude.

- ◉ Choose your attitude.
- ◉ Always stay positive about the staff and children. Interactions should always be positive.
- ◉ Compliment the parent on parenting!
- ◉ Compliment the child!
- ◉ Compliment the staff members.
- ◉ Work hard at being an encourager.

Professionalism is imperative.

- ◉ Always be in dress code; dress for success.
- ◉ Watch your language and mannerisms.
- ◉ Have an organized classroom - remember first impressions.
- ◉ Be a good teacher! Have fun!
- ◉ Always return calls within 24-hours.
- ◉ Proof correspondence for errors.
- ◉ Avoid confrontation issues with parents.
- ◉ Handle phone calls with courtesy and closure. Model good phone behavior for children.
- ◉ SMILE!!

Center's philosophy upheld

- ◉ What is your centers philosophy?
- ◉ This philosophy must be upheld by every staff member

Remember:

We all think differently - global or detail.

Teachers must develop a strong relationship with all parents, staff and children.

- Relationships must be a priority.
- Greet every parent and child; use the 10-foot rule.
 1. Always be warm.
 2. Greet the individual with a smile and a question.
 3. Give a fond farewell.

Always be proactive.

- Teachers should be the first to speak; inquire about the day.
- Offer to serve the staff and parents (remember the 10-foot rule).
- Offer to assist the child!

Always be prepared to handle problems.

- ⦿ Respect confidentiality of parents and staff, as well as the child.
- ⦿ Report problems in private.
- ⦿ Always use the “sandwich” method.
- ⦿ Pick your battles (Number one rule for teachers!).
- ⦿ **THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK!**
 - Count to 10 if needed!

Always present the day's happenings.

- Parents need to know what is going on in the classroom so that they can encourage conversation at home.
- Kids need to know what is going on in the program. They also need to be reminded what was done.
- Give specifics, such as names of books, songs, field trips.
- Inform the parent of teacher changes.

Customer Service and Parent/Child Communication Assessment

- Once a month, have someone come in and evaluate your customer service.
- Children are our customers, too!
- If you were being evaluated today, how would you do?
- What would people say about the way you communicate?

Parent Communication Checklist

- Children's artwork displayed and framed in the lobby, office or communication area.
- Lesson plans are posted.
- Daily schedules and routines are posted.
- Teacher's schedules are posted.
- Daily note with specific information about the child's day is delivered each day.
- Field trip information posted in advance.
- Menus and allergy reports posted.
- File system with individually labeled children's folders containing documentation of their work.

Other Ideas to Enrich Communication

- ◉ A comfortable environment in your common area for parents and children to interact.
- ◉ A parent resource library.
- ◉ A scrapbook of your program.
- ◉ “What We Did Today” boards.
- ◉ “Kick Off Questions” for parents.
- ◉ An easel with announcements or pictures parents see when they first walk in and walk out.
- ◉ Interactive bulletin board for parents to post information about their travels, business, and culture.
- ◉ A media center.
- ◉ Video tape classroom activities and send parents clips via email.

Getting Parents Involved

- ◉ Invite parents to read to small groups.
- ◉ Cook and share a family recipe.
- ◉ Field trip volunteer.
- ◉ Have parents sing to children or write down words to special songs.
- ◉ Teach the children a dance or art.
- ◉ Ask parents to share their own childhood stories.
- ◉ Eat lunch with the children.
- ◉ Allow parents to breast feed infants.
- ◉ Encourage parents to talk to other children.
- ◉ Encourage parents to contribute to curriculum planning.

Getting Parents Involved

- Send home supplies to make clay dough.
- Ask parents to help locate music, clothing, everyday objects and cultural items.
- Ask parents to save “beautiful junk”.
- Encourage parents to hang up children’s artwork.
- Ask parents to talk to the children about their day.
- Help plan for special events.
- Write or edit school newsletter.
- Assist in fund raising.