

Parent–Teacher Conferences: Building the Foundation

Summary of Presentation:

Family involvement is an often overlooked and underappreciated aspect of teaching. Yet, family involvement is directly correlated with increased attendance, academic achievement, and fewer behavior problems. The parent–teacher conference is the hallmark of family involvement within the family/school relationship. This webinar is designed to ensure that new teachers are prepared to arrange and implement this valuable teaching tool.

Understanding how to manage positive family involvement in the classroom is an important milestone for beginning teachers. This webinar will provide the foundation you will need to reach the first milestone: building a successful parent–teacher conference.

Speaker Biography:

Dr. Robin Quick is an Assistant Professor at Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania. She teaches undergraduate courses with particular emphasis in early childhood education, teaching methodology, and ESL, as well as graduate courses in reading diagnosis and remediation. She has 21 years in education ranging from preschool to adult learners. Robin designs and presents parent involvement workshops for both teachers and parents. Current research includes parent involvement, male role models in reading, and understanding cultural significance.

Time of Webcast:

Intended Audience:

Teachers and future teachers

Objectives:

Learn:

- The best ways to prepare yourself and your classroom **before** the conference,
- How to communicate effectively **during** the conference, and
- Strategies for following up with parents **after** the conference.

Pre-Questions on the topic:

What are the benefits of holding a parent/teacher conference?

Questions to Answer During or Immediately After the Webcast:

How do you prepare for an effective parent/teacher conference?

What is the best method for gathering and presenting academic progress at a P/T conference?

What are the best ways to communicate with hard-to-reach parents?

What can you do when faced with a defensive parent during a P/T conference?

Ultimately, what is the take-away from a P/T conference for both parties?

Questions for Further Exploration:

1. What do you know about your students' parents/guardians? Do you have students whose parents do not speak English? Do some of your students have parents who are absent for various reasons—military, prison, dead, divorce, etc.? How can you connect with these parents or help your students either connect with them or work through their feelings? (See various articles in the Resources)

Self-Reflection, Enrichment, and Extension Ideas (take and incorporate into your own teaching):

1. Since the first parent-teacher conference of the year comes about 5-7 weeks into the school year, what are some ways in which you should initiate a relationship with parents/guardians of your students?
2. What are some ongoing ways of involving parents and families in your student's school progress and the life of the school?
3. If your school has a required spring parent-teacher conference, how does the purpose of this conference differ from the one in the fall?
4. When are other times you need to have a parent-teacher conference? How can you conduct these without making the parent defensive? What methods can you use to reframe questions and situations and enlist the parent(s) to be partners with you and their child?

Additional Recommended KDP Resources:

Articles

Going the Extra Mile: Connecting with Students' Families by Robin Quick and Danelle Conner

Involving Families in School Events by John M. Barrera and Laverne Warner

Involving Parents: So Valuable, Not So Easy! By Carole Kurtines-Becker

Let's Talk: Communicating Positively with Parents, Teachers, and Students by Stephanie Trautman

Listening to the Voices of Latino Parent Volunteers by Anita P. Quintanar and Susan R. Warren

Parents as Partners: The 6 P's of a Successful Parent-Teacher Conference by Leona Rowan

Plan & Ask: Positive Parent Conferences by Madeline Kovarik

Stop, Think, Reframe by Conrado L. Gomez and Margarita Jimenez-Silva

What Teachers Should Say and How They Should Say It by Greg Conderman, Sarah Johnston-Rodriguez, Paula Hartman, and Drew Kemp

Using Books to Keep Families Together Even While Separated by Pamela Godt

Welcoming International Parents to Your Classroom by Anne P. Copeland

Other Webcasts

From the Classroom to the Family Room: Building a Bridge from School to Home by Melissa Lowry

Rolling Out the Red Carpet for VIPs (Very Involved Parents) by Chantrell Bruton

Check the KDP Web site (www.kdp.org) for additional and updated resources.