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 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.
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!!
What is your center's 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-feet rule.

1. Always be warm.
2. Greet the individual with a smile and a question.
3. Give a fond farewell.
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!
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.