

Positive Outreach Can Make a Difference

Use these suggestions when making phone calls, emails or texts, to families.

When communication from school is positive, the atmosphere between home and school is improved and encourages the belief that all children can learn.

When communicating with families, consider the following:

- introduce yourself to the parent;
- comment on the child's progress;
- share particular strengths of the child and an anecdote about the child;
- invite parents to open house, conferences, volunteer opportunities and other school functions; and
- describe the school curriculum as appropriate.

Making a positive communication to parents is simple in concept, but requires:

- time and effort;
- strong support from school administrators to provide teachers with time, feedback and resources to maintain open lines of communication;
- planning to ensure commitment; and
- contacting parents in the evening or during the weekend since many work during the day.

Tips For Making Phone Calls

- Establish rapport and an effective working relationship with parents by making positive calls early in the year and often.
- Communicate about student growth, rather than student problems, to get parents on your side. If there is a problem later, you will have laid the foundation for their support in helping to solve it.
- Contact parents at the first sign of a problem, but avoid making your first contact a problem-solving call.
- Use the *Worksheet for Phone Calls (Positive and Problem Solving)*

Sample Worksheet for Phone Calls (Positive and Problem Solving)

Use this worksheet to help plan your phone contact with families. Thinking ahead about what you want to discuss and why will help make your call more effective.

Student Name
Phone Number

Parent/Guardian Names

Reason for Calling

Hello, this is (your name & position). Is this a good time to talk?

Reason for calling (positive call)

I would like to let you know how well your child is doing in...

Statement of Goal (problem solving call)

I need your help in...

Statement of Objectives for the Outreach

I am contacting you to...

Rationale

It is in the child's best interest that we work together to...

Discuss how parent can support the goal

Solution and Follow-up (problem solving)

So, to review, we've decided to...

