



Communication Workshop

Strategies for Success

Agenda Topics

- **How to Involve Parents in Meaningful Conversations**
- **How to Conductive Conferences**
- **Exploring Effective Communication Strategies**



Goals of Workshop

- **To identify effective strategies for communication with families and others**
- **To differentiate between the three levels of communication**
- **To identify effective means of involving families in our schools**

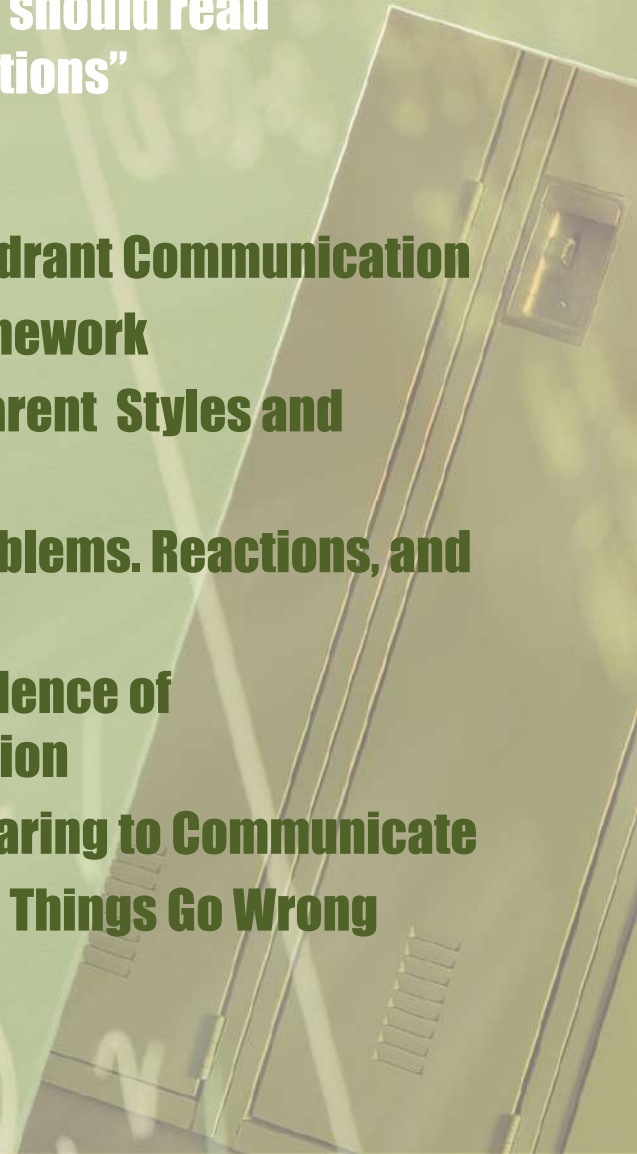


Key Strategies

- **Greet parents with respect and interest in their child.**
- **Solicit parent questions, comments, and advice.**
- **Think about homework and its importance and impact**
- **Develop “we-ness” in communication**
- **Be prepared with interesting, meaningful information**
- **Be honest- be patient**
- **Be professional...in a personal way**

Creating Your Flip Book

- **Directions:**
 - **Tear two pieces of paper in a hot dog manner (length wise)**
 - **Align the sheets so they are about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch apart, creating four tabs.**
 - **Fold the tabs over so that you now have a front page and seven tabs.**
- **The top page should read “communications”**
 - **Tab One: Quadrant Communication**
 - **Tab Two: Homework**
 - **Tab Three: Parent Styles and Strategies**
 - **Tab Four: Problems, Reactions, and Solutions**
 - **Tab Five: Evidence of Communication**
 - **Tab Six: Preparing to Communicate**
 - **Tab Seven: If Things Go Wrong**



Greet with Respect and Interest



Simple Structure of Conversations

What does your child feel that he/she is successful in doing in my class?

What are some of the challenges that he/she says he/she is facing in my class?

Looking at the challenges can any of them be addressed and corrected by the student? Is the challenge something that you can work with at home?

What resources or assistance do I need to try and provide for you and/or your child?

Interest, Questions, and Comments

- **Starting off the year by asking parents or others to provide you with information about the interests of the child builds an understanding that you care about the child as an individual.**
- **How will parents be able to pose questions of you during the course of the day/ year?**
- **Do you have a means for the parents to make comments about work, behaviors, or concerns in a communication to you during the course of the day /year?**

Diminish No Hope



Homework Considerations

- **How often?**
- **Is it meaningful?**
- **Is it differentiated to meet the needs of the child?**
- **Is it balanced?**
- **Which students have parents who can help? Which do not?**
- **What is the purpose of my homework?**
- **If is it practice do I grade it? Am I careful to assure that homework does not fail or defeat the child?**

Develop We-ness



Parent Styles

- **Supportive**
- **Helicopter Parents-** Have been known to travel from California to Massachusetts to argue a grade for their child
- **Swoop-in Parents-** Are immediately reactive to what took place in school and want to see you at once
- **Avoidance-** Parents who found school difficult or feel that they cannot help their child.

If the Problem is the Student

- **Focus on the needs of the student**
- **Begin or continue an open dialogues with the parent(s)**
- **Use shared language – yours and the parent's- to solve the problem**
- **Be prepared for the challenges of dealing with divorced parents, children being raised other family members, and/or parent of adopted children.**

If the Problem is the Parent and Strategies

- **Wanting to talk with you in public places**
- **Expecting a response from you when immediately when your schedule does not permit you to respond**
- **Abusive language**
- **Being caught between two parents**



What if the Problem is Yours?

- **Focus on the needs of the student.**
- **Consider alternate actions to try.**
- **Be willing to admit mistakes.**
- **Focus on good well and success.**



Consideration of Parent Reactions

- **Protection**
- **Guilt**
- **Parenting is hard and demanding**
- **Issues within their family may impact their reactions to you and to school**



What May Trigger Actions

- **Being tired**
- **Stress**
- **Same issues every day with no improvement**
- **Lack of time**



Communicating



Be Prepared, Honest, and Professional



How to Prepare

- **Make certain that you have the documents that you need for the communication. Have specifics to offer to the person.**
- **If held during a school event, preparing folders for each student is advised. This allows the parents to review the data and potentially student work samples.**
- **Give parents some time to review the information and encourage them to ask questions and voice their concerns.**
- **Be honest about what the data says.**
- **Remember to break down the information for the parents.**

Communication Guidelines

- **Be positive**
- **Listen carefully**
- **Speak plainly so parent understands**
- **Find ways to involve the parents**
- **When appropriate, involve the student**
- **Follow up**



Types of Communication

- **One- way**
- **Two- way**
- **Three- way**



Sources and Evidence of Communication

- **Phone calls**
- **Weekly/daily communication tools**
- **Emails**
- **Websites**
- **Invitations to events in the classroom**



What If Things Go Wrong

- **If there were issues during any communication the best thing to do is to inform your administrator.**
- **Be honest**
- **Describe what happened**
- **Do it as soon as possible**
- **It is easier to let them know up front than it is to have an angry parent calling them with only their side of the issue first.**



A photograph of a young boy and a young girl sitting on the floor of school lockers. The boy, on the left, is wearing a plaid shirt and grey pants, looking towards the girl. The girl, on the right, is wearing a white shirt and blue shorts, holding an open book and smiling. A thin white string is stretched between the two lockers, connecting them. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, creating a soft glow. The background consists of several green metal lockers with silver handles and vents.

Thanks

**Their success lies with your ability to
communicate.**