



North Carolina Parent Information and Resource Center Parent Partners E-PIC

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We believe that parents are their children's first and most important teachers. When schools welcome families and establish personal relationships among family and staff, student achievement improves *and* schools get better. As you prepare to welcome families back for the new school year, please consider our *Effective School Partnerships as Easy as 1, 2, 3...* workshop that we provide *free* to families. To schedule our workshop, please call Parent Partners at 1- 800-962-6817 and ask for Rita at extension 39.

How can we create family friendly schools where parents and families feel welcome and want to become involved in their children's and school's success?

Create a welcoming school environment

- Post friendly signs to welcome visitors and explain how to get around the building.
- Expect standards of welcoming behavior to apply to all staff, including front office staff, bus drivers, security guards, custodians and cafeteria workers.
- Greet visitors and callers politely and right away.
- Provide a comfortable family resource room for parents to meet and check out materials.
- Welcome new families by offering tours and introducing families to staff.

Provide trainings and development

- Provide programs and activities to help families understand what their children are learning and to promote higher achievement standards.
- Provide workshops, learning kits, and other activities to show families how to help their children at home.
- Provide school reports to parents about student progress.
- Provide opportunities for families to develop their skills and self-confidence.
- Encourage family involvement in school planning.
- Provide professional development for families and staff on how to work together.

Encourage strong relationships between teachers and families and community

- Provide opportunities for teachers and families to get to know each other-- class meetings, breakfasts, home visits, and class observations.
- Authorize teachers to make personal contact with each family at least once a month.
- Hire a family liaison to help bridge cultural and language barriers.
- Actively recruit families from all backgrounds for school committees and the PTA/PTO that reflect the diversity of the school community.
- Make sure the school is open and accessible - it is easy for parents to meet with the principal, talk to teachers and counselors, and bring up issues and concerns.
- Allow parents to develop school improvement projects and do action research - survey families, observe in classrooms, review materials, and visit other schools and programs.
- Identify ways to reach out and use local community resources

When families and schools work together, students have the best opportunity to succeed in school!