



# School Connections

A quarterly publication from FACTS, a New York State Parental Information and Resource Center

## Introduction

**Families and Communities Together with Schools (FACTS)** welcomes you to the first issue of *School Connections*, a quarterly resource for schools in New York State.

This publication is intended for administrators, teachers, pre-service teachers and other school personnel. Each issue will contain articles and information for schools related to building connections and partnerships with parents and families in order to help students succeed.

## What does Research say about Parental Involvement?

- The extent of parent involvement in a child's education is more important to a student's success than family income or education.
- Home involvement in schooling has a positive impact on a child's attitudes, aspirations, and achievement.
- Family and community involvement that is linked to student learning has a greater effect on achievement than more general forms of involvement.
- The benefits of parent involvement are not limited to early childhood or the elementary level; there are continuing positive effects through high school.
- We cannot look at school and the home in isolation from one another; families and schools need to collaborate to help children adjust to the world of school. This is particularly critical for families with different cultural and language backgrounds.

Source: Henderson, A. & Berla, N. (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. National Committee for Citizens in Education.

## What is a PIRC Program?

*Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRC)* are funded by the U.S. Department of Education and are located in every state.

As a PIRC, FACTS provides trainings and information to schools on topics such as:

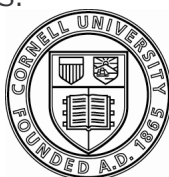
- Parental Involvement
- Working with Families in Poverty
- Working with Low Literacy Adults
- The Emotional Stages of Deployment
- The Challenges of Working with Difficult Parents
- Creating Family Friendly Schools

FACTS, located in Northern New York, provides both local and statewide services to parents and schools.

These services include a Parents as Teachers home visiting program, parent workshops, training for teachers and schools, and a statewide resource website. ([www.nyspirc.org](http://www.nyspirc.org))

FACTS is one of two PIRC programs in New York State. Find out more information about the other program, EPIC, by visiting the PIRC website.

FACTS is a New York State PIRC sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County in partnership with Jefferson-Lewis BOCES.



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension  
Jefferson County



## Working Together with Parents: *Tips for Positive Communication*



Research has shown that when schools and parents work together, children are more successful.

It is important for teachers to communicate with parents on a regular basis. It is also important for schools to create a welcoming environment for parents and the community so they will feel connected to the school.

### **The following are some suggestions on how you can include parents in their children's education.**

- Communicate with every parent before the school year begins to introduce yourself and to ask parents to share any important information regarding their child.
- Contact parents when their child has done something positive. This will make it easier to contact them later if there is a problem.
- Build trust with parents from the start so they will feel comfortable coming to you when there is a problem.
- Think ahead and let parents know of issues immediately. Be proactive and not reactive!
- Remember that parents know their child best so seek their ideas and suggestions if you have concerns.
- Let parents know what is the best time and means for contacting you (e-mail, phone, etc.).
- Create your own webpage so parents can view pictures of classroom activities, projects, assignments and upcoming events. This will help them stay connected to what is going on in the classroom.

## **nyspirc.org**

***A Resource for Teachers and Parents in New York State***

### **At www.nyspirc.org teachers can:**

- Obtain a listing of professional development workshops
- Access newsletters for parents and education professionals
- Download parent guides to distribute to parents on topics such as:
  - Understanding No Child Left Behind
  - Helping with Homework
  - Raising Responsible Children
  - Children and the Media
  - Getting Ready for Kindergarten
  - Help Your Child Learn to Read
  - Supporting Your Child's Learning at Home
  - Getting Ready for College
- Download fact sheets on the above topics that can be inserted into your classroom or school newsletter and distributed to parents.

## **Contact FACTS**

If you have any questions or ideas on how the FACTS program can help your school, please contact:

Deanna Lothrop  
FACTS School Coordinator  
Jefferson-Lewis BOCES  
(315) 779-7071  
e-mail: [dlothrop@mail.boces.com](mailto:dlothrop@mail.boces.com)