



School Connections

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

Families and Communities Together with Schools (FACTS) is a New York State Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC). The FACTS program is funded by the US Department of Education and provides information and support to parents and schools with a focus on parental involvement.

If you have any questions regarding parental involvement, please call the FACTS School Coordinator at (315) 779-7071, email dlothrop@mail.boces.com, or visit our website at www.nyspirc.org.

New! Teachers Blog/Discussion Forum

Our website, www.nyspirc.org, now includes a blog where teachers can share their most successful strategies for improving parental involvement.

On the homepage, click on the flashing **"New Blog for Parents and Teachers"**. The question posted for teachers is: **"How do you engage parents in their child's education?"** Please share your most successful ideas and see how other teachers from across the state are finding creative ways for improving partnerships with parents.

Website Resources

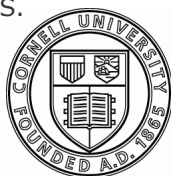
www.responsiveclassroom.org

The Responsive Classroom website has valuable books and other resources for forming positive partnerships with families and creating a sense of community in your school.

www.csos.jhu.edu/P2000/tips

Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork includes sample lessons that involve home-to-school connections.

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Cornell University
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Professional Resource Review

Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships

Authors: Anne T. Henderson, Karen L. Mapp, Vivian R. Johnson, and Don Davies



This one-of-a kind book builds on research to show how schools can form essential partnerships to help raise student achievement. *Beyond the Bake Sale* includes useful surveys, check-lists, sample policies and strategies for schools to utilize. It also offers practical advice for improving interactions between teachers and parents and is an essential resource for teachers, administrators, parents, and school board members.

For more information or to order a copy, go to www.thenewpress.com/bakesale.

Looking Ahead: October is *National Parental Involvement Month*

October is National Parental Involvement Month, and this is a great opportunity for schools to review their current parent involvement policies and practices. This is also a great time for teachers and administrators to find new and creative ways to involve parents in their child's education.



Some ideas might include:

1. Creating homework assignments that require students to interview or involve family members
2. Providing opportunities for parents to learn about your classroom curriculum
3. Finding ways for parents to volunteer when they are not able to come to the school
4. Including interactive projects for students and parents to do together during open house
5. Sending positive news phone calls, periodic postcards and regular emails to parents
6. Providing parents a list of the various ways they can be involved throughout the year
7. Creating a classroom newsletter that includes student work and a section with "ask me about" to help stimulate conversations at home
8. Making conference times available every week for parents
9. Having students write letters to parents letting them know how important their support is in their education
10. Making contact with every family

Self Assessment on Fostering Parental Involvement

It is important to take the time to review the parental involvement practices in your classroom and school. Below are a few questions to ask yourself:

- Do I ask the parents to share their hopes and dreams for their child?
- Do I ask parents their preferred method of communication?
- Do I inform parents about the best times and means of reaching me if they have a concern?
- Do I share the school's parental involvement policy and compact with families?
- Do I take the time to reflect on the parental involvement practices utilized in my classroom?

Contact FACTS

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

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