COLLABORATING for SUCCESS

Parent Engagement Materials
For Parents
2018/2019
TOPIC: Parent Engagement Fact Sheet - What are the most important things parents can do?

Summary: When families and schools work together, children are more likely to build good relationships and do better at school. There are simple things parents can do at home, and with their child’s school, to help their child to do their best. Showing children that education is important, building their confidence and connecting with their school helps to shape children’s learning and well-being.

See this link for a fact sheet from the P&F Federation about the best things research says parents can do to engage with their children’s learning.

TOPIC: Ten questions for your next parent–teacher interview

Summary: Make the most of your time with your child’s teacher. At the following link is a worksheet with 10 suggested questions to help you plan your time for your next parent-teacher interview.

See the worksheet at this link

TOPIC: Growing Your Child’s Learning Muscles

Summary: Your child is learning from you all the time – and the way you talk about learning can help make them even smarter.

Our (parents) attitudes about learning – called “mindsets” – have a profound impact on how our children learn, their attitudes about making mistakes, and their self-confidence. A positive “growth mindset” will help your child succeed in the classroom and in life.

Here are some quick questions and resources to help you learn about growth mindsets – the name researchers use for the idea that hard work leads to success.

See this link for more information
TOPIC: Close to home: how many books do you have?

**Summary:** If you are a parent, you might consider taking a count of the number of books you have in your home. Sound trivial?

It’s not. A 20-year study by a University of Nevada, Reno associate professor recently found that the number of books in a home has shown to raise the educational level of children in the home.

See this link for more information:


TOPIC: Simple Calming Strategies for you and your kids

**Summary:** This video short from the NBC Parent Toolkit shows how simple it can be to incorporate calming strategies into your life and your children’s to benefit all in your family. Maurice Elias, Social and Emotional Learning Expert at Rutgers University helped prepare this video. Check it out and in addition, there are some helpful ways to remind yourself to use calming strategies.

See this link for more information:

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2015/10/08/simple-calming-strategies-for-you-and-your-kids/

TOPIC: Watch D.O.G.S – Dads of great students program

**Summary:** Here’s a great video of a program currently in the States called Watch D.O.G.S. The purpose of the program is to engage fathers in education at school

See this link for more information:


TOPIC: STOP. THINK. GO! Practicing problem solving

**Summary:** Sibling rivalry is a common family problem. Mum could fix it. Or she could help her children learn valuable skills in problem-solving. These opportunities for practicing critical life skills happen daily if you look for them.
Roger Weissberg developed the Traffic Light Model with colleagues at Yale University to promote problem-solving between students in schools, it was also used for discipline purposes.

You too can use this as a discipline tool in your home.

See this link for more information:


**TOPIC:** How much should parents do at home to engage with their child's education? (Radio interview)

**Summary:** This is a great tool for parents and principals to create conversation about Parent Engagement. In 2017 the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) held “the most comprehensive conference on parent engagement ever held.” The Queensland P&F Federation was heavily involved.

This radio interview is about the conference and asks “why is parent engagement such a hot button issue?” Part of the answer is that parents are an untapped resource but are one of the best ways to improve the academic performance of young people.

See this link for more information:

http://www.abc.net.au/radio/canberra/programs/mornings/parental-engagement/8590020

**TOPIC:** Letting Go, Staying Close – Strategies for parent involvement in school during the teenage years

**Summary:** New research is showing that parental involvement during the teenage years is still essential. It’s just different — like so much else about parenting in adolescence.

Professor Nancy Hill of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and colleagues of the University of Pittsburgh are among the first researchers to explore how family dynamics during adolescence reshape parental involvement in education. What Hill and her colleagues found is that even though communication between home and school declines in middle and high school, another kind of age-appropriate parental involvement becomes important — what they refer to as “academic socialization.”

Parents’ use of new strategies during these years — especially efforts to link education to future success, to scaffold their teens’ independence, and to provide structure at home
— staves off all manner of problems, including declines in GPA, negative behaviour at school, and depressive symptoms across high school.

See this link for more information:

https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/15/05/letting-go-staying-close

**TOPIC: Parent Involvement Policy** – an example from a school

**Summary:** This is a real example of a four part plan for implementing parent engagement in a school.

See this link for more information:


**TOPIC: Parents aren’t teachers, they’re parents**

**Summary:** Almost all parents are ready, willing and able to influence something that really matters to their children's success: the quality of their family relationships.

It is not particularly novel to say that parent-child relationships matter, but it is new to suggest that schools should help families strengthen them. Evidence for adopting that approach comes from a just-released Search Institute study, *Don’t Forget the Families*. Based on a US national survey of 1,085 parents of 3 to 13 year olds, our research underscores the powerful role that parent-child relationships play in children's learning and development.

When parenting adults reported building relationships with children that feature high levels of five actions, they were also significantly more likely to report that their children have developed key character strengths, including perseverance, conscientiousness, self-control, and the ability to work well with others. A growing body of research demonstrates that such character strengths are as influential as IQ in determining life outcomes not only in school, but also in the workplace, and in areas such as health and criminality.

See this link for more information for parents:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kent-pek认为arent-teachers-th_b_8282028.html?ir=Australia
TOPIC: Five ways to get your child talking about their day

Summary: So your child has started school and you’ve gone from knowing all about their day to being told ‘I can’t remember’, ‘we didn’t do anything today’, ‘that was ages ago, I don’t know’ when you ask what they got up to?

Well, first up, you are not alone. It seems to be a weird mind-warping illness that affects them all! These 5 tips might help you get a better response from your primary school children.

See this link for the 5 tips:
http://www.thereadingresidence.com/5-ways-to-get-your-child-talking-about-their-day/

TOPIC: 13 Children’s Books That Encourage Kindness Towards Others

Summary: Kindness is one of the most important character traits, but sometimes kids need an extra reminder about the best ways to be kind to others or why kindness matters. These books provide that reminder in creative and appealing ways. Happy reading!

See this link for the 13 books

TOPIC: A Trip to the Beach

Dear Carmel,

In solidarity with my daughters who are finishing up their school reports describing their summer adventures, I thought I’d share mine. The last week of August, my family and I headed to Long Beach Island (LBI), New Jersey for what turned out to be much more than a day at the beach. Through a program called Passport to LBI we explored the history and ecology of the island: we used a small net, to catch minnows and crabs in the bay, held baby clams, visited the island museum to see a schoolhouse from 1915, and counted together as we climbed over 200 steps the top of a lighthouse. The best part—it was all free!

As we drove back home, my daughters were clamoring to learn more. They were curious about the world in new and exciting ways. My oldest daughter, inspired by the schoolhouse, wanted to jump back into reading the Little House on the Prairie books. My youngest daughter started using vocabulary and descriptive language we’d never heard from her before. Their newly-gained background knowledge was immense. This got me
thinking - why should these activities only be available to me and my family? Why just on vacation? Why not everyone, everywhere, all the time? Read more...

Best wishes,
Harvard Family Research Project

The Harvard Family Research Project has become the Global Family Research Project from 1 January 2017. This is the link https://globalfrp.org/

**TOPIC: Family Guides for Student Success**

**Summary:** These detailed guides were produced by the Mississippi Department of Education to help parents understand the learning expectations for each year level (PreK to year 8) and to give clear and specific advice about how parents can help students learn at home and to support their learning at school.

The guides include numerous step by step tools and parents can choose those they feel comfortable with or that their children need.

See this link for more information:


**TOPIC: Engaging Families using the 5Rs**

**Summary:** The Global Family Research Project shares tips on tapping into students’ greatest resources - their families. Developed with the Public Library Association, the 5Rs framework offers afterschool programs and libraries a fresh approach to designing experiences through which students and families can explore and extend their learning. It stretches the imagination to consider the many ways to reach out to families and build the trusting relationships that undergird learning.

See more at this link: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolSnack/Guest-blog-Engaging-families-using-the-5Rs_05-22-2017.cfm

This is a link to an infographic of the 5Rs: http://afterschoolalliance.org/imgs/GFRP%205Rs%20Infographic%20Revised.jpg
TOPIC: Supporting your child’s social and emotional learning

**Summary:** Parents and carers have a critical role to play in supporting their children’s social and emotional learning. This edition of KidsMatter enewsletter discusses what social and emotional learning is and how parents can help their children build their social and emotional skills.

See this link for more information:


TOPIC: Parents as agents of change

**Summary:** This is a video of Dr Karen Mapp discussing how parents can help and support other parents into more effective engagement with their children’s education.

Parents play many roles which are very important in the education and development of their children including being a partner with teachers and schools in their formal education. But some parents do not know how to do this or may lack the confidence or skills or “permission” to become more engaged particularly with the school. “If parents don’t become involved it does not mean they don’t want to.” This short video discusses how schools and parents can invite and support other parents into better ways to engage with their children’s education.

See the video at this link: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=AMZqHVDiw7w

TOPIC: Activities to support your child’s literacy and numeracy

**Summary:** Research shows that children’s motivation and achievement improve when their parents or carers are engaged in their education. But how can we parents do that?

You can find at the link below a great set of fact sheets and activities that parents can use each day to help encourage and support their children’s literacy and numeracy. This excellent material has been produced by the Queensland Department of Education and Training and is available at this link:

http://education.qld.gov.au/literacyandnumeracy/resources.html
TOPIC: Closing the education divide – Parent-Child Home Programme

Summary: At three years of age, there are already big differences in language and mathematical development between children from rich and poor backgrounds. This gap will widen if not addressed before a child starts school.

A programme pioneered in Ireland in Dublin’s Docklands is showing how early intervention, at home, can eliminate that gap. The Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) is a school readiness programme that aims to nurture pre-school children’s early literacy and numeracy skills through educational play.

Each week, for two years, a home visitor brings a book or toy, and uses it to model play and interaction activities for parents and children to do together. The books and toys are left after each visit to encourage interaction between the parents and their children.

The PCHP originated in America in 1965, and was first introduced in Dublin in 2007, as part of the Early Learning Initiative (ELI) at the National College of Ireland.

See these links for more information:

https://www.ncirl.ie/ELI/Strand-1-Early-Learning-0-6-years/Home-Visitor-Programme-PCHP
http://www.parent-child.org/

TOPIC: Why winning and losing is important for children

Summary: Life is competitive, and children learn that it’s best to be good at things from a young age. Here are some reasons why learning to lose is just as important as learning to win.

See this link for more information:

https://novakdjokovicfoundation.org/ winning-losing-important-children/

TOPIC: THINKUKNOW what we see, say, do online

Summary: Technology plays an important role in how young people maintain their friendships and communicate with those closest to them.
Technology is no different to anything else a young person encounters. They will make mistakes, and we need to be able to support them through this and arm them with the right information, and empower them to make the right choices.

Through research and discussions, parents have told us they want to know what their children are seeing and doing online. We’ve developed advice on what children SEE, SAY and DO online. The THINKUKNOW parent portal has specific and useful advice including how to apply parent controls on the various types of devices.


**TOPIC: How to avoid toxic disputes between parents and teachers**

Summary: A very relevant and contemporary article from Rebecca English, lecturer in Education at QUT and a former teacher in Queensland. She offers things that teachers can do and things that parents can do.

See this link for the full article:


**TOPIC: Giving parents meaningful information about their child’s learning**

Summary: Dylan Wiliam, Professor of Educational Assessment at the University of London talks to ACER about A to E grades and what meaningful information parents need to understand their child’s learning.

See the article and video at this link:


**TOPIC: A new look at parent-teacher interviews**

Summary: Instead of the traditional parent-teacher interviews, parents of all the children in the class attend group meetings together with the teacher. They learn about a skill.
teachers want the students to work on. They set a goal for their child, and receive a few simple, educational games they can play at home to help their child work on the skill.

See more information at this link:


TOPIC: FREE printable counting mats

Summary: These FREE printable Counting Mats are a fun and colourful counting activity for pre-schoolers and kindergarten children to provide an opportunity to count out loud and develop number recognition.

Find the printable mats at this link:

https://www.learning4kids.net/2014/10/26/printable-counting-mats/

TOPIC: Tips for Principals, Teachers, and Families: How to Share Data Effectively

Summary: From the Global Family Resource Project. Face-to-face interaction between parents and teachers is still the cornerstone of school family engagement. Parents not only need access to data, but they need to know how to act on what the data might be telling them. These Parent–Teacher Conference Tip Sheets provide key strategies that both parents and teachers can use to support students both in and out of the classroom. A tip sheet aimed at school principals also outlines how school administrators can support parents and teachers to that end.

See more information at this link

https://globalfrp.org/Articles/Tips-for-Administrators-Teachers-and-Families-How-to-Share-Data-Effectively
TOPIC: Seven Research-Based Ways Families Promote Early Literacy

**Summary:** From the Global Family Research Project. This link provides a research to practice brief on seven ways families can promote early literacy. There is also an infographic highlighting the seven methods.

See this link: [https://globalfrp.org/Articles/Seven-Research-Based-Ways-Families-Promote-Early-Literacy](https://globalfrp.org/Articles/Seven-Research-Based-Ways-Families-Promote-Early-Literacy)

TOPIC: Jamming with your toddler: how music trumps reading for childhood development

**Summary:** A new study suggests that regular informal music-making with very young children may even have benefits above and beyond those of reading. But there’s an important, interesting, and somewhat beautiful catch – for best results, make it shared music-making in your home.

In a study involving more than 3,000 children, a University of Queensland team found that informal music-making in the home from around the ages of two and three can lead to better literacy, numeracy, social skills, and attention and emotion regulation by the age of five.

See more information at this link:


TOPIC: Children play their way to better learning outcomes

**Summary:** To snuggle up with a good book is considered to be one of life’s great pleasures. But research increasingly shows that, at least when it comes to small children, the sedentary approach to reading isn’t always best.

According to the Early Years Learning Framework, children aged 2-5 have better learning outcomes when they are engaged in play-based learning.

See this link for more information:

TOPIC: The Brain-Changing Power of Conversation

Summary: Interplay between parents and children ignites the brain and boosts its response to language, spurring lasting literacy skills. New research describes a simple and powerful way to build children’s brains: talk with them, early and often.

See more from the Harvard Graduate School of Education at this link.

https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/18/02/brain-changing-power-conversation

TOPIC: 5 Super Simple Habits that Will Transform Your Parenting

Summary: There are tons of books and blogs that teach us how to be a good parent, but it’s really very simple. Being a good parent can start with changing a few habits. Try one of these simple habits every day throughout the next five days, and watch how it transforms your family and your home!

See this link for more information:

https://www.thebettermom.com/blog/2015/3/27/5-super-simple-habits-that-will-transform-your-parenting-plus-a-free-printable

TOPIC: Best-ever communication tips around teens

Summary: After teaching, counselling and living with teens for 40 years, Carmen Myler has worked out some of the things that can improve our capacity as grown-ups – those who have pre-frontal lobes – to connect and communicate with teens who are on the bumpy ride to becoming adults.

Use this link to read more:

https://www.maggiedent.com/blog/best-ever-communication-tips-around-teens/
**TOPIC: Building Relationships With Teachers**
Summary: A parent and former middle school teacher uses thank you notes at the start of the year to foster ties with her child’s teachers. By changing routines she gains so much more.....

Use this link to read more:

https://www.edutopia.org/article/building-relationships-teachers

**TOPIC: Building resilience in children aged 0 – 12**
Summary: Resilience ... it’s a familiar word, isn’t it? But what does it really mean?

When we talk about resilience, we’re talking about a child’s ability to cope with ups and downs, and bounce back from the challenges they experience during childhood – for example moving home, changing schools, studying for an exam or dealing with the death of a loved one. Building resilience helps children not only to deal with current difficulties that are a part of everyday life, but also to develop the basic skills and habits that will help them deal with challenges later in life, during adolescence and adulthood.

Use this link to read more:


**TOPIC: University of Queensland Researchers find students whose fathers engage with their education are more successful**
Summary: DADS who ask about the school day or talk to teachers could be the secret to boosting a child’s education dreams and confidence.

Researchers from the Life Course Centre at the University of Queensland found the father figure had a significant impact.

Read more here:

TOPIC: How to Read to Differently Aged Children for Great Family Read Aloud Time!

Summary: To spend more time reading with your younger ones, read below for the following strategies:

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/reading-to-differently-aged-children-at-the-same-time/?utm_source=MadMimi&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Unique+Read+Aloud+Ideas&utm_campaign=20180213_m144066909_Unique+Read+Aloud+Ideas&utm_term=How+to+read+aloud+to+siblings+of+different+ages

TOPIC: How to Spend Dinner Time Without Asking “How Was Your Day?”

Summary: Picture the scene: You’ve had a long day. You’re tired, the kids are cranky and you are all desperate to get some food in your bellies. You know you should use this family dinner time as a way to connect with your kids, find out what’s going on in their lives. Help them on the road to becoming good humans. So you begin, How was your day?

They answer, Fine. You try again, “What did you do in school? “Nothing. So you give up. I mean you were tired anyway,

right? But what if you could have a meaningful family dinner without feeling like Sisyphus?

Good news! You can read below for different ideas and strategies

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/family-dinner-activities/?utm_source=MadMimi&utm_medium=email&utm_content=The+Best+Way+to+Spend+Family+Dinner+Time&utm_campaign=20171003_m141869193_Why+You+Can+Stop+Asking+%22How+Was+Your+Day%3F%22&utm_term=Family+Dinner+Activities
TOPIC: How to transform your teenager from a reluctant reader to avid bookworm in five steps

Summary: What do you do when your child has reached adolescence and suddenly shudders at the thought of reading for pleasure?

Is there anything a parent can do?

There is plenty, according to Margaret Merga from Curtin University, but it is important to understand why children turn away from reading for fun in the first place.

To read more, please use the following link:


TOPIC: Music Making: Joyful Ways Families Can Promote Children’s Social and Emotional Development

Summary: Numerous studies on children’s exposure to music through instrument lessons or music education in school have shown that it can have a significant impact on a child’s brain development. In fact, children with musical training have been found to score higher on reading and math assessments, have greater spatial and fine motor skills, and enhanced social and emotional skills. In addition, one study that examined 232 brain scans of healthy children found that those who played a musical instrument had a stronger ability to focus their attention, manage anxiety and exercise self-control.

Read more here:

TOPIC: Community, parents and students help determine success

Summary: Their backpacks are full. They are armed with school supplies. And they are dressed for a new school year. But regardless of the outward appearances, not every child walks into the classroom prepared to learn. Some are hungry. Some are cold. And some are angry.

These experiences shape a child’s journey in school, and can mean the difference between academic success and failure, says Lee County Schools Superintendent Nancy Graham. Teachers and principals can help, but student success also hinges on the kids and their at-home support system.

Use this link to read more:


TOPIC: Parent-teacher conferences get new look

Summary: Butte des Morts Elementary in Menasha is piloting a new parent-teacher conference style. The format includes group meetings with the parents of all the children in the class. Parents set goals for their kids and receive activities they can do at home to help their kids grow.

For more information use the link below:

TOPIC: WHEN YOU HAVE KIDS WHO NEVER LISTEN: 8 POSITIVE STRATEGIES THAT WORK!

Summary: Here’s 8 positive strategies to help you (and the child) work together towards a little more success...

Use this link to read more:
https://happilyevermom.com/kids-who-never-listen/

TOPIC: 4 Ways to Talk with Your Kids About Their Celebrity Influencers

Summary: A large number of U.S. children have told Highlights in their 2018 State of the Kid survey that celebrities are a key and growing influencer in their lives. Yes, parents remain the top influencer and second and importantly, teachers also capture children’s admiration. But increasingly our children also look to the personalities on their screens for role modeling. Whether it’s an e-gamer (playing competitive video games) or a reality television show star or a professional athlete, fifteen percent of children ages 6-12 report that they admire and respect celebrities. In addition to noting that those role models are caring and kind, they said they were generous, helped others, were smart, and knowledgeable.

Read more here: https://thriveglobal.com/stories/4-ways-to-talk-with-your-kids-about-their-celebrity-influencers/

TOPIC: From Clueless to Connected : My Parent Engagement Journey

Summary: When my daughter started preschool four years ago, I was thrilled. I couldn’t believe how quickly the time went by and now my little person was starting her educational journey. And just like most first-time parents, I didn't know what exactly to expect.

There I was walking to back-to-school night to meet with other families and teachers. I was incredibly excited about the very first steps she would be making in her educational journey.
But there was a problem. I had absolutely, positively no idea what I was supposed to do
to be a great supporter of her education and help find the same love for education that I
have.

Read more here: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/from-clueless-to-connecte_b_13382714

**TOPIC: Helping Children Find Their Voices – Tips for Teachers and Tips for Parents**

Summary: It was so heartening to learn from the 2,000 children, ages 6-12, who were
questioned through the Highlights State of the Kid survey. They said they feel like parents
and teachers really listen to them and care about what they have to say. But how do we
help our children use that voice in healthy and giving ways?

Here are three simple ideas for parents…


**TOPIC: How Children May Perceive Loss and Death at Various Ages and Stages**

Summary: There are many different ways that parents can support their children, no
matter what age they are.


**TOPIC: Research shows the importance of parents reading with children – even after children can read**

Summary: Research has typically found that shared reading experiences are highly
beneficial for young people

TOPIC: The Unexpected Connection Between Handwriting and Learning to Read

Summary: Research shows there’s something special about language development and the act of handwriting. In studies, kids who practice handwriting do better at reading and spelling. The reason? Some experts believe that forming letters by hand while learning sounds activates reading circuits in the brain that promote literacy.

Read more here: https://www.understood.org/en/community-events/blogs/expert-corner/2018/09/24/the-unexpected-connection-between-handwriting-and-learning-to-read?fbclid=IwAR3mRDV9Q4H9e7yN2v5Hnu5Y5GJZiuVuzZP6q0tuhFsVCaqP_snXH5GsFE

TOPIC: Viewing Parenting as Servant Leadership

Summary: Parents, by the very nature of our roles, serve in a leadership position while we raise our children. A servant leader realizes that his or her ability to significantly influence others and achieve any vision comes from serving others. Understanding the qualities of a successful leader - that of a servant leader - can assist any parent in further refining his or her values and skills to better perform her role. Research on power demonstrates that the skills required to rise to a leadership position are empathy and social skills.1 However, interestingly, those are the very skills that become the most challenging to leaders once they have acquired power. So when we are parenting, we may have a greater challenge than in other roles with our ability to be empathetic and to demonstrate social intelligence.

Read more here: https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2018/08/02/viewing-parenting-as-servant-leadership/

TOPIC: Parent-community-engagement-framework for parents of those children in Years 3 - 6

Summary: 14 steps for you

Read more here:

**TOPIC:** Parent-community-engagement-framework for parents of those children in Years 7 - 9

Summary: 11 steps for you