

## MEET THE PARENTS

Tips for successful partnerships

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## First Contact

- Confidence/assurances tchr can manage child & effectively teach the class & this child
- Trust us we know what we are doing
- No news doesn't mean good news

## NEK MINUT...

- Trouble & strife (eg mat time □ non-compliance / non-completion / off task / socialisation / nonconformity)
- Uncertainties – why X, Y and/or Z?
- Little problems quickly amplified, multiplied & complexity abounds.

## Behavioural problems...

- How communicated
- Who communicates them
- What is the purpose of the communications
- Who is included & how are they involved
- NO special needs here
- NOT identified as gifted
- Lots of 'actors' involved and each bring another perspective to the issues around/with the child

## Or a child is “doing well”

- READ...
- Is not making any trouble for class
- Is performing as expected relative to other children (doing what is asked of her/no more no less)
- Is socialising OK with age peers (not isolated, making friends)
- NO special needs here....
- NOT identified as gifted.

## The Crux of it... T call home

- Tchr tends to call when want parent to know...
- how difficult a child is being
- what a parent can do to assist (can child be influenced from home; via remote control)
- or a Principal calls to remove a child from activity / class / school
- ....Or, wait till written report to make aware of under-achieving (could do better...)

## Parents want to know

- What does teacher know/appreciate about my child's abilities and learning needs?
- Will anyone listen to my ideas about each/all of the issues being described
- What are you going to do to meet my child's needs,
- What's to be done to address problems as child is experiencing them and who is to deliver
- An objective / neutral appraisal of what's going on in class/at school that triggers X, Y, Z (explicit/specific details are required to inform a parent)

## Use of tools – involve parents

- How to evaluate child's natural abilities / capacity for learning – explain
- How to assess for special learning needs
- Use of independent (neutral) objective assessments
- Explain to parents – respect not condescend to with overuse of jargon

- Mis-communication / talking cross purposes
- What I want you to hear
- What I need you to understand
- What I want you to do
- Parents want to know if anyone is listening to their views as advocates for their child, who understand their child's perspective and often are forcing unhappy child to attend...
- Parents ideas do tend to be based in child's perspectives. Allow parents to do their job and express their child's needs as parent advocates.

## What do teachers hear?

- Parents' comments met with defensiveness
- or with – you aren't expert, we are...
- And/or counter attack (against the child or commentary about parenting).
- Child's accounts dismissed as inaccurate
- Parents' ideas are dismissed
- Even accepted ideas may not be implemented
- Limited feedback about scale and/or success of interventions

## Who comes to meetings

- RTLB
- Teacher
- Syndicate leader
- Principal
- Min Edu Ed Psychologist
- All of the above
- Who makes the phone calls home?

## Language of Reporting

- Stanine
- Star
- Above / at / below expected for yr level
- Attitudinal reporting
- Attendance reporting

## Partnerships

- Respect parents as experts in their child
- Engage early and often
- Involve in learning assessments
- Ask for advice about likes/preferences or dislikes/difficulties
- Seek explanations from within school environment 1st, and to home environment as add on (in addition to)
- Be seen to be listening and do some of what is suggested
- Stop blaming parent/ing
- Stop blaming child – treat as individual