

Parent Involvement

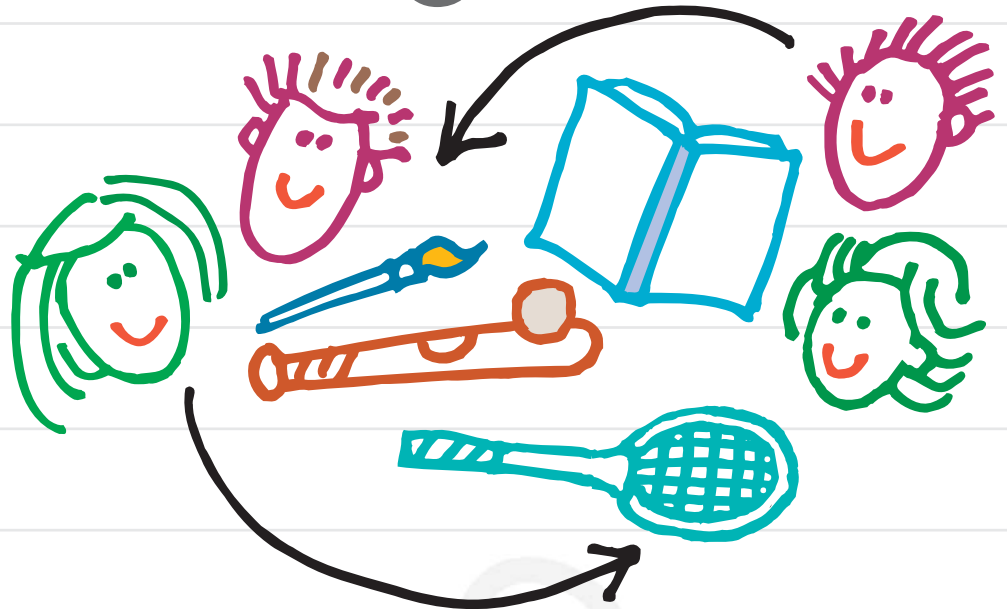


Parent Involvement

“Our odds of winning go up when we get parents in the game.”



– Coach Calhoun



➔ Ever notice how an athlete – even a professional athlete – almost always has a big game when his or her parents are right there, cheering in the stands? In a much more profound way, children whose parents get actively involved in children’s school and community programs have a much better chance to grow into a successful, happy, productive adults. And, that’s when we all win!

Moment of Victory

Parents are active partners in their children's school and the community.

Team Stats That Cut It

Parent involvement in school and community:

- Improves teacher morale;
- Helps develop better instructional strategies for use in classroom lessons;
- Increases teachers' expectations of their students; and
- Improves student attendance, homework and achievement.

Game Situation

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. They teach values, the power of love and connection. They provide nurturance, safety, joy and show children the ways of the world. No institution, public or private, can replace the family or the powerful role parents play in the lives of their children.

Research shows that children with involved parents are more likely to attend school regularly, earn better grades and higher test scores, and show improved behavior and social skills. These children are also more likely to graduate from high school and go on to post-secondary education.

The team that plays together, wins together.

All parents want their children to succeed and they rely on their schools and community to provide caring, safe environments for their children. In turn, schools and the community rely on parents for involvement and active participation. When parents expect quality for their children, policies and programs improve, and schools and communities thrive.

Successful schools and programs ask parents for their input and incorporate their views. Parents provide a personal example of how programs are working for their children. They offer a view from the needs of the family and the sense of the neighborhood. Family-community partnerships build strong outcomes for children. It is a win/win game plan.



When parents step up, kids respond.

Children are more likely to lead productive lives when parents and community work together to help children. Children need to see their parents speaking up and volunteering for all children within the school and community. From this, they learn that change is possible in community and that their parents play a role in making society better for all.

TIP FROM THE PROS

“When families are involved at home, at school, and in the community, children do better in school and the school gets better.”

Henderson & Mapp, 2002
national experts on
parent involvement and schools

“When one parent has the tools and the knowledge, coupled with their passion, that person will know how to join with other parents to advocate for the common good of all.”

- Rep. Bruce Morris



“Parental involvement in education seems to be a more important influence than poverty, school environment and the influence of peers.”

DfES, Every Child Matters

“Full Court Press” Game Plan

Change the rules and you change the game.

Successful businesses keep the consumer in mind when designing products or services. Since parents are the ultimate consumer for their children, they need to be involved from the beginning in programs and policies that serve their children.

What parents can do

- Remember you are the most important advocate for your child's success.
- Ask how to be involved in your child's school or early care setting.
- Introduce yourself to your children's teachers and let them know you would like to partner on helping your children learn. No matter how many hours you are working, you want to know what you can do at home to help your child excel. Monitor your child's homework and grades. Volunteer in the classroom or library.
- Consider joining a parent involvement committee at school.
- Offer your ideas to keep programs great and to ensure the best for your children and other children. Ask about opportunities for parent input in the programs and schools where your children attend.
- Write, email or call your elected officials about current and proposed policies that impact your family's life. They need your input to know what is working.
- Volunteer in the school and community as a family, if time allows it.

"I would like to pass on skills that I learn to other parents. I want to be a link in the chain."

Christopher Service, parent

What the school can do

- Listen to parents. Ensure that parents have a true vehicle to offer input into school policies and programs.
- Help parents become partners in their children's learning. Develop ways to share the educational goals for the whole school as well as for each grade.
- Share the curriculum and convey what parents can do, in an on-going way, as partners for educational excellence.
- Promote family-school-community events to enhance education during after school hours.
- Go beyond the bake sale in ways that parents can be involved to promote effective schools.

What the community can do

- Offer a wide range of activities in your community where parents can meet one another as well as town leaders.
- Work with employers to develop policies that encourage parents to be active in their children's schools and events.
- Partner with organizations to create parent-friendly programs.
- Remember that children are raised in different kinds of families ranging from two parent families to grandparents, single mothers and fathers as well as foster parents. Provide opportunities in the community that address changing family structure and need.
- Bring in parents as partners to advise and help with community programs and events. Invite parents to give input into the policies and programs impacting children.

Read More About Parent Involvement

The Parent Leadership Training InstituteSM

PLTI, hosted by the Connecticut Commission on Children, teaches democracy and leadership skills to parents at classes held one night a week for 20 weeks. Learn more about PLTI by visiting www.plti-ct.org or calling (860) 240-0290.

The Connecticut Commission on Children

Visit the Parent Engagement section of the Commission's website, at www.cga.ct.gov/coc/parent_engagement.htm, or call (860) 240-0290 for materials.

The Connecticut State Department of Education

Visit the department's website at www.sde.ct.gov/sde and click on Parents and Community in the left column, or call the Bureau of Health, Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education at (860) 807-2122.

The Child Care Partnership Project

The Child Care Partnership Project was created to support partnerships between public and private sectors. Copies are available through the National Child Care Information Center at <http://nccic.org/ccpartnerships> or at 800-616-2242 or 202-628-4200.

Connecticut Clearinghouse

This is a statewide resource center for materials and information about parenting, prevention, and wellness. Visit it online at www.ctclearinghouse.org.

The State Education Resource Center

SERC, in operation since 1969 through funding primarily from the Connecticut Department of Education, provides research-based professional development to families as well as educators and service providers. Call (860) 632-1485 or visit www.ctserc.org.

Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center

CT PIRC provides support to families, community and faith-based organizations, and educators. Call its toll-free parent line at 1-800-842-8678 or visit www.ctpirc.org.

Leave No Parent Behind

This is a national campaign by the St. Louis-based nonprofit group Project Appleseed to improve public schools by increasing and organizing parent involvement. Get more information at www.projectappleseed.org.

National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools

Visit this organization's website, at www.sedl.org, for research on families in schools, especially the book "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement," by Anne Henderson and Karen Mapp. It can be downloaded as a free PDF at www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf.

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