

## Teaching Module - Working With Parents/Families

### **Background:**

The teacher's primary responsibility is to work with students. It is also important to communicate with the students' parents/families. Students come from many types of families. Some have two parent families, some come from single parent families, and some have stepparents, etc. Parental involvement in their children's schooling has a positive effect on student attendance, attitudes, behavior, and higher academic achievement. Therefore it is important for the teacher to establish communication between themselves and the parents/families of their students.

### **Objectives:**

- To identify the reasons for contacting and interacting with parents/families
- Identify some reasons for the parents/families to resist involvement.
- Determine ways that a parent/family support system can be created.
- Identify methods to communicate with parents.

### **Materials:**

- Paper, pens, and markers

### **Information for this teaching module adapted from the following sources:**

[www.responsiveclassroom.org/bookstore/rp\\_parentsteachers.html](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/bookstore/rp_parentsteachers.html) - 23k  
[www.ed.gov/teachers/become/about/survivalguide/parent.html](http://www.ed.gov/teachers/become/about/survivalguide/parent.html) - 39k –  
[www.education-world.com/a\\_special/parent\\_involvement.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_special/parent_involvement.shtml) - 48k -  
[www.teachersandfamilies.com/](http://www.teachersandfamilies.com/) - 19k

### **Handouts:**

- Working With Parents: Advice from Teachers
- Survival Guide for New Teachers: Working With Parents
- Effective Communication: Parent Tips for Working With Teachers

### **Procedure:**

Students will be organized in groups of three to four per group and will discuss and list possible solutions to these problems.

- How might knowledge about a student's home situation help the teacher?
- Determine methods a teacher can communicate with parents/families.
- Determine when it is appropriate to communicate with parents/families.
- Identify methods to communicate with parents/families.

### **Activity:**

Each group will choose any one of the following exercises and present to the class.

- Prepare a letter that might be sent to parents at start of school year. Specify if letter will be sent to parents of an elementary, middle, or high school student.
- Prepare four letters for mailing during the school year. Select the month and content for each letter.
- List potential rationales for parents to not participate and possible methods to overcome their objections for participation.

### **Closure/Reflection:**

- What did you learn today about parent/family involvement?
- Is this important to you? Why?
- How will you use this information in the future?