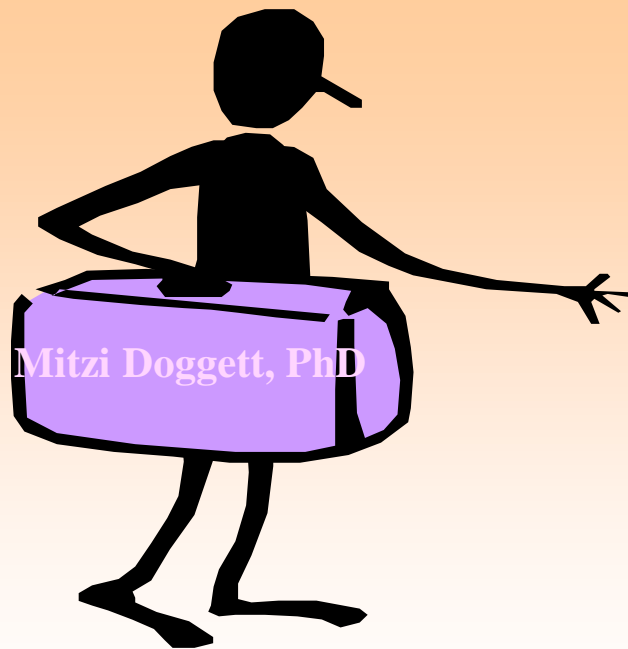


Effective Conferencing: The Parent's Perspective





How to plan, implement, & conduct
effective parent conferences

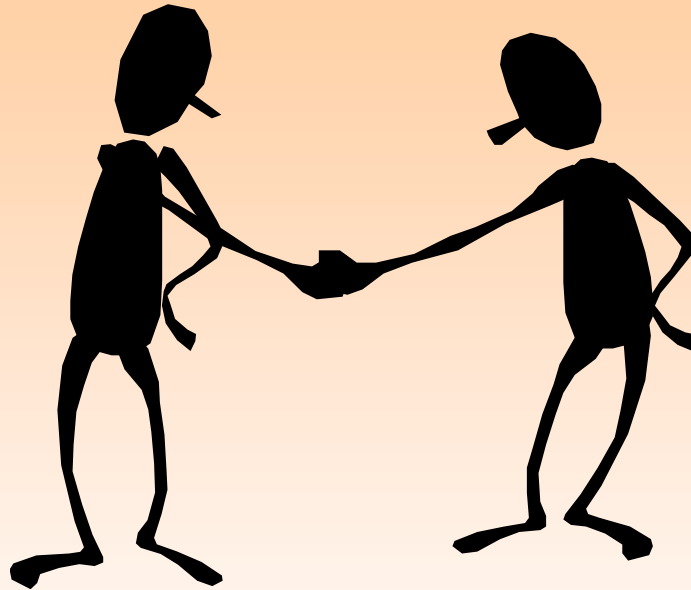
Insight

“When parents walk through the doors of the school house they see their past. Whereas, when children walk through the same doors they see the future and their teacher as the person who will lead them out successfully.”

Larry Lezotte, Ed.D.



Parents & Teachers



What do they have in common?

Parents

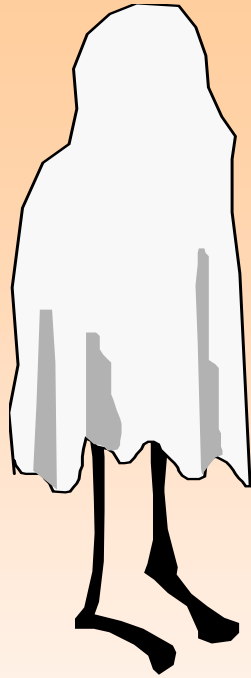
- Know child best
- Hear about child's teacher
- Remember own experiences
- Need guidance on issues
- May feel guilt over circumstances



Teachers

- Provide warmth, empathy, & respect
- Spend lots of time with child
- Hear about child's home
- Want answers
- Not authority on all subjects





Uncover The
Mystery

What does everyone really want?

How Do You View Teachers?

Good Model

Teacher

Leader

Supportive

Open-Minded

Confident

Knowledge-Seeking

Poor Model

Observer

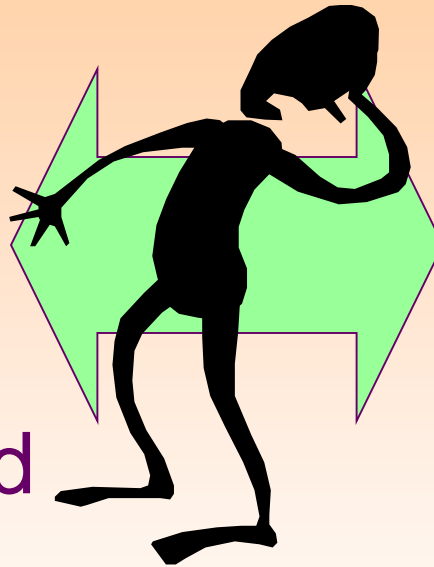
Follower

Critical

Close-Minded

Fearful

Know-It-All



Parent's Wish List

- Build child's self-esteem
- Get to know child's needs
- Communicate often with parents
- Regularly assign homework
- Set high academic standards



Parent's Wish List

- Encourage parental participation
- Understand learning styles
- Treat all children fairly
- Use positive discipline
- Care about children



How Do Teachers View You?

Cooperative

Positive

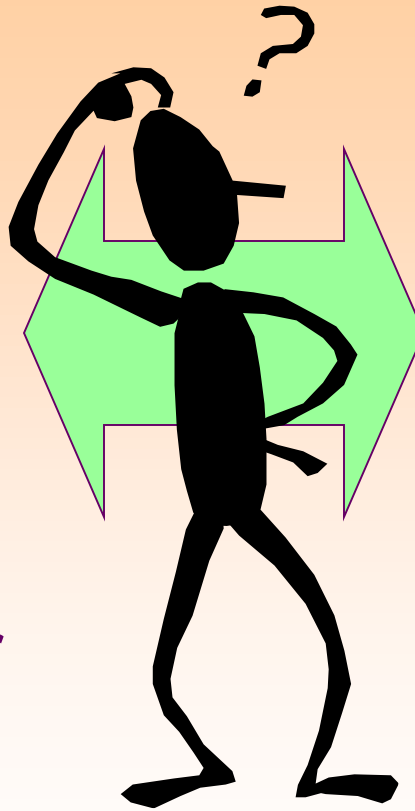
Concerned

Friendly

Energetic

Policy Maker

Resource



Antagonistic

Complaining

Not Interested

Distant

Lazy

Uninvolved

Obstacle

Teacher's Wish List

- Be involved in child's education
- Provide resources at home
- Set good example
- Expect child's best at school
- Put academics first



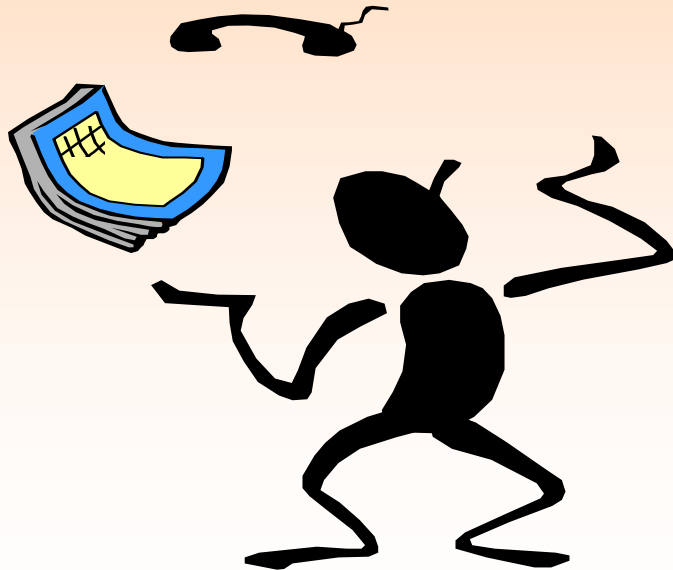
Teacher's Wish List

- Support school rules
- Use pressure positively
- Call teacher about problems
- Assume parental responsibility
- Understand alcohol, tobacco, & excessive partying are problems as serious as drug abuse



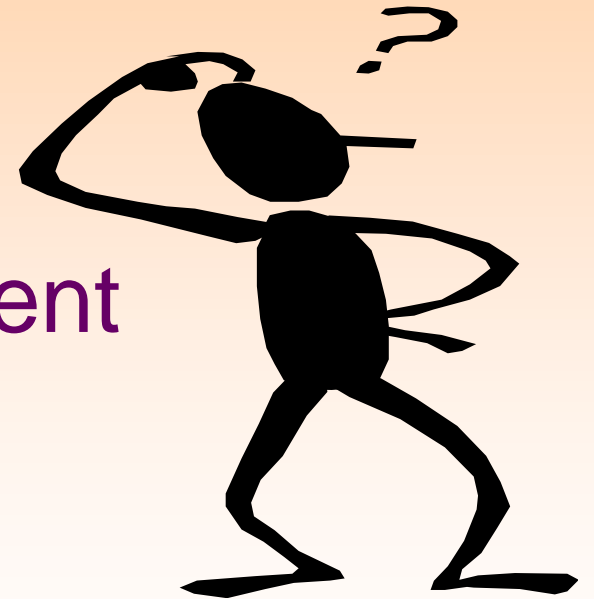
Casual Conversation

- Phone calls
- Newsletters
- Encounters
- Notes



Why Conference?

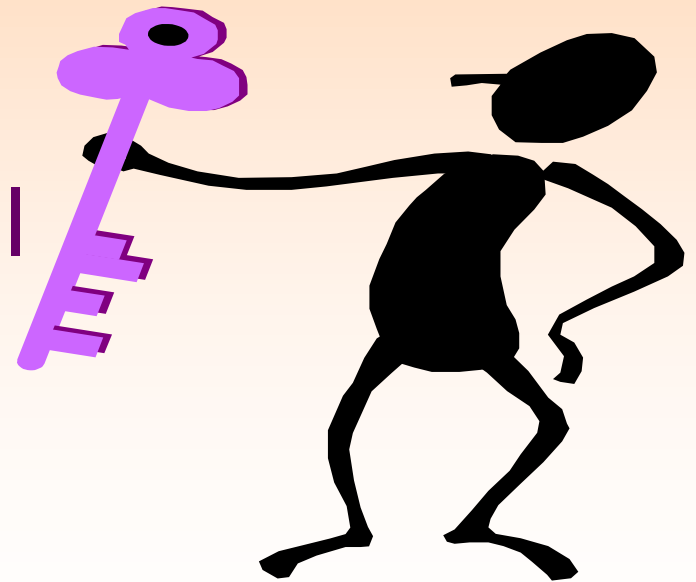
- Communication
- Bridge building
- Goal development
- Partnership development



Key to Success

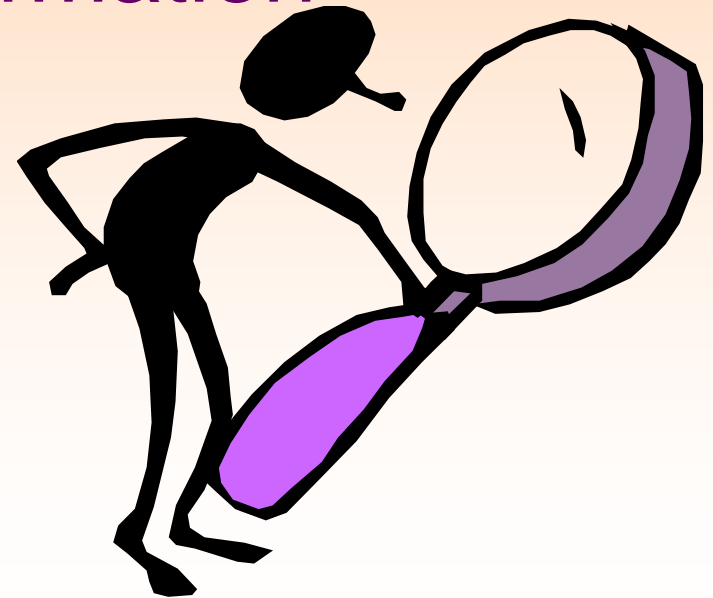
“Let your advance worrying become advance thinking and planning.”

- Winston Churchill



Be Prepared

- Define Purpose
- Collect facts
- Prepare family information
- Develop agenda
- Arrange to attend



Rules Of The Game



- Educator to facilitate
- Stay on track
- Summarize
- Watch the clock
- Sign document

Sample Form

Conference Summary

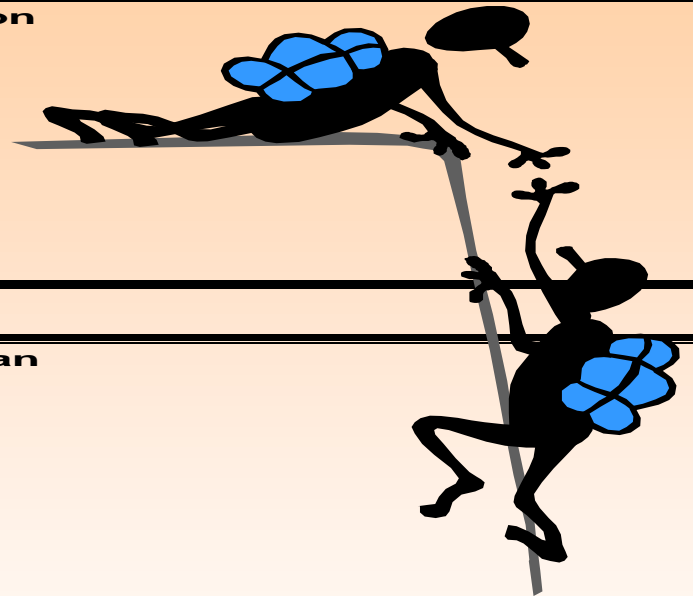
Student: _____

Teacher: _____

Discussion

Strengths:

Areas for Growth:



Action Plan

Goals:

- 1.
- 2.

Action to be taken by:

Student:

Parent:

Teacher:

Student Signature

Parent Signature

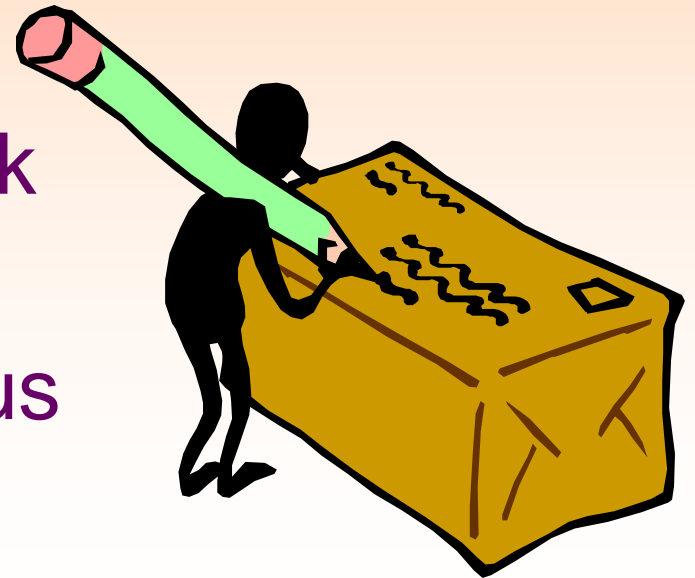
Teacher Signature

Date

Put It On Paper

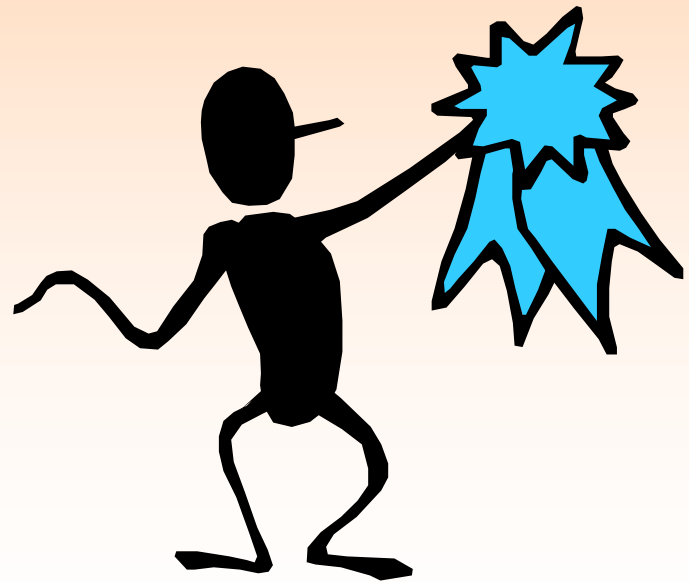
Written goals have a way of transforming wishes into wants; can'ts into cans; dreams into plans; and plans into reality. Don't just think about it...ink it.

-Anonymous



Types Of Conferences

- Academic planning
- Progress report
- Home visit
- Conflict resolution
- Referral



Academic Planning

- Increase communication
- Set goals & strategies
- Learn
- Reflect



Progress Report

- Identify strengths
- Discuss all areas
- Request specific examples
- Avoid value judgments
- Involve others



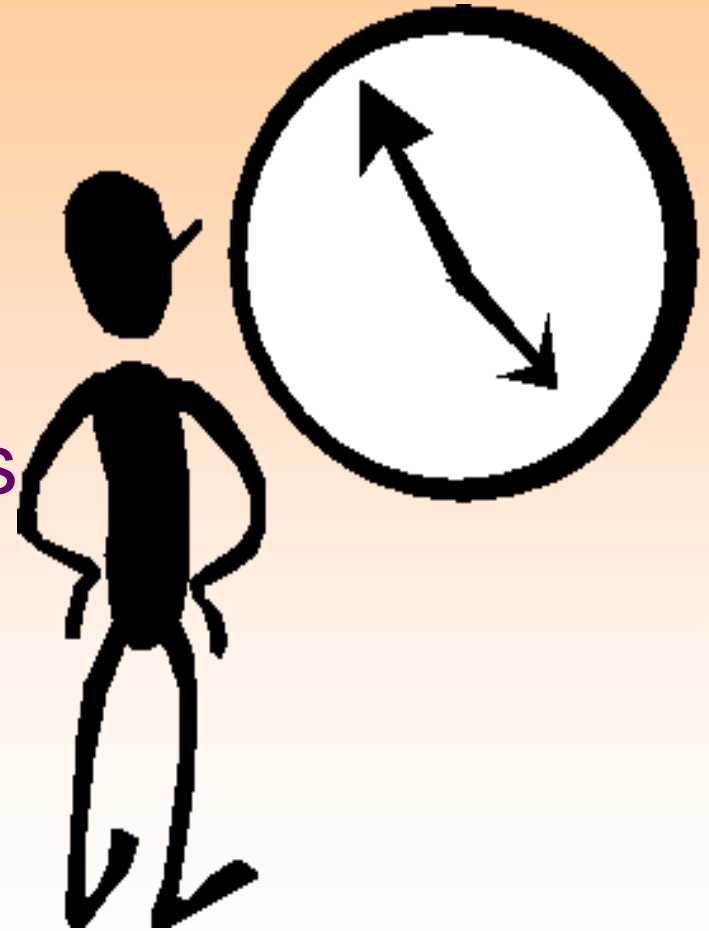
Welcome To Our Home

- Promote understanding
- Provide interaction
- Demonstrate interest
- Establish rapport
- Build relationships



Home Visit Requests

- Use convenient time
- Phone before arriving
- Avoid visiting alone
- Avoid value judgments
- Make visit brief



Conflict Resolution



- State concern
- Describe details
- Get input
- List steps to solution
- Express confidence
- Schedule follow-up

Referral

- Collaborate
- Review documentation
- Look for patterns
- Consider alternatives
- Plan initial strategies



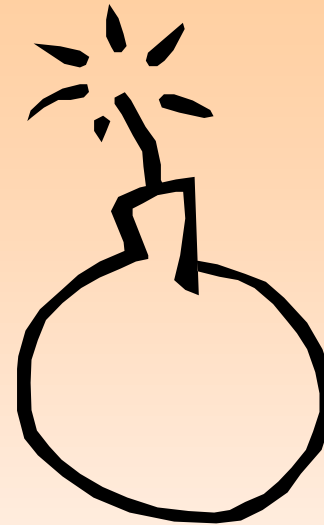
Emotions Are Taking Me Over



- Relief
- Anger
- Sad
- Guilt
- Denial
- Blame
- Fear

Handle the Situation

- Listen
- Remain calm
- Acknowledge
- Apologize
- Ask “What would you like me to do?”
- Offer resolution



Tips for Success - Don't

- Know it all
- Make snap judgments
- Be critical
- Ridicule or make excuses
- Express surprise



Tips for Success - Don't

- Make promises you can't keep
- Moralize or use shame
- Minimize other's comments
- Patronize



Tips for Success - Do



- Have sense of humor
- Be accepting
- Keep positive attitude
- Listen

Tips for Success - Do

- Watch body language
- Be sincere & respectful
- Reinforce others when necessary



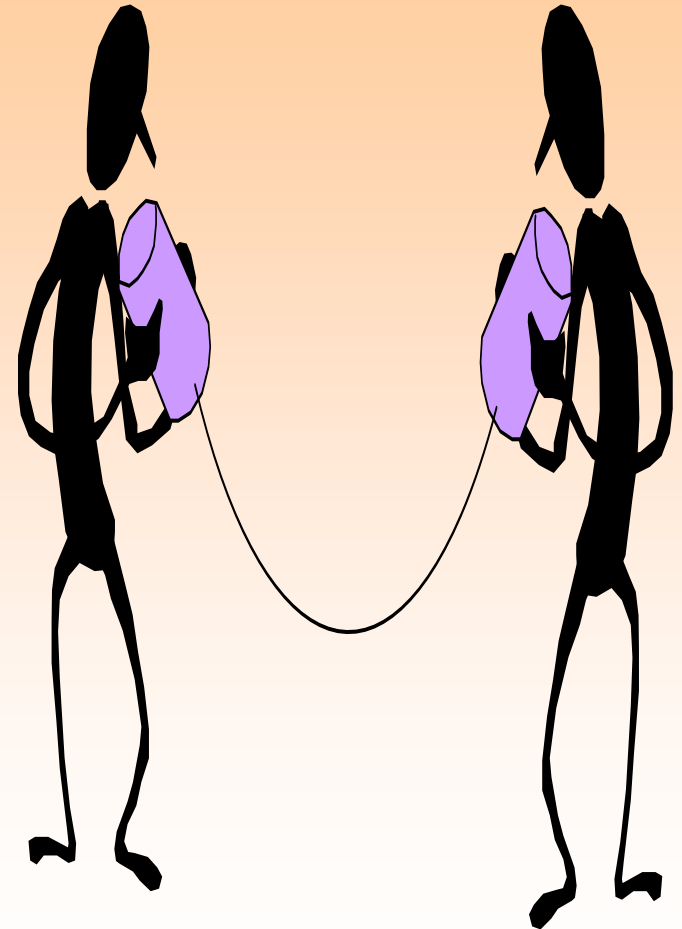
Communicating With Teens

- Practice empathy, flexibility, & open-mindedness
- Take 10 minutes to make decisions
- Be available & accessible
- Remain consistent
- Count to 10 before speaking



Communicating With Teens

- Be controlled & calm
- Learn to apologize
- Live the “golden rule”
- Consider writing a note
- Avoid being preachy

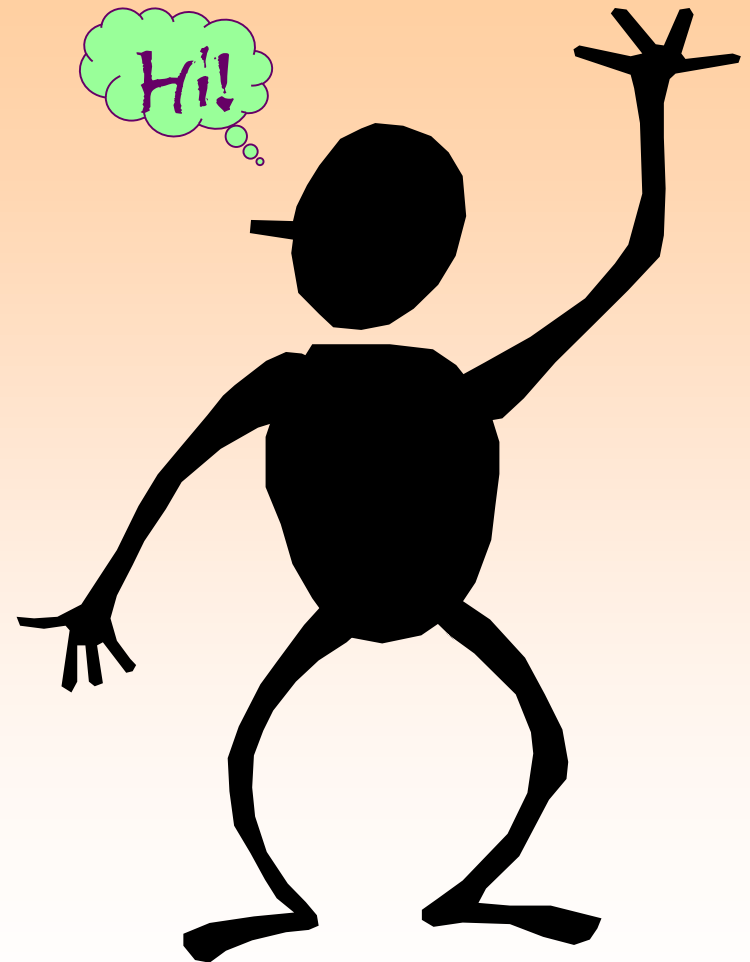


Reflection

- Was I courteous?
- Was I open, honest, & organized?
- Was the purpose met?
- Did the conference end on a positive note?



How Do You Feel?



What The School Can Do

- ☺ Greet parents in courteous manner
- ☺ Have informal parent-teacher occasions
- ☺ Have scheduled conference times
- ☺ Have reception area
- ☺ Offer parent orientation



To Help

- ☺ Seek input in decision-making
- ☺ Have suggestion box
- ☺ Encourage unscheduled visits
- ☺ Allow building use after hours



What You Can Do

- ☺ Get to know your child's teacher
- ☺ Be involved, not intrusive
- ☺ Share unique insights about your child
- ☺ Offer to assist with projects
- ☺ Know & support classroom rules
- ☺ Speak respectfully of the teacher in front of your child



To Help

- ☺ Keep lines of communication open
- ☺ Recognize your child's version is only one side of the story
- ☺ Don't over-react
- ☺ Respect the teacher's skills & knowledge
- ☺ Recognize the value of teamwork

What A Team!



The best formula for a child's success in school is a strong partnership between parents and teachers. Both have special skills and insights to share.

Thanks!

