The Power of Communication in the 21st Century

Alternate working title:
Dealing With Difficult Families:
*When Choking is Not an Option!*

Tammy Martin and Kirsten Parr
Illini Central Grade School, Mason City, IL
Presentation Objectives

• To have the necessary knowledge base needed for framing positive school-family relationships.
• To learn and apply positive listening and speaking strategies for use during difficult conversations with families.
• To utilize various 21st century tools, including social media and apps, allowing for interaction with families in convenient and up-to-date ways.
We are in the business of customer service!

We never get a second chance to redo the first impression.
The thing that impresses me most about America is the way parents obey their children.

Your poll will show here

1. Install the app from pollev.com/app
2. Make sure you are in Slide Show mode

Still not working? Get help at pollev.com/app/help
or
Open poll in your web browser
Family Structures have changed!

- Family Configurations & Dynamics: single parent, grandparents, foster families, stand-in guardians, homeless, doubled-up families

- Family Stress: housing, work, relationships

- Educational Predisposition: negative experience
Think of a particularly difficult encounter with an angry parent that caught you off-guard and that you wished you had handled differently.
Your poll will show here

1
Install the app from pollev.com/app

2
Make sure you are in Slide Show mode

Still not working? Get help at pollev.com/app/help
or
Open poll in your web browser
Effect of Parent Involvement According to the Research

- Higher student achievement - higher test scores, better grades, improved attendance & homework
- Students have a more positive attitude towards school
- Improved teacher morale
- Higher graduation rates
The Only Thing That is Constant is Change!

Dr. Marcus Welby, a dedicated family physician who makes house calls a priority in life ...  
https://youtu.be/Y10VEkyKd3w

Dr. Derek Shepherd, a doctor otherwise known as McDreamyé é an ER doctor who makes drama a priority in life ...
Dr. Marcus Welby - Era

- Parent support mostly unquestioned
- If I get in trouble at school, I'll be in trouble at home
- Punish now, Ask questions later
- Teachers and school were valued and respected much like clergy and church
Dr. Derek McDreamy - Era

- Today's parents have different values.
- I was in school so I am an authority.
- Don't mess with my paycheck or my kid.
- Parents had a bad experience in school.
- Parents mistake rescuing as love.
Family Structure: Ozzie & Harriet

- Nuclear family
- Stay at home mother
- Language proficient
- Work ethic
- Respect for authority
- Value of education
- Wants the best for children
Family Structure: The Braverman Family

- Single parent/quasi-guardian home
- Questions authority
- Often feels threatened by professionals
- Feels unwelcome at school
- Language barriers
- Cultural differences
- Wants the best for children
Changing parent behavior may not be an option…
...But changing our approach is!
Communicating

Communication should be:

- Regular
- Two-Way
- Meaningful
Traditional ways to communicate

- Introductory letter
- Classroom newsletter
- Phone calls
- Email
- Positive notes
- Folders
- Assignment notebooks
21st century tools to connect

- Ways to communicate prior to the angry face-to-face meeting.
  - Email
  - Classroom blogs
  - Private social media accounts: class Instagram, class Twitter, class Facebook accounts
  - Web tools: Poll Everywhere
  - Free Apps
Here’s how you’ve been checking in today:

- Poll Everywhere
  - www.polleverywhere.com

- Apply it in your classroom

- For example, during a parent night, you could collect and answer anonymous questions.
Classroom Blog
http://mrsstrauman.blogspot.com/
Classroom Facebook Page

Mrs. Strauman's Class
Jan 14, 2015 at 4:36pm
Students researched MLK Jr. today and organized their findings using post-its. We'll do more with this project tomorrow and Friday.

Mrs. Strauman's Class added 2 new photos.
Aug 26, 2015 at 8:34am
Mrs. Tucker’s students worked in groups to read books and determine the author’s purpose.

Mrs. Strauman's Class
Oct 27, 2015 at 12:37pm
Researchers hard at work during RTI
Instant Audience Feedback

How does Poll Everywhere work?
Try voting on a multiple choice poll
Text a question to the Q&A poll
Watch the demo video

1. You ask a question
2. Audience answers using mobile phones, Twitter, or web browser
3. Responses are displayed live in Keynote, PowerPoint, or the web

Create your first poll
Takes 30 seconds. No signup required.
21st Century Tools

There are new tools that all educators can leverage to easily maximize parent-teacher-student communication.
Remind 101

Message your class

A safe way for teachers to text message students and stay in touch with parents. Free.

remind101
Class DoJo

Share reports with parents now!
Easily engage parents by sharing your students’ ClassDojo reports, with just one click.

Share reports with parents by email...  ...or print and send invitations home...  ...and parents can log in to see new reports every Friday!

https://youtu.be/ZZ27nMOVI_g
Seesaw

Parent and Teacher Comments

After seeing their child's work, parents (and teachers) can like or comment on an item.

The Primary Life

IDEAS FOR SEESEAW IN THE CLASSROOM
1. Share work/tests that students are proud of
2. Take pictures of graphic organizers/class notes so parents see what we’re learning
3. Create video book reviews that encourage friends to read a book
4. Exit ticket: What is one thing you learned today?
5. Upload projects and receive feedback from peers

https://youtu.be/tlw-tUKvnNc
What is App Smashing?

The process of using multiple apps in conjunction with one another to complete a final task or project.
Teachers then send Remind notifications via SMS text or email with the date of the test and a link to the Quizlet “set” to parents and students.

These flashcards can now be accessed at home on any device, and parents are made aware of upcoming test dates.
Educreations is an awesome app that allows teachers to create and share amazing video lessons using an iPad, tablet or desktop computer.

Instead of struggling with argumentative children, parents and children can check the class blog in order to see exactly how the skill was taught in class.
Every time I post something on my class blog, I send a Remind notification with the link out to parents and students.

They range from extra credit activities, blogging tasks, challenges, virtual field trips, to any additional learning task that I want my students to engage in.
Proactive Approach to Prevent an Epidemic

Learning how to defuse negative emotions of parents with both real and imagined problems is a critical human relations skill.
Best Ways to Respond

- Listen
- Be gentle
- Read between the lines
- Give “wordless advice”
- Backtrack
- Open your mind
- Don’t react
Best Ways to Respond

• Remain composed
• Be assertive
• Apologize
• Empathize
• Welcome criticism
• Consider cultural differences
• End positively
WARNING!

The Following Can Be Hazardous To Your Health

- Don’t interrupt
- Don’t take over the conversation
- Don’t change the subject
- Don’t focus on things that can’t be changed
- Don’t get off on your own agenda
- Don’t engage in silent combat
- Don’t start to answer before you understand
- Don’t advise unless you’re asked
- Don’t try to persuade
- Don’t appear neutral
- Don’t sound like a “know-it-all”
- Don’t over explain
- Don’t become intimidated
- Don’t settle for a superficial resolution
The 5 B’s to remember:

- Be trustworthy
- Be honest
- Be authentic
- Be respectful
- Be forgiving
Public Schools are for the Public

Every citizen has a guaranteed, constitutional right to attend
Remember…….

Parents are sending us the best kids they have.

They are not keeping the good ones at home!
Credits:

- Dealing with Difficult Parents by Whitaker
- http://www.slideshare.net/EasyBib/app-smashing-for-educators-leveraging-tools-to-maximize-communication/7-What_isApp_SmashingThe_process_of