

Get Ready for the Parent-Teacher Conference



A school conference is a great opportunity for parents and teachers to learn more about students. You can both use the time to share important information to help your child succeed in school.

The key to a successful conference, parents and teachers agree, is two-way communication. By exchanging information, parents and teachers can set the stage for a successful school year.

QuickTips

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Talk With Your Child

Before you attend the conference, spend a few minutes talking with your child. Explain that you need help preparing for the conference. Then ask:

- What your child would like you to talk about with the teacher.
- What your child thinks the teacher will say.
- About your child's likes and dislikes, as well as problems and successes.

Let your child know that after the conference you will share and discuss what the teacher said.



Think About Questions You'd Like to Ask

To make the most of your time, prepare some questions in advance. There's room on the back of this QuickTip for you to jot them down.

Here are some suggestions:

- What is being covered in this grade or subject this year?
- What are your expectations for homework? Has my child missed any assignments?
- How are my child's work habits? Does my child use time wisely?
- Does my child read at the level you would expect for this grade?
- Is my child able to do the math you would expect for a student in this grade?
- Is my child in different groups for different subjects? Why?
- Has my child been absent, other than the times when I contacted the school?
- How is my child doing in any special programs—for example, advanced academics, English language learning or special education?
- Does my child get along well with others?
- Does my child cooperate in class and follow directions?
- What can I do at home to help my child be more successful in school?

What Should the Teacher Know?

As a parent, you know your child better than anyone else. Share the following information about your child with the teacher:

1. Favorite subjects.



2. Outside interests and hobbies.

3. Any medical or health needs.



4. Things happening at home that may affect schoolwork—moving, divorce, the birth of a child.

At the Conference

Keep an open mind. Remember that both you and the teacher want to help your child succeed. Even if the teacher says something you disagree with, listen before responding. Also:

- **Ask to see your child's work.**
There's no better way to see how your student is progressing.
- **Ask the teacher to explain** terms that are new to you.
- **Sum up** what you think has been said. Make sure both you and the teacher agree on any decisions you have made about your child. If necessary, ask to meet again.
- **Establish the best way** to contact each other, and make plans to follow up on any actions agreed to.

After the Conference

Follow up. Stay in touch with the teacher. If you think of a question you didn't ask, contact the teacher.

Talk with your child. Stress the positive things the teacher said and talk about suggestions for improvement. Plan with your child how to carry out these suggestions.

Jot Down What You Want to Discuss

Information I want the teacher to know about my child:

Questions I have:

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