

## How to Talk With Your Child's Teacher

The back-to-school nights and parent-teacher conferences are over, but communications between parents and teachers should continue to help children get the best out of each day they spend in the classroom. Building and maintaining good relationships with your children's teachers will also help parents avoid those scary report cards that make you gasp in horror.

Teachers are eager to partner with supportive parents, but keep in mind they are very busy and their time is limited. Help them get to know you by introducing yourself, if you haven't already done so. Find out the teacher's preferred method of communication and send her a note or an email with information that may help her better assist your son in the classroom.

Communicate your questions or concerns, and your appreciation regularly. Share your insights about your child with the teacher. Compliment her when your child makes positive remarks about a lesson. Also, let her know when your daughter seems to be struggling with certain concepts. Perhaps the teacher can take a different approach to the material that benefits the entire class. Maybe there are steps you can take to help your daughter when it's time to do homework or study for the next test. Tell the teacher if there is an event or transition pending at home, whether pleasant or stressful, so that she will understand your daughter's frame of mind during that time.

If you have time to volunteer in the classroom, a special skill you can apply to an upcoming lesson, or items to donate, tell the teacher you would like to be of assistance. Most teachers are thrilled to get helping hands and extra materials for their students.

Treat teachers as you would have them treat you — with kindness and respect. Teach your children to do the same, even when a teacher is having a rough day. We all have those! If your child complains about a teacher, remain neutral until you've had a chance to speak with the teacher to get her perspective. Resolving conflicts as they arise will be much easier than dealing with your son's resentment and resistance both in and out of the classroom throughout the school year.