

September 2011 Parent Involvement Tip of the Month

(Script) "Hello, as the faculty member assigned to promoting parent involvement, I'd like to take a few minutes to give you a simple plan for starting the year off positively with parents. I challenge each of you to give all of our students' families a figurative H.U.G. to establish the positive rapport necessary for parents being actively engaged across the school year. When you give or get a hug it feels great, doesn't it? Hugs are a way of showing someone you care. I believe that parents won't care what we know until they know that we care! Let's use the acronym H.U.G. to give us a three-point approach to make a quick telephone call to our students' parents.

- H- Hello! Make it a priority to call the parents of every one of your students by the end of the first month of school just to say hello. Research tells us that the sooner we make the first contact with parents, the better. Your "hello" should be brief but warm, friendly, and positive!
- U- Understand. During the call, make sure parents understand that you want what they want-- the best educational experience for their child. When parents feel that you care about their child, they are more likely to care about what you need them to do to support their child's learning at home.
- G- Give. Wrap up your message by giving parents a personal invitation to be a vital part of their child's education all year long starting with meeting each other in person at your Open House. Give the specific date and time. End the call with a sincere "thank you" for entrusting their child to you during the school day and that you look forward to working TOGETHER to make sure their child experiences great success this school year!

Each call should only take a few minutes to make - with a classroom of 25 children that would equate to each one of us spending about an hour and a half of time on the telephone at most. Our time investment should pay off in a big way as we will likely see more parents show up for school events, parent-teacher conferences, and so forth throughout the year simply because we took the time to establish a positive rapport at the beginning of the school year. So, I encourage you to give lots of H.U.G.s!"