

Home-School Communication Workshop

**Created by the Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE)
at the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)**

Objectives

- To be aware of different communication approaches
- To recognize how different communication approaches can strengthen or weaken teacher-family relations
- To gain practice in employing different communication approaches in different circumstances

Communication is a message sent
and a message received.

Communication matters

Parents seek good communication skills in their children's teachers, citing it as one of the most desirable characteristics a new teacher could have.

Top 5 reasons why home-school communication is beneficial:

- Increases trust between schools and families
- Encourages higher and realistic parental expectations
- Serves as the first step to other types of parent involvement to follow
- Leads to a higher degree of parents' commitment to helping their students improve
- Puts everyone on the “same page”

Communication is a process

- Identifying the **goal** and reason for the communication.
- Considering one's **audience**.
- Choosing a communication **approach** that opens rather than blocks a two-way conversation

Goal:

Consider the content of your message

Ask yourself:

- What message do I want to convey?
- What do I want to have happen as a result of this communication?

Audience

Good communication requires knowing not only what words to use and what messages to send, but also how to communicate in ways that open communication, help the people involved explore the situation, and generate options for change.

Audience

Ask yourself:

- Who am I talking with?
- What is our degree of familiarity?
- What style of communication am I comfortable with? How might it be different—or the same—than the family I am communicating with?

Home-School Communication Approaches

Choose a home-school communication approach that will convey the message meaningfully.

