

Interacting with Parents

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- Why is it important?
 - Supports and empowers parents/families
 - Models healthy relationships of respect
 - Maintains a more consistent, integrated care
- Obstacles
 - Time
 - Language/cultural differences
 - Baggage
 - Fear of criticism, inadequacy, or judgment
- How to create/maintain connections with parents
 - Maintain professionalism
 - Develop and nurture a relationship with parents/families
 - Show a positive attitude about the child and the parents
 - Let parents see your passion for what you do
- Handling difficult conversations with tact, grace, and compassion
 - Always start and end the conversation with positives – the “sandwich”
 - Think before you speak
 - Plan ahead and find a private place to talk
 - Have another staff member in with you (director, asst director, etc.)
 - Assume that everyone has a reason behind their behavior
 - LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN!!
 - Restate parents’ concerns and define the problem
 - Share your own experiences/opinions
 - Work together to create a solution
- “High maintenance” parents
 - Biases of person using this term
 - Discover the parents’ perspective