



HOME VISIT : RESEARCH

FROM 'LABELING' TO 'ENABLING'

“Teachers often find themselves wondering why their efforts at organizing opportunities for parents to become more involved in classroom activities do not pan out. They send written reminders home with their students, make phone calls, email, and text. When their repeated attempts to communicate with parents are left unanswered, many teachers become discouraged and begin making negative assumptions about parents’ involvement.”

RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Teachers often find themselves wondering why their efforts at organizing opportunities for parents to become more involved in classroom activities do not pan out. They send written reminders home with their students, make phone calls, email, and text. When their repeated attempts to communicate with parents are left unanswered, many teachers become discouraged and begin making **negative assumptions** about parents’ involvement.¹

One of the most important and recognizable processes of parent partnership is the home visit. It also serves as the basis for actions made in school to translate better back home. In addition to creating a foundation for **positive relationships**, home visits can also be used as a valuable process to get parents **more involved** in both the **pedagogy and philosophy** of the school as well as their child’s education.

It’s important to identify some of the key markers of a successful home visit, and what it looks like. Some of the common attributes of a positive interaction with parents include: going **prepared**, knowing the **family** and **child**, focus on **strengths**, what is to be **gained** from the visit, **following up** after the visit.

Ultimately, parents’ knowledge of their child can help teachers become better educators. When inviting parents to the school, it is a space out of their comfort zone; informing them of the progress of their child and updating them on the changes in curriculum etc, it is a game of catch up for the parent. In a home visit, the **roles are reversed**, and parents are in a space that is **comfortable** for them. During the Home Visit, it is the teachers who makes the effort to inquire about the ecosystem of their student outside the school. In the process of **extending themselves** outside school, it demonstrates to both parent and child, that **they care**.²

(Cont.)

PARENT PARTNERSHIP PILLAR

Bronfenbrenner's **ecological systems theory** has been pivotal in family focused processes and ideas. It is a theory that describes an individual – or in this case a child – in increasingly **complex social structures**, beginning with family. The family is in a community, the community in a state etc. The school lies right **beyond the periphery** of the family, and it is important to identify that a change in social conditions and variables (such as the school) can cause a change in family life.

Bridging that gap and understanding the **change caused** from one variable to the next is also the role of a home visit.³

HOME VISIT : IN A NUTSHELL

- Family environments serve as one of the **strongest factors** that define differences in **academic achievement**. Multiple studies suggest that home visits help bridge that gap especially as children grow older and parents become **less informed** about their child's **schooling experience**.⁴
- Educators can sometimes have '**implicit biases**' which lower expectations for students. Their mindset about these students changes when they visit their home and can see that low-income parents can be just as **supportive and interested** in their child's learning and future as parents from well-off backgrounds.⁵

REFERENCES

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