



parent'r'us
school parent involvement to
increase student achievement

Parent'R'Us Awareness Raising Tool for Parents

The role of parents in educating their children and their relation to school

Parents are the primary educators of their children. This not only means that you are the first educators, but research also shows that **parents have the largest impact on the learning – including school learning – of their children. And your impact on learning does not depend on your ability to help with schoolwork or homework.** All you need to do is celebrate every bit of school success, and encourage them to try harder if they are not so successful. This primary role is present until the age of 11-12 when it is overtaken by the peer group. Contrary to common belief, it is never the teacher who has the largest impact.

You have to make sure your child goes to school regularly. At the same time, you have to find out the reason if he/she doesn't want to go, and reach out to the teacher if you think there is a problem at school.

You need to ask them regularly if they are ready with their homework, but you shouldn't check it regularly. If your child struggles with the homework, you should remind the teacher that it is not your job to help with homework, and they should set tasks your child can do on his/her own.

Take some time to understand that you have taught a lot of things to your child. They can walk and talk, he/she has learnt to tie shoelaces, to dress, sing,

play, cook, bake, plant vegetables, clean the room, wash up – the list is endless.

You can do two things that have a proven positive effect on their school success, and neither of them are related to schoolwork.

- Try to establish a routine of having a meal together every day, and discuss everyday topics with your child.
- Sit down and read for your own pleasure or to your child, because reading as an example will make them readers.

The role of teachers and your relationship with them as equal partners

Parents are also responsible for the education of their children, and the school's role is a supporting one. Most parents want the school to help with some of their educator duties, mostly those they are not capable of doing.

Parents and teachers are educating children together. You are an equal partner regardless of your position in the local community. You know your own child and his/her needs best, while the teacher has the professional knowledge and knows how to teach school subjects. Teachers as professional educators should be able to help you as an educator if you have doubts or questions. However, you may feel more comfortable discussing such topics in the presence of other parents.



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What you can expect in a school implementing the Parent'R'Us model

Once a school has subscribed to the Parent'R'Us model, you can expect:

- Teachers to consider all parents as equal partners;
- Teachers actively reaching out to all parents and finding the best way to engage you in the learning of your child, but also school life;
- The school to invite you to mentor other parents or the teachers;
- The school to offer you mentoring if you need help;
- To have school practices that consider the difference between education by parents and by the school, for example little or no homework.

You and other parents

It doesn't matter what you do for a living, what schools you went to, what languages you speak, what you believe in, whether you are married or not, what the colour of your skin is... **in the school you are one of the parents. You are equal, and you shouldn't be shy to demand equal treatment.** You have to understand that for each parent it is their own child or children who are the most important. Your child may have special needs, but the same is true for other children.

You may feel more comfortable at the school than other parents. In this case, find a way to support those who are less confident.

You may feel uncomfortable at school or speaking to teachers. In this case, reach out to other parents, and find one you can trust and feel comfortable with.

Benefits of participating in Parent'R'Us as a mentor or mentee

If you are one of the more confident parents, and you have a little time, you may want to consider becoming a Parent'R'Us mentor. You will surely learn a lot about yourself and about other parents.



If you don't feel comfortable at school, try to ask the school or your community for a Parent'R'Us mentor. They are also parents, they are very similar to you, they have the same problems, but they are a little more comfortable around teachers. They can help you.



www.parentrus.eu

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