I NEED YOU AND YOU NEED ME, TOO: THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN ENGAGING FAMILIES AS EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

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Today in School Psychology

this is why a day without direct contact with students is wasted

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Today in School Psychology

VOLUME 2

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Today, and every day, give yourself a break by taking a break. And despite what you might have been taught, you don't always have to earn it; you deserve it.

After waking up feeling great-fully rested and with energy -this does not mean that we should get out of bed. More rest is more than okay.

CHARLES BARRETT

When it feels like I'm behind in some areas of my life, yet ahead in others, it simply means that I'm exactly where I am supposed to be.

CHARLES BARRETT

What did one mask say to the other?

I've got you covered.

What did one ice cube say to the other when one of the ice cubes got sick?

Do you have a cold?

this is why a day without direct contact with a student is wasted...



ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE

CHALLENGE THE SYSTEM



I NEED YOU AND YOU NEED ME, TOO: THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS IN ENGAGING FAMILIES AS EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

LEARNER OBJECTIVES...

- How can schools empower families to be their child's most informed and effective advocates?
- Schools demonstrate their commitment to creating welcoming and inclusive environments that are conducive to meaningful family engagement by...
 - Inviting families
 - Partnering with families
 - Sharing decision-making power
 - Being flexible
 - Involving them in the educational process



its ALWAYS ABOUT THE Laren charles a. barrett

Chapter 5 Social Justice: A Framework for Equity in Public Education ASSESS CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES TO RULE OUT ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS FOR CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE

RATHER THAN RELYING ON INCOMPLETE QUANTITATIVE DATA, GATHER QUALITATIVE INFORMATION FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES REMAIN AWARE OF OUR PERSONAL BIASES SO THAT THEY DO NOT NEGATIVELY AFFECT STUDENTS

SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THOSE WHOM WE SERVE—THEIR RESPECTIVE HISTORIES AND CURRENT CULTURAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC REALITIES

INTENTIONALLY EMPOWER FAMILIES BY ESTABLISHING MEANINGFUL HOME-SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO BY CONTINUALLY REFINING OUR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE. WHEN NECESSARY, WE CHALLENGE THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE OF OUR COLLEAGUES

NATIONAL BESTSELLER

"MAGNIFICENT . . . Enrique's Journey is about love. It's about family. It's about home." —The Washington Post Book World

ENRIQUE'S JOURNEY

The story of a boy's dangerous odyssey to reunite with his mother

Sonia Nazario

Winner of the PULITZER PRIZE REVISED AND UPDATED BY THE AUTHOR

SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THOSE WHOM WE SERVE—THEIR RESPECTIVE HISTORIES AND CURRENT CULTURAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC REALITIES



A few weeks ago I mentioned a book that my Millersville University school psychology graduate students and I read during our Assessment of English Learners course. Among other issues, *Enrique's Journey* shows the significance of systems in the lives of children and families who have emigrated to the United States. For example, Enrique's mother was taken advantage of several times while trying to get her papers-paying people thousands of dollars, only to be scammed on multiple occasions. For Enrique and other migrants, the police often took their money and bribed them so that they could continue on their journey to America. What does this mean? When families finally arrive to the United States and are sitting in our schools and attending our meetings, their skepticism about what we're offering is valid and informed by their previous experiences. In other words, schools and school-based professionals, represent systems and authority figuressimilar to the ones that previously took advantage of them. Though all families want what's best for their children, it's quite possible that they don't trust what we're saying. Perhaps they're thinking, *Why should I trust this person who is saying that they're going to help me and my child? I've heard that before and it wasn't true.* As some of us have returned to school for the 21-22 school year, or are preparing to return in the near future, let's be patient with families by being mindful of what they have likely experienced. Also, let's remember that more than individuals, we represent systems that might not have been fair to some children and families. And because of these things, establishing trust through developing relationships is paramount.

#todayinschoolpsychology #itsalwaysaboutthechildren #focusonthefence Why should I trust this person who is saying that they're going to help me and my child? I've heard that before and it wasn't true. **INTENTIONALLY EMPOWER** FAMILIES BY **ESTABLISHING MEANINGFUL HOME-SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE** RELATIONSHIPS

access to information is key

knowledge is power



prevention is better than cure

INVITE

- Intentionally invite families to a series of informational sessions to educate them about the school
- Whether new parents or returning families, because of the complexities of schools and their ever-changing policies and practices, these annual events can be beneficial
- Proactively empower families by giving them access to information
 - Meeting the principal and other administrators, teachers, and support staff (e.g., school nurses, secretaries, and mental health providers)
 - Explaining how they can access the services that are available to them and their children (e.g., free or reduced-price lunch, afterschool programs, homework assistance)

PARTNER

- Partner with community and faith-based organizations: institutions that have significant relational currency and cultural capital with families
 - Back-to-School fairs and other events at churches, mosques, and temples
 - Share resources about school in places that are accessible to families (e.g., faith-based organizations, community centers, grocery stores, sports facilities, parks, recreation centers, barber shops, nail salons)
- Engage in outreach efforts by meeting families where they are
 - Rather than expecting families to meet you (schools) in unfamiliar and potentially oppressive or traumatizing spaces

PARTNER

- Cultural Brokers
 - Faith leaders
 - Parent or family liaisons
 - Community organizations
- Listen to and learn from people who understand your students and families
 - Which holidays are celebrated by your students and families?
 - How is their education system similar to, or different from, the American public school system?
 - What are families' perspectives on education and authority figures? How likely are they to disagree with what schools and educators recommend concerning their children?
 - Are there dietary needs (e.g., Kosher, Halal) that schools should be aware of to help students feel more comfortable?

SHARE DECISION-MAKING POWER

- Don't unfairly influence families to do what you feel is best for their child
 - Informed Consent
 - Provide information in terms families can understand, including having interpreters present when necessary
 - After giving families information, including the implications of their choices, allow them to make the decisions that they feel are in the best interest of their child
 - If they disagree with our recommendations, not only is this okay, but it shows that they have listened to our perspective and are exercising their parental (family) rights to choose another option

BE FLEXIBLE

- Establish school communities and cultures that are flexible enough to meet families' needs
 - When are meetings scheduled?
 - Are families able to attend meetings that are held earlier or later during the school day?
 - Who speaks first in meetings?
 - How much time are families given to share their perspectives about their children?
 - Bilingual School Psychologist Example

INVOLVE

- Equipping families with information (knowledge) so they are more informed (empowered) to be their child's most effective advocates is a moral and ethical imperative
- When educators and families don't share similar racial, ethnic, SES, or language backgrounds, they must continually develop their skills to effectively engage (invite) and partner with families so that these differences don't become barriers to beneficial outcomes for students
- By intentionally engaging families as partners in their children's education, families' self-efficacy (the belief that they can successfully accomplish a task) increases, which leads to further participation



FAMILY/PARENTING

New Year, New Beginnings: Creating Structure at Home to Prepare Children for Success

In their latest article, school psychologists Barrett and Vyas offer advice on routines that will help get youngsters ready for school and, ultimately, for successful lives.



By Charles Barrett and Desiree Vyas on August 19, 2019
PRESENT

PROACTIVE

PERSISTENT

PROACTIVE

- Rather than waiting for your child's teachers to contact you, call or email them first.
 - Introduce yourself and help them understand your child's strengths and areas that need improvement.
 - Pledge your support as a partner in your child's educational success.

PRESENT

 As much as possible, make yourself available to support your child's teacher and school events.

 Ask about opportunities to volunteer in your child's classroom, chaperone field trips or assist with fundraising activities.

PERSISTENT

- In many instances, if you are told no, that might not be the final answer. Schools often want to find ways to meet families' needs (within reason).
 - As a parent or guardian, if you are not satisfied with the answer you've been given, there is often a way to elevate your concerns.











i treat all of my students the same

well-intentioned teachers



focus. on. the. fence.

FOCUS ON THE FENCE

fences are constructed. and because they're constructed, they can be deconstructed.





The assumption is that everyone benefits from the same supports. This is equal treatment.

Equity

Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed The systemic barrier has been removed.









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