

# Parent Communication

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# Ways to Communicate

straight forward and  
direct

informal and friendly

logical and precise

warm and sincere

# How do I start? What do I Need to Think About?

- Straight forward and direct: watch body language, remember emotions, slow down, give time for a response (that may be days of thinking), watch space and proximity.
- Informal and friendly: watch your humor, no bad words 😊, is it harder to tell friends hard things or strangers hard things (everyone is your friend), am I making sense?
- Warm and sincere: watch how much of your heart is exposed, you can do this!, practice.practice.practice, write it down.
- Logical and precise: add emotion, eye contact, watch for feelings and respond to them with words, there is gray area.

# Where does judgement and bias come in?

- We have to accept others rather than reject them.
- We need to understand rather than judge.
- We need to ask for participation rather than manipulation.
  
- Having children changed the way I saw judgement and bias!

# Behavior

Behavior norms: The rules we follow in society.

Behavior excess: Something we do too often, with too much force or with too much intensity.

Behavior deficit: Something we don't do often enough, with not enough force or with too little intensity.

# One Chance

- You have one chance to say hard things to parents.
- How do we know they are ready?
- Bring in an Occupational Therapist/Speech Pathologist if you can
- How do parents hear it best?
  - Let's have a meeting to talk about the challenges your child is facing.
  - Could we get together for a cup of coffee and talk about how we can follow your child's strengths?

# Observations

- Answer the question WHY? (Become a detective)
  - Why does it keep happening?
  - Why is it always around lunch time/nap time/literacy?
  - Why is it when I am not in the room?
- How do I talk to a parent so they will listen and not become defensive?
- How would I want to hear the message?

# Emotional Intelligence and Emotional Wellness

- Academics (technical skills) only accounts for 15% of your success in life. 85% of success is in people skills.
- Our goal is physical and emotional wellness!
- Interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence are key to social-emotional growth.



# Working with parents

- Document, document, document in writing
- Observations need to be objective (No VERY or OPINIONS)
- Watch out for home/school journals: can become a dumping ground
- “What works at home for you? We would like to try it at school!”
- Be approachable: what does that look like and sound like
- Collect articles and books and make a lending library.

# Challenges:

- Education vs. Experience
- Pay scale - babysitters
- Pick up and drop off may not be the best time to talk to parents
- How did something little turn into something so big?
- “I can’t do it!” – talking to parents can be so scary!
- Parents are a child’s first teacher. We are their second teachers.
- Who’s the expert?
- Social media vs friendships