



All Children Deserve Excellent Teachers

New Generation of Parents – Millennials born 1982 - present

Characteristics of Millennial Parents

- > Have survived intense competition: for college, jobs
- > Married later than previous generations and had children later than previous generations
- > Have fewer children, but feel less competent as a parent
- > Both parents have careers – and a greater focus on work (long hours, travel, identity, career focused)
- > Disruption in the family is common
- > Single parents
- > Less family support (extended family of grandparents, etc...)
- > More transient
- > High stress levels – job, parenting, over-extended
- > More discretionary income – tend to be over-indulgent; material parenting
- > Willing to pay for quality (and expect it)
- > Want convenient services – daycare/extended day programs, transportation, meals, health care...
- > Critical consumers – demanding, shop around, more aware and hands-on
- > Feel guilty
- > Friend vs. parent
- > Do not have a history of private school education
- > Hounded for donations (health, religious, arts, environment, college, United Way...)

Impact of Parents' Experiences on Children

- > Alone at home more often (no parents at home after school)
- > Less sheltered
- > Thrust into independence before they have the life skills to handle it
- > Harried, often high-stressed home life
- > Left with third party care-givers or are raising themselves
- > Over-indulged and over-empowered (parents lavish money and things instead of time)
- > Greater pressure – validated for what they do rather than what they are
- > More anxious, worried and depressed
- > Greater frequency of significant life events
- > Less inhibition with adults, manipulative
- > Children – forced to be adults at home, come to school to be children
- > Lack of stability – lack of grounded, solid value system

Works Cited

- Noddings, Ned (1988) *The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education*, 2nd edition.
- Schuman, H. & Scott J. (1989) *Generations & Collective Memories*. *American Psychological Review*, 54, pp. 359-381.
- Werner, E.E., & Smith, R.S. (1992) *Overcoming the Odds: High-risk children*.

How Today's Parents Contact You (and How You Should Respond)

- > Via the Phone: Direct Calls, Answering Machines, Fax, and Voice Mail
 - Parents need to know that they and their calls are valued
 - There is no substitute for a friendly greeting – one that includes the name of school and the name of the person answering the telephone.
 - Should hear a friendly encouraging message on answering machine
 - Keep the message up to date
- > Via the Computer: Email and the Internet
 - Emails should not replace personal communication (telephone, letters, or conferences) and should never be used to communicate confidential information about individual students
- > Guidelines for responding to messages
 - A reasonable period is 24 hours
 - Review faculty handbook

Conflict Resolution

- > Know the School policies and procedures
- > Teach well
- > Do not defend the indefensible
- > Remember that your mission's first-order commitment is to your students – not to their parents
- > Good teaching displays wisdom and courage
- > Remember pure "win-win" solutions are uncommon

Important to connect and network with counselors and support staff at schools

Counselors and support staff are a critical mechanism in the life of schools. The obvious advantage of having a centralized, personal contact for each student is invaluable to the educational program, but there are many other ways in which counselors and support staff help form the backbone of a school.

- > Allow for coordination of care and education by one supervising adult
- > Afford opportunities for one-on-one general academics advising (time management skills, organizing help)
- > Teach tolerance and no-judgment
- > An adult who will serve as an advocate for a student, when necessary.
- > Provide a built-in engagement between other faculty and their students. School research has consistently shown that students will stay with a team, activity or school if they are connected to a person who brings meaning to their life.
- > Offer an opportunity for honest feedback from students and parents about the operations of the school.
- > Allow for healthy group identity.

Characteristics of the counselor-student relationship:

- > Distinguished by interdependence, shared goals, and communication.
- > Interdependence in this relationship is accomplished by attendance, participation and care. It requires commitment and involves some personal sacrifice (i.e. getting up on time in the morning)
- > Shared goals – tasks of the teacher might include the business of the school. One of the goals of the teacher is to partner with the counselor to fulfill the emotional needs of students.
- > Provide values – opportunity for discussion and role modeling.
- > Communication – essential to a student feeling like they belong. Make sure everyone participates in your time together. Be attentive to ways that the more introverted students might be involved.
- > Counselors along with teachers help satisfy a need to belong.