

# Building a Strong Relationship With Your Child's School

## Podcast Transcript

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Your child is in school about seven hours every weekday for the majority of the year. That's a significant chunk of time. The best way to ensure that you know what's going on is to build a relationship with your child's school by keeping an open line of communication with your child's teachers, principal and counselor.

Take down their email addresses and give them yours. Find out the best time to contact them by phone and what websites they may use to post class notes and assignments. The best way to actively participate in parent-teacher conferences is to write out any questions you have prior to the conference and ask for specific information about your child's progress and work. Listen and take notes during the conference.

You don't need to limit your communication to conference time. It's a good idea to check in with your child's teacher routinely, even if there are no concerns. You can always give positive feedback for what your child's teacher is doing effectively. If your child comes home from school excited about the lessons and activities, remember to thank the teacher. Compliments and positive feedback reinforce effective teaching techniques and help to build good rapport with your child's teacher.

Get involved in the classroom. If you can spare the time, volunteer to chaperone a field trip, be a guest speaker or help out with a project. Even if you have a very busy schedule, you can volunteer by providing snacks for a school party, making baked goods for a fundraiser or gathering extra supplies for the classroom. Many teachers have to purchase supplies out of their own paychecks and will be happy for any donation you can make.

If your child reports a problem in the classroom, address it right away with the teacher. Schedule a solution-focused session. Be calm and respectful and make every effort to listen to all perspectives before offering constructive suggestions. If a solution is not identified, let the teacher know that you would like to obtain the school principal's perspective before moving forward. You can respectfully maintain open communication when you actively involve the teacher in the process.

Finally, talk to the counselors if there are any major events or transitions at home like a divorce, illness or death in the family that could potentially impact your child's schoolwork. Counselors can also tell you about tutoring services and explain standardized tests. They are a major part of the team of professionals that can help your child thrive at school and at home.

For more information on important topics related to parenting, visit Military OneSource at [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil) and click on the "Parenting" page.

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