

Family Support NEWS BRIEF

A publication of

 CENTER FOR SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES



A Parent's Role in School Readiness and School Success

Back-to-school advertisements remind us to get ready for school. While they focus on student clothing and equipment for school success, parents must focus on communication skills, healthy nutrition, homework, transportation, child care arrangements, and other activities. Having their first child enter the education system can be daunting for families. A parent's understanding of the education system is critical for them to be successful advocates for their children.

“For decades, researchers have pointed to one key success factor that transcends nearly all others, such as socioeconomic status, student background or the kind of school a student attends: parental involvement.”¹

Family support professionals can be instrumental partners in this time of transition for families. It is important to acknowledge with the parent that they are their child's

first teacher and primary guide in the education system. Parents and caregivers have funds of knowledge and experience that can be tapped to support student learning. Family support programs can provide information about how school systems function, what to expect, and who to contact with questions, paving the way to build positive partnerships with the school.

Karen Mapp and Anne Henderson built on their previous family engagement work in their children's education process in their new book, “Everyone Wins!: The Evidence for Family-School Partnerships and Implications for Practice.” “For 50 years, the evidence has been steadily mounting: family-school partnerships are essential not only to student success, but also to creating schools that serve all children well. Why? Students feel supported and reassured when the most important adults in their lives are working together to help

them learn. When this process starts in early childhood, children’s developing confidence and motivation encourage their families to remain involved setting up a positive cycle that persists from cradle to career.”²

Family support programs can learn about the [Pennsylvania Department of Education \(PDE\) Early Learning Standards](#) (infancy through second grade), expose parents to the standards, and demonstrate ways parents are already engaged in promoting learning with their children. Parents as Teachers (PAT) programs can utilize the [PDE-PAT Early Learning Standards Crosswalk](#) to make explicit connections with the standards and demonstrate ways that informal play and household activities are preparation for formal school entrance.

Parents and caregivers can be engaged with their child’s school by reading with their children, assisting with homework, communicating with school staff, visiting the school, joining parent clubs and other school-sponsored groups, and more. Two helpful resources for parents, school staff, and family support staff in community programs are “[The Pennsylvania Family Engagement Birth Through College, Career and Community Ready Framework](#)” and “[The Companion Guide for Families.](#)”

Parents’ engagement with their children’s learning is the key factor in student readiness and success in school and life. Family support programs in the community and school staff can encourage parents to share their hopes and dreams for their children, and partner to achieve them.

Sources

- 1 The Annie E. Casey Foundation (2022, December 14). Parental Involvement in Your Child’s Education: The Key to Student Success, Research Shows. <https://www.aecf.org/blog/parental-involvement-is-key-to-student-success-research-shows>
- 2 Mapp, K., Henderson, A., Cuevas, S., Franco, M., & Ewert, S. (2022). Everyone Wins!: The Evidence for Family-School Partnerships and Implications for Practice. Scholastic, Inc.

Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers Courses

October 7-11, 2024

Start Time: 8:00 AM CST

Instructors: Terry Wertman, Bethany Smith

[Register for F2 October](#)

November 4-15, 2024

Skipping 11/11 for Veteran’s Day

Start Time: 8:00 AM CST

Instructors: Terry Wertman, Bethany Smith

[Register for FMI November](#)

[Register for FND November](#)





Family Support Team

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities provides training and technical assistance to Parents as Teachers providers, Children's Trust Fund grantees, and the Strengthening Families Leadership Team.

Alexia Brown

Family Support Technical Assistance Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 146

Jennifer Esposito

Family Support Data Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 161

Christine Felicetti

Family Support Coordinator
717-763-1661, ext. 104

Drewanne Kline

Family Support Project Specialist
717-763-1661, ext. 169

Rijelle Kraft

Family Support Managing Coordinator
(717) 763-1661, ext. 221

Karen Shanoski

Family Support and Community Engagement Director
(717) 763-1661, ext. 139

[Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers](#) at Center for Schools and Communities

[Pennsylvania Children's Trust Fund](#)

[Pennsylvania Strengthening Families](#)

Family Support at Center for Schools and Communities

275 Grandview Avenue
Suite 200, Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 763-1661

centerforschoolsandcommunities.org

Safe Kids Corner

Child Passenger Safety Basics

- Misuse of child safety seats is widespread. Estimates show that approximately 75-85 percent of children placed in child safety seats and booster seats are improperly restrained.
- Driver safety belt use is positively associated with child restraint use.
- The back seat is the safest place for children to ride. Estimates show that children ages 12 and under are 36 percent less likely to die in a crash if seated in the rear seat of a passenger vehicle.

Finding Child Passenger Safety Resources in Pennsylvania

- [Find a Car Seat Loaner Program at the Traffic Injury Prevention Project](#)
We recommend you search by the county you reside in for best results.
- [Find a Fitting Station for a Seat You Already Have.](#)
- [Register Your Car Seat.](#)

Right seat, Right time and used the Right way every time!

The best way to protect a child in the car is to use the right seat at the right time and the right way every time the child rides.



Recommendations to Keep Children Safe in the Vehicle

- Select a car seat based on the child's age and size; choose a seat that fits in your vehicle; and use it every time. Try to wait as long as possible based on height and weight before moving your child up to the next seat.
- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or LATCH system; and check height and weight limits on the car seat.
- To maximize safety, keep a child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Keep children in the back seat at least through age 12.
- [Register any car seat or booster seat you have](#), and don't purchase one without knowing its full history or if it's expired.

Source: Safe Kids Worldwide