

Ten Steps To a Good Parent-Teacher Conference

1. Get to know your child's teacher early in the school year, before conferences are scheduled or problems develop.
2. Plan for conferences. Talk to your child. Jot down questions. Glance over your child's textbooks and the work he brings home. Think about your child's learning style and study habits.
3. Have both parents attend the conference if possible.
4. Ask questions about your child's schoolwork, his relationship with students and teachers, tests taken or scheduled, and any class or school rules you don't understand.
5. Stay calm. Don't get angry or defensive, argue, or try to assess blame. Concentrate instead on developing a good working relationship with the teacher.
6. Share any information that might help the teacher develop a better understanding of your child.
7. Decide with the teacher what, if anything, needs to be done to help your child. Agree on plans and on any special assistance your child needs before you leave.
8. Talk with your child afterward and discuss what was decided.
9. Follow up. Implement your end of any agreement. Keep in touch with the teacher. If the plan doesn't seem to be working, or if new problems develop, call the teacher and ask for another meeting.
10. Ask for additional help if you aren't getting results. If the teacher isn't helpful or progress is not being made, talk with a supervisor. Call the principal's office to see what you should do next.