

Thinking About Relationships

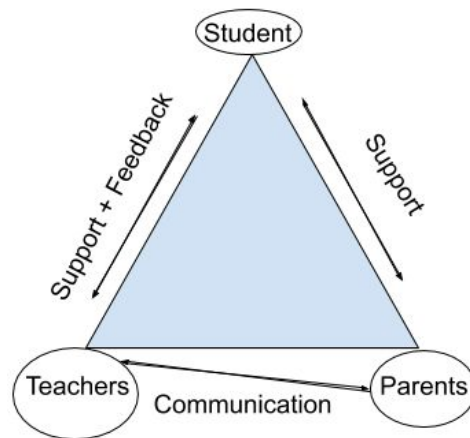
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When I was a student I never had any bad relationships with teachers, the worst I would hear each year was when my mom got home from parent-teacher interviews; “they say you have potential, but you’re lazy”. I always found it odd that I only heard these negative remarks from my mom, but never had a teacher tell me to my face, even though I probably deserved it. As a teacher, there are many relationships going on, but I feel as if the most important one is the triangle consisting of the teacher, student, and parent. I think that this relationship triangle is the most important because teachers and parents/guardians have the most influence on students, whether it be good or bad. If the triangle works properly, it has the potential to be the most fruitful relationship for student success. If a student is supported by both their teacher and parents, I feel as if it will promote more communication, support, and feedback.



("Parent-teacher conferences", 2020)

William Ayers (2019) describes parents in his novel as “potentially your second-greatest allies and partners, right next to the students themselves. Parents are your students’ first teachers, and as such, they’re your colleagues and co-teachers” (p. 173). I personally think that Ayers’ discussion of parents is important because it reiterates the connection in the triangle; teachers and

parents have a lot in common. Ayers (2019) says “if you plan to wait for parents to contact you or if you reach out to them only when their child is having some difficulty or problem, you’re not building a useful relationship”, he even recommends things like newsletters or weekly phone calls (p. 177). In reality, the majority of parents will not talk to teachers on a regular basis but I feel as if Ayers’ ideas of extending the branch to parents reflect healthy communication.

Alessandro Pepe and Loredana Addimando (2014) published a paper in the *European Journal of Psychology of Education* which states that “the involvement of parents and family in education is now more than ever recognized as vitally important for children’s well being and academic achievement” (p. 504). The paper goes on to analyze inequalities in parent-teacher relationships, and concludes that parents who came from an uneducated background were more likely to be “uninvolved and uncooperative” and “parents who were within the highly educated groups were more likely to be excessively worried about the academic achievement of their children” (Pepe and Addimando, 2014, p. 514). I think that this study is important to keep in mind because students are from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and many parents do not have the time to dedicate to a parent-teacher relationship, therefore teachers can’t approach every relationship the same.

To conclude, I believe that teachers should be learning alongside their students and attempting to create productive parent-teacher-student relationships. If teachers are able to develop relationships with strong communication, support, and feedback I feel as if it is one step closer to student success.

References

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