

# Best Practices for Orienting Families

## Orientation basics

Below are some best practices for orienting families to each new school year:

- An introduction phone call before school starts or early in the school year.
- Use a team approach: appoint a dedicated team/committee to oversee parent engagement and orientation.
- Ask families how they prefer to communicate with you. Check in with families throughout the school year to ensure the forms of communication are effective and user-friendly.
- Obtain input from parents on how they would like to be involved.
- Provide opportunities for two-way communication. Allow families the opportunity to share their culture, knowledge and family practice throughout the school year.
- Provide a variety of activities and volunteer opportunities for families to join. Learn from families about ways to support their children. Invite families into the classroom, host learning activities during non-school hours or invite parents to share their knowledge during a particular lesson/unit.
- In orienting families, include information on school policies, procedures and contact information for a variety of support roles.
- Encourage school staff to personally answer questions families might have.

## Building relationships with each family

Always try to make your first contact with parents/guardians a positive one!

Working hard to carve out time to connect with the family before school starts in order to introduce yourself and learn more about their child is an important step in building relationships. If you weren't able to connect with the family before school be sure to find time to call or email the family with a positive story or observation about their child.

The following page has questions that will open the door to learning more about your students and their families.



For more information and ideas look at the [Family Inventory Tool](#)

# Child Questionnaire: For Parents

---

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

What are some of your child's strengths?

---

---

Who are the important people in your child's life?

---

---

What are your hopes for your child this school year?

---

---

How would you like me to be in touch with you this year?

---

---

What are your concerns for your child?

---

---

What area do you hope your child grows the most in this year?

---

---

Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your child?

---

---