



10 TIPS FOR HIGHLY INVOLVED

FAMILIES

# THE RESEARCH

**FACT:** Involved families = higher achievement - regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic-racial background or parent educational level

*The more extensive the involvement -  
the higher the student achievement*

**CRUCIAL:** Family involvement is the most accurate predictor of student school achievement!! It is the family's responsiveness to the child's educational needs that makes the most bang in results & outcomes.

**WHAT THIS MEANS:** If you look honestly at this data - then you realize a startling fact. The most important access to making a difference in a student's educational life - is with the family.

The most powerful doorway for this impact is in the beginning - the early childhood years. In this ebook - I am going to share some dynamic ways to capture family involvement right at the start of school!

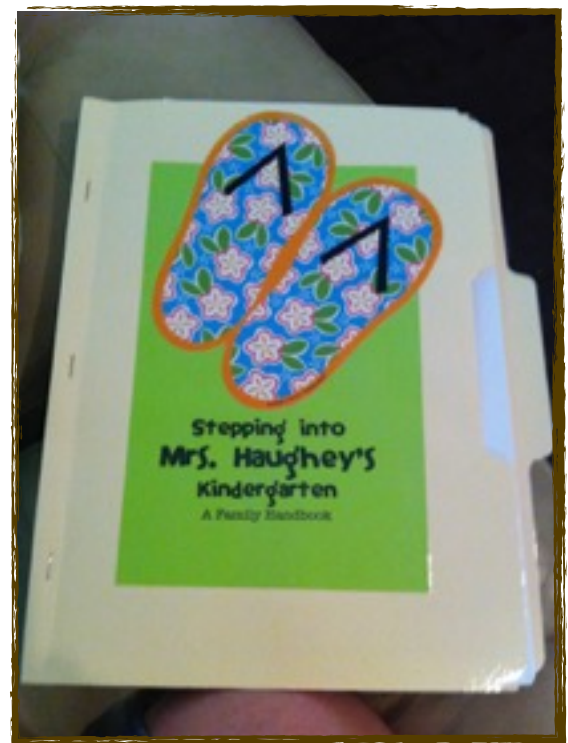
# TIP #1

**FACT:** *Families need to feel honored to be involved.*

**ACTION STEP:** Develop systems of connection that have families feel respected.

**TIP:** Provide two important documents at the beginning of the year:

- **Family Handbook/Packet -**  
Addresses the need to know what to expect in the running of the classroom. This includes how you recognize birthdays, how you discipline, etc.
- **Curriculum Guide -** Addresses “What is my child learning?”



# TIP #2

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Offer gestures of kindness.

**TIP:** Send a Post Card welcoming the family.

This is perhaps the easiest of the these ideas. A simple post card welcoming the family to school can provide a massive dose of "*you belong here.*"

# TIP #3

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Show you are concerned and invested.

**TIP:** Make a “Checking in” call a few weeks into the school year.

This easy but highly effective in building family connections. Make a simple script of what you want to say. Call each family and share! I start the conversation with: *I am calling to check on how school is going and if you have any questions or concerns.* I share something positive about their child that I have observed.

I guide the conversation based on the parent's concerns. My main goal in this call to be there as a team player - to begin that feeling of "you and I are in this together" for the good of your child.

**This step is probably one of the most powerful steps I do each year. The impact is amazing.**

# TIP #4

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Let families know you are accessible.

**TIP:** Provide a business card magnet with your contact information.

I think this is such a wonderful gesture. It is a gesture of respect for families. It says - "*here is my contact information and how to reach me. I am available.*" You have to decide whether you are willing to share your cell number. I do but I think it an individual choice. I am also willing to communicate by text.



I just put it inside the front of their handbook. I can not begin to tell you how many families have mentioned this as so useful.

# TIP #5

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Have families express their hopes and dreams for their child.

**TIP:** Create a Hopes & Dreams Weaving.

Families write their hopes and dreams for their child and weave in the loom.



# TIP #6

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Let families know you are accessible.

**TIP:** Provide a way for families to communicate with you on a daily basis with a communication log. (See sample on next page)

I have a family communication log that has a short overview of my learning goals (taken directly from my curriculum guide - created in Curriculum Blueprint E-course).

It also holds my email address and a daily overview of homework (required by my school at the time).

I use my communication log to primarily deliver notes about the children. I choose three students a day to write in their log. (In my classroom - there is no way to do more!)

It is a wonderful affirmation - your child belongs here and is cared for deeply.



MRS. HAUGHEY'S  
**Detective Report**  
*August 17-24*

**THEME:** My Home

**MAIN STORY:** The Three Pigs

**FOCUS SHAPE:** Circle (Circle Hunts, Walking in Circles, Circle Scarf dancing. . . ) Artist Study work with Kandisky's Circles!

**LETTER/NUMBER AWARENESS:** How many letters are in my name? How many people in my family? How many doors and windows in my home?

**COUNTING GROUPS:** 3

**FAMILY PROJECT:** Home Rubbing

DAY	TEACHER NOTES	FAMILY Signature & Comments
<b>Monday</b> Home Rubbing Family Mission goes home.		
<b>Tuesday</b> Find 3 Family Clue goes home. LIBRARY TODAY!!		
<b>Wednesday</b> How Many Doors? Investigation goes home.		
<b>Thursday</b> Show-n-Share Tomorrow! Bring something that is a circle.		
<b>Friday</b> Family Reflection goes home. Due Monday.		

PLEASE PACK A WATER BOTTLE FOR YOUR CHILD TO USE IN CLASS!

# TIP #7

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Learn parent (guardian) names.

**TIP:** Make a deck of index card cheat sheets!

Put the child's name and photo on the front of the card with parent names in the corners.

I put a D on the card if the parents are divorced.

I put a NF if no father is involved and NM if no mother is involved.

**Use the back of the index card to:**

- make notes about the family and things they tell you about their child or to record parent conversations - the dates and short notes

# TIP #8

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Let the children share their families.

**TIP:** Create a FAMILY INTERVIEW bag!

FAMILY INTERVIEW BAG is a way we find out about each other. During the first month of school, each child is given an opportunity to take the bag home. The bag is packed with:

- a “Get the Scoop” reporting sheet which has lots of questions about the family
- a list of show and share ideas such as a family photo, favorite family books, etc.
- a small photo album for the family to add their family photo
- and a plastic microphone for the family to use as they gather their information. The child uses this microphone to share about his/her family at school.

# TIP #9

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Make families a visible part of the classroom.

**TIP:** Create a family tree!

I find an old tree branch that I will plaster into a bucket. I send home simple instructions for each family to decorate and prepare a family photo to hang from our family tree. I restrict the size to 4 x 5 inches.



# TIP #10

**TEACHING TRUTH:** *In the beginning of the year - you are building safety, trust and respect with the families.*

**ACTION STEP:** Invite families into the classroom process.

**TIP:** Provide a wide variety of volunteer opportunities.

I like to offer volunteer opportunities for inside and outside the classroom. I have given them fun names as well. Not all families can volunteer in the classroom - there are lots of ways to use their help!

Learning Station Helpers

Cutting/Assembling Angels

Book Makers

Sewing Angels

Seasonal Craft Table Hosts

Cooking Helpers

Scholastic Order Helper

Family Work Days

Mystery Readers



# Final Notes:

Family involvement is the single most powerful tool you have to make a difference in a child's education life.

If you would like to learn my complete Family Involvement System - I have a e-course called Dynamic Family Involvement.

In this course I take you through the entire year and all the systems I use to keep families highly engaged!

Find out more information at <http://fairydustteaching.com/>