



Effective Ways to Partner with Teachers

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Banana Moments

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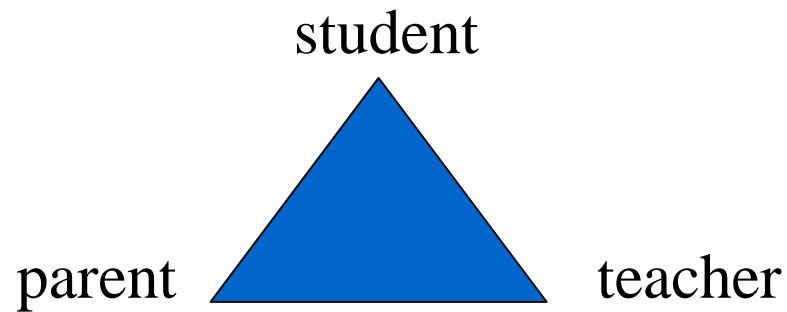
Introduction

About Banana Moments

www.bananamoments.com

Objective

Strengthen the functional relationship between



Relationships & Discipline

Why this workshop?

A generation ago:

- Authority was more ascribed to roles and titles
- Children complied with classroom conduct expectations.

“Used to be the majority were ‘good citizens’ in the classroom. Today, classrooms are filled with more bad apples and many more swing voters” ...anonymous teacher of 25 years



Relationships & Discipline

“Most kids [are] light years ahead of those in the fifties in terms of how much they know and what they can do...[And] for whatever reasons, from exposure to mass media to distraction by family problems, today kids do not always pay attention as well as their grandparents did. Certainly they are not always as compliant as their grandparents were in classrooms of yesteryear..” Time to Teach, Center for Teacher Effectiveness (CTE), Hayden Lake, ID, 2007.



Learning Environment Today

- Authority is more earned than ascribed
- Accommodation is emerging as a new norm
- Media – big influencer
- Instant gratification
- Fear of failure
- Global Society



Blind Spots

- “Blind spots” are the aspects of our children’s lives that we cannot see:
 - We are not present 24X7; we don’t see all aspects of our children and how they behave
 - the popular culture, including technology, cultivate and inspire ideas and behavior that reflect “no limits”
 - All the while we parents may be operating on *beliefs*, *assumptions* and *anxieties* that engage our blind spots rather than the pursuit of truth

Counting on Blind Spots

Belief - Students know how to learn.

Not necessarily.

Socialization of our youth has dramatically changed since we were in school. Virtues are not widely enforced like they once were (honesty, integrity, compassion, kindness, good citizenship)

Influences of popular culture...

- Growing Up Gotti
- MTV – Parental Control
- Bart Simpson
- That 70's Show



Leading with Blind Spots

Assumptions

When your child is not doing as well as you expect...

“Dear Granite Bay Teacher - Obviously, our student is not taking his education seriously. Can you offer suggestions or insights?”

“Dear Granite Bay Teacher – our student has always done well in school. We want a conference immediately to figure out what’s wrong.”



Perpetuating Blind Spots

Anxieties

What happens when we think the teacher is being unfair or unreasonable to our own child?

Impulse response:

Criticizing the teacher [in front of the student] = license to disrespect

Result: a student who believes the teacher is not legitimate hinders learning.

The “impulse response” will cause the teacher to become defensive and the student is not expected to help make the relationship work.



Overcoming Blind Spots

First Assume Good Intent

This approach will allow the teacher to feel supported and will be better able to respond to your concern.

1. Always first assume good intent. And then,
2. Listen to the teacher's point of view and experience with your child (whether or not you like or believe what you hear)
3. Repeat what you heard the teacher say – so that he knows you were listening. And then,
4. Express your concern and ask for his help.



Exercise 1: Identifying Blind Spots

Can you think of some examples of blind spots that you may have experienced or witnessed with other parents?

How did they come to exist?

What made blind spots hard to see?



Rules of Engagement for the Parent

Goals

1. Maintain your dignity.
2. Feel competent as a parent.
3. Hold your child accountable and communicate that accountability in a manner that demonstrates that your actions support your child.
4. Establish (or reaffirm) a collaborative relationship with the school.

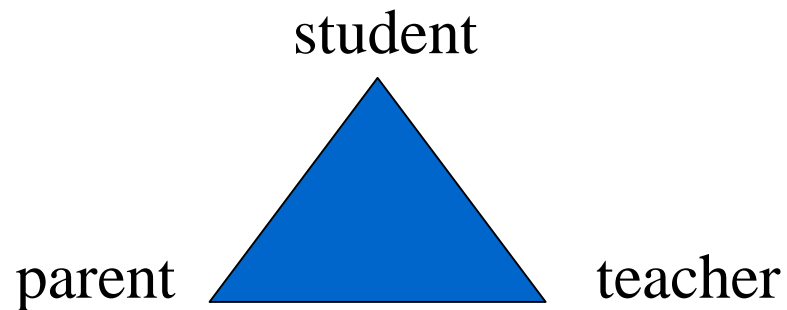
(Source: Rosalind Wiseman, Queen Bee Moms & Kingpin Dads, 2006, Crown Publishers, pp.180-181)



Partnership: Caring and Learning

Role of the Parent

- Setting expectations for the student
(classroom conduct as well as study habits)
- Enforcing consequences for student decisions
and actions
- Supporting the teacher and the student around
common ground



Exercise 2: Experiences

- What are some examples of expectations and consequences for your student?
- Do you have an example of when you were able to solve a problem with your student working with the teacher?
- Do you have an example of when you were not able to address a concern with a teacher?
- In each example, how would you describe your role? The student's role? The teacher's role?



Summary of Teacher Survey

Parent Involvement with the Student

- Don't assume that because they look mature they are. Most teenagers need guidance all through their high school years.
- Look over student work when students are having troubles.
- Enforce consequences for negative behavior & celebrate good behavior/successes.
- Healthy questioning of your child's judgment is a good thing.
- Encourage student to get extra help at the first sign of trouble.



Establish a United Front with Teachers

- **Limit access to electronic equipment at home.**
- **Make sure that you can receive grade updates via Aries Homelink.**
- **Support the rule of no use of cell phones during class.**
- **Email teachers early and ask for contact and show support.**
- **Hold the student more accountable – don't “rescue” student when the student is at fault.**
- **If there is a problem, please contact teacher first and try to work it out before going to the principal or vice principal.**



Exercise 3: Taking Stock

- Based upon the content of this workshop, has your perspective about the relationship between you, your student and the teacher changed?
- What if anything, will you do differently in the future?
- What has been reaffirmed for you as the parent?



Feedback For Teachers

- Based upon your experiences and the content of this workshop, what do you believe parents need from teachers?
- How can teachers strengthen their relationships with parents to benefit the students?



Related Publications

- *Parent Factor, “What Teachers Need from Parents”, August 2008, Granite Bay View.*
- *August 2007, Granite Bay View, “How Parents Can Help Children Succeed” (Back to school)*
- *Banana Moments, Summer 2008, Back to School (Part I): Virtues and Discipline*
- *Banana Moments, Fall 2008, Back to School (Part 2): How Parents Help Children Succeed*
- *Banana Moments, Spring 2008, ADD/ADHD: Medicate the Disorder, not the Behavior*

