

TRI-STATE WEBINAR SERIES

Working with Students and Parents From Poverty

Presented by: Anna Huynh



Tri State Webinar Series 2015-2016

Tri-State Autism Spectrum Disorder Webinar Series



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Anna Huynh

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Learner Objectives

- Be more inviting and less intimidating.
- Communicating with Families.
- Be Involved in the Community.
- Be a PART.

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Outcomes

The purpose of this webinar is to expand our thinking and introduce proactive approaches to serving children and families from poverty in a way that builds connections in and out of school.

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#1 Be More Inviting and Less Intimidating

- Take a moment to reflect on your school experience growing up.
 - How did you get to school?
 - Who met with your teachers for parent/teacher conferences?
 - How often did you get a phone call home from the teacher?
 - How often did your parents come into school?

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- Home-school connection for our students from poverty...
 - Describe parental involvement or lack thereof?
 - What could be the reasoning behind this?
 - How many of these parents may have had a negative school experience?
 - In what ways would that create a present-day disconnect for their own children?

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- What are some other potential factors that could impact the home-school relationship?
 - Work schedule
 - Multiple children
 - Lacking support systems for childcare
 - Language Barriers
 - Unfamiliarity of the school building and/or how to gain access and navigate through the building
 - Unspoken cues or norms of the school building that may cause parents to feel as though they don't belong

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Possible Solutions

- Welcome package with a DVD
 - Brief tour of the school
 - Protocol for entering/navigating the building.
 - Feature key staff members
- Host family events
- Create opportunities for families to interact with teachers and staff for nonacademic reasons.

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Polling Question

- According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, what income amount is considered the current Federal Poverty Threshold for a family of four?
 - A. \$23,550
 - B. \$28,000
 - C. \$32,775
 - D. \$35,000

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#2 Communicating with Families

- Parent contacts you made in terms of percentages:
 - Disciplinary reasons?
 - Negative academic reasons?
 - Positive reasons?
 - Other reasons?

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#2 Communicating with Families

- Parent contacts you made in terms of percentages:
 - **Disciplinary reasons?**
 - **Negative academic reasons?**
 - Positive reasons?
 - Other reasons?

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Find Positive Reasons to Communicate!

- Earned a good grade
- Shared ideas during a discussion
- Showed positive leadership,
- Helped another student
- Worked well in their small group
- Volunteered to share in front of the class.

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Modes of Communication

- Which method of communication works best for your parents?
- Start ongoing communication as soon as possible

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Special Education Teacher Dilemma

- Students were telling parents that they had no homework
- As a result students would fail
- Middle class parents would contact me
- Parents from poverty usually would not
- Something had to be done!

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- Weekly sent snapshots through text message to parents

- Rubrics
- Assignments
- Grades
- Calendars
- Test scores
- Projects



- Parents felt 'in the loop'

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- Established borders and expectations for communication



- Parents were more receptive and proactive

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Polling Question

- Teachers who contact home *only* for disciplinary reasons are able to build strong relationships with families.
 - True
 - False

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#3 Be Involved

- Reflect on the following questions:
 - In what ways are you involved in your own community?
 - How has this involvement impacted the relationships you have?
- We benefit from taking intentional steps towards being present, active, and involved in our student's communities

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What is the goal of being involved in your students' community?

**The goal is to be seen,
build relationships, and
bridge the gap
between home and school**

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Results of Being Involved

- The world of school and home begin to merge.
- You will meet and have 'everyday' conversations with parents and families,
- Strengths their trust towards you and their willingness to join the TEAM.
- More likely to cross paths with harder-to-reach parents.

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Polling Question

Which of the following are **not** ways to get involved in the community surrounding your school?

- A. Parent/Teacher Conferences
- B. Attending sporting events or performances
- C. Driving through the community
- D. Supporting local businesses and keeping them informed about upcoming school events

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#4 Be a PART

- Tap into student's unique qualities and talents as a means of being a part of your classroom and school.
- School should be the most stable, structured, predictable, safe part of their day.

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We want every student to know
they are valued and they are needed.

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Jobs/Roles



Images from Scholastic

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Team Building Activities

- Solidify learning environment conducive to difference, learning, and working together.



Images from Scholastic

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Curricular opportunities

- Students can relate and share their personal experience



Image from www.nbc29.com

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Non-academic opportunities



Lunch Bunch



STEM Club

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The Results of Student Belonging

- Students gain:
 - Initiative
 - Motivation
 - Drive
 - Intrinsically striving to succeed
- The feeling of belonging in your classroom may be the biggest factor in helping students to finish school and break the poverty cycle

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Polling Question

According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, approximately 1 out of every ___ children in the United States is growing up in poverty.

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Polling Question Answers

1. A. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, \$23,550 is considered the current Federal Poverty Threshold for a family of four?
2. False: Teachers who contact home *only* for disciplinary reasons will not build strong relationships with families.
3. A. Parent/Teacher Conferences Is not one of the ways to get involved in the community surrounding your school
4. 5. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty, approximately 1 out of every 5 children in the United States is growing up in poverty.