

Family Education Strategy Guide

Directions: Use this strategy guide to discover new ideas for how you can engage your families by educating them about their child, school, and the world around them.

Strategy 1: Teacher Tips

As a teacher, you can make it a point to include “Teacher Tips” in your weekly communications, whether it be via email, paper newsletter, or website update. Families are often very receptive to information in small, manageable chunks. Here are some ideas to get you started!

Table Talk Topics	Suggest a talking point for family dinners or car rides. You can provide specific questions the family can ask their child about particular content that was learned that week that are designed to really get them talking.
Tech Tip of the Week	Tech Tips can include suggested online resources or apps that can reinforce a skill being taught at school or even be a suggestion for monitoring or limiting gaming and social media.
Building Independence	Each week, the teacher can offer a suggestion for something a child can do at home that will build their independence such as tying their shoes and making their bed for the very young ones, to setting the table and unloading the dishwasher for slightly older kids, to doing their own laundry and helping to care for the yard for middle school and high school students. Sometimes, families are not fully aware of what their child is capable of!
Academic Expectations / Norms	Each week, the teacher can share samples of typical work, whether it be writing, math, a science journal, etc. This will give families an idea of what is typical and how their own child is doing in comparison.

Strategy 2: Family Nights

Your school can host various themed family nights in which teachers and staff on your campus share their expertise to educate families through purposeful activities.

Some examples include:

Event	Purpose
Family Fitness Night	Hosted by coaches or physical education teachers, this could be an evening where families rotate to different stations to learn fun activities to do together to encourage regular exercise and healthy eating habits.
Curriculum Night / Back to School Night	Most schools host some type of “Open House” at the beginning of a new school year. Let this be an opportunity to teach families about the content their students will be learning throughout the year, as well as ways they can support learning at home. Grade level teachers can use this as an opportunity to share detailed information about what is developmentally appropriate for their particular grade level, both academically and behaviorally, as well as make suggestions for typical responsibilities students are capable of at home.
Technology Night	Have your school or district instructional technology staff member present to families about internet safety, including the importance of limiting and monitoring social media presence and online gaming.
Transition Nights	Schools can host informational evenings for families with students transitioning from elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to college. They can share common expectations, how things will change, and how families can encourage their student’s independence through the next level.

Strategy 3: Community Guest Speakers

Teachers and administrators are not always the “expert”! For little to no cost, you can invite members from your community to share important information with your families. See the table below for several ideas.

Community Member	Potential Topics
Police Officer	Stranger Danger, after school safety (walking home, staying home alone), internet safety, bike riding safety, etc.
Firefighters	Home fire safety, establishing a safety plan
Doctor	Physical child development (what to expect at each age), importance of vaccinations and regular well-checks or physicals
Dentist	Importance of oral hygiene and regular dental exams
School Counselor / Psychologist or Psychiatrist	Warning signs of stress, anxiety, or depression
Nutritionist	Healthy meal planning, kid-friendly recipes

Strategy 4: Professional Guest Speakers

If the school budget allows, there are a plethora of professional speakers who can deliver engaging and informational programs for families. Often schools have discretionary spending where, with a strong proposal, they can allocate funds to important school functions. A basic Google search for “(topic) speaker” should yield great results.

Dangers / Risks / Signs of Dating Abuse	Personal Student Safety (Latchkey Kids)
Various Age-Appropriate Health Issues	Stranger Danger
Driving Safety	Financial Planning for College
Social Media / Digital Footprint / Internet Safety	Anti-Bullying
Safety in the Home	Importance of Self-Care
Substance Abuse	Reducing Anxiety