

Outreach Tip #1: Making Contact with Parents about Early Literacy Events

You should have two goals in mind when making contact with parents. One goal is to encourage parents to attend early literacy events. Another goal is to try and develop sustainable relationships with parents. Achieving this goal will result in parents attending more events.

Developing sustainable relationships with parents means that they will begin to see you as a source of information, in their community, about parenting events.

But, relationships take time to build. This means that talking to parents once may not get you the results you hoped for, which is that parents attend early literacy events.

Build time in your schedule to contact parents more than once. In fact, you should make at least three contacts with parents.

Below are some tips about what to talk to parents about, during each contact, when inviting them to events. By following these tips you are also on your way to building sustainable relationships with parents.

1st Contact:

Explain to the parent:

- ❖ What the event is
- ❖ Where it is located
- ❖ When it is, i.e. the date of the event
- ❖ What time it is being held
- ❖ Who can come to the event, explain if it is for parents only or for both parents and children
- ❖ Why the event is important, including what parents will learn
- ❖ How families will receive free stuff!

Most importantly during this first contact, get a telephone number, and ask the parent, politely, if it's all right for you to call them to remind them about the event.

2nd Contact:

- ❖ Remind the parent of the event
- ❖ Review the information you shared with them during the first contact
- ❖ **Get a commitment. You want to hear the words "I will be there."**

3rd Contact:

- ❖ If you see the parent at the event make sure to thank them for coming and let them know that you're excited and pleased to see them there.
- ❖ If the parent did not come to the event make sure you contact them to let them know what a great and interesting time they missed out on. Also, let the parent know that you'll make sure to keep them informed about future fun events.