

PARENTAL GUIDE TO VISION MAKING

INTRODUCTION

It is important to establish “baseline” indications of your child’s performance in order to find out what, if anything, you and/or your child would like to improve. There are no right answers. Each of us is our own person and we come from different cultures and backgrounds. Using these guidelines, we would like you to answer the following questions. It is not necessary that you write out your responses. But if you have talked to your child before the meeting about these things, you will be able to give us useful information. Don’t be overly concerned if you and your child have different views; what is important is to identify these points not debate them. So if your child sees things better or worse than you do, simply note this in the meeting.

Attendance: Your child, like the rest of us, attends to that which is of interest. While attendance at school and class can be rated by teachers, we need you to identify his/her attendance at meals and other family functions; attendance to tasks such as chores & homework; hobbies and athletic events. When thinking about measurement of attendance you might think of four ranges, all approximate: 0 to 25% of the time in attendance; 25% to 50%; 50% to 75%; or 75% to 100%.

Relations: your child has relations with people in the family, school and community. It is the family and community relations where we will need your input. We are interested in who, what, when, where and why your child has relationships. Think about adults who have and do not have authority over your child [e.g., neighbor versus employer; or older sibling versus parent] and whether the relationships differ. Relations with other children should indicate not only the type of child, but also how many relationships there are and the importance of the relationships. Consider casual friends, close friend, or romantic interests. Relations with younger children may also give some information about your child’s methods of relationship.

Appraisals: Most of us constantly compare ourselves with other people to determine how we are doing. Your child probably has areas where s/he feels confident and productive and other areas where s/he doesn’t. Discuss with your child how s/he rates him/herself in areas such as math, reading, making friends, etc. and individual environments. Some children feels quite inadequate doing math at school, but are pretty good at figuring out baseball averages. Discuss who the child considers better than themselves and worse than themselves and in what areas. Discuss, whether your child believes s/he can improve in those areas where s/he feels inadequate; and whether s/he would like to.

Roles: Each of us plays a lot of different roles in life: you are probably a parent, spouse, worker, friend, etc. and the same kinds of roles exists for your child. We

are particularly interested in whether your child has **social** roles such as being a good friend or joins in sports or recreational activities; **helping** roles such as doing chores or helping others through volunteer work or informally; **productive** roles such as working, volunteering on a regular basis or having regular chores on which you rely. Other roles such as “joker”, “bully”, “victim”, “friend”, etc may be more difficult to agree to since the names define the perception. However, if you or your child feel that they are appropriate, please let us know. One way to approach the subject of roles is to talk about family chores, meals, discussions; community social, athletic, recreational, employment or other interests.

Natural Supports: Finally, we are interested in who you and your child see as people who provide natural support. This may be a neighbor, extended family member, peer, recreational leader, teacher, crossing guard, etc. The important idea is that your child feels “good” about the relationship, or you feel that this is a person who your child would relate to well if the opportunity existed. You should list as many of these people as possible.

CONCLUSION

All children and families have hopes and dreams for the future. It may be hard to think about the future when things are not going the way you would like. But failure to do so may mean that someone else will make decisions about what future is best for you and/or your child. The most important information for you and your child to share is your “vision” of the future. What would you like to see five and even ten years down the road. This may include the type of friends, the job, the home life, or other things. The job of the professionals in the Home, School & Community Council is to find ways to help these dreams to become a reality. Do not be concerned if your child dreams of being an astronaut and is failing school. S/he still needs to have a chance to understand what is required to meet that goal and to make his/her own decision whether the goal is worth the effort. Even if it is, these goals will be changed over time for lots of different reasons. Only by identifying a *realistic ideal* can we know whether we can get the support of the child for change. Professionals need to support the goals that you and your child identify whenever possible. The task of discussing these guidelines should help you both identify some areas which you would like to see changed. But it would also be helpful to have a goal for which we all can reach.