



Parents' "Rights"

Information taken from Family Ties newsletter, Spring, 1995, Vol.9 (1)

A Parents' Bill of Rights

Parents do have legal rights--and they are very important, but perhaps even more important are the rights which are not legally defined.

The Right to Feel.

Everyone has the right to his or her own negative feelings (anger, disappointment, etc) as well as positive feelings (pride, excitement). Their emotions are valid and normal. Only by acknowledging their feelings can parents work through them and gain more positive attitudes.

The Right to Be Informed.

Although parents are legally entitled to all of the information that is gathered by professionals, they are required to request this information.

The Right to Be Empowered.

Many parents feel inadequate when dealing with professionals in the medical, mental health, or educational fields. They have a right to feel that they are equally essential to their child's well being.

The Right to Be Accepted.

How parents raise their children has much to do with their own beliefs on child-rearing, culture, and spirituality. Each family has a right to be a unique entity, and each family member has a right to be accepted as an individual.

The Right to Take Care of Themselves.

Most parents feel overwhelmed at times. When stress levels are high and time is short, one of the first things that happens is that parents stop taking care of themselves. They need to get enough sleep, eat regular meals, and take time for their other relationships.

The Right to Gather with other Parents.

From other parents you can gain insight, invaluable information, and resources. Parent support groups provide hope and encouragement to parents and their families.

For more information contact:



The Center for Parent Involvement (FCPI) was funded by the U.S. Department of Education; Goals 2000, Educate America Act from 1994-1999. Guided by an advisory board of parents and professionals, the FCPI's goal was to tap the power of parents.

The FCPI gathered information on parent needs, coordinated the information, and created a series of resources organized by theme, including fact sheets for parents and professionals, "Beyond the Basics" resources, and resource identification lists. Many of the resources have been translated into Spanish language versions, and every effort has been made to preserve the meaning and flavor of the original English documents. This series of materials provides a wealth of current information for both parents and providers; the complete set of resources can be obtained in PDF format on the Department of Child and Family Studies Website at www.fmhi.usf.edu/cfs/dares/fcpi. The staff of the FCPI are hopeful that their work will continue to help children get ready to learn for many years to come.

The series' themes include:

- Family Empowerment
- Parent Involvement
- Parenting Support
- School Readiness
- Violence in the Lives of Children
- Transition to Kindergarten

The Center was one component of a project led by Hillsborough County Center of Excellence in collaboration with the Department of Child & Family Studies at USF's de la Parte Institute and the Florida Children's Forum. Other project partners include HIPPIY (Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters), Hillsborough County Head Start and Hillsborough County Even Start. For more information about these projects, call 813.974.4612.

Family Empowerment Series, Parent Tip Sheets, #4: Transition: Parents' "Rights"

© 1999, Tampa, Florida

This is a publication of the Florida Center for Parent Involvement which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The opinions contained in this publication are those of the grantee and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Education. All or portions of this work may be reproduced providing the Florida Center for Parent Involvement, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, University of South Florida is properly credited on all reproductions.

Events, activities, programs and facilities of the University of South Florida are available to all without regard to race, color, marital status, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, Vietnam or disabled veteran status as provided by law and in accordance with the University's respect for personal dignity.

**University of
South Florida**
USF