



Getting Your Voice Heard In the Public Schools

As a parent, one of your greatest responsibilities is to make sure that your child receives an appropriate educational experience.

When you are not satisfied with the performance of the school system, you need to make your voice heard, but how?

Identify your Concerns

*Talk to a friend, write them down, say them into a tape recorder. Just be able to say exactly what it is you are concerned about. Descriptions of specific incidents with dates and times are helpful.

*Think about how you want the problem resolved.

Talk to the Teacher

*Stop by, leave a note, make a call to set up a convenient time to talk.

*If the concerns are not resolved, or if your teacher is not cooperative, then talk to the principal.

Talk to the Principal

*Stop by, leave a note, make a call to set up a convenient time to talk.

*Discuss the problems in dealing with the teacher that led you to this meeting. Explain your concerns using specific descriptions when possible.

*Make your suggestion for a solution and ask for others.

*Consider the solutions. Take extra time and don't feel pressured to make a decision on the spot.

Talk to Other Parents

*Other parents may have the same concerns. Work together to get your voice heard.

Write a Letter to Your School Board

If you are not satisfied with the solutions offered by your principal, write a letter to the local school board. Your school's office has the address, or you can find the phone number in the telephone book.

Sample letter on back of sheet

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, #9: Transition: Getting Your Voice Heard in Public Schools

© 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**