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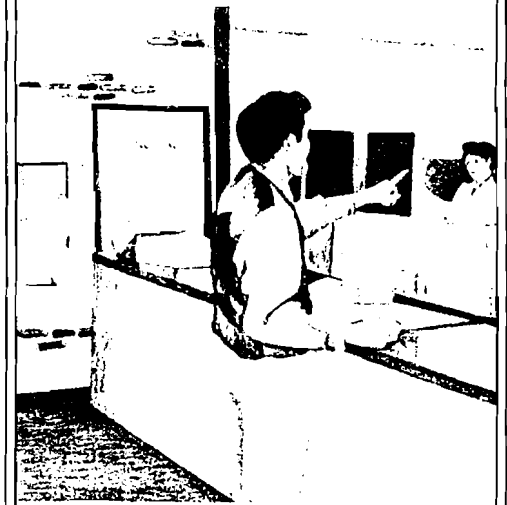
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**PARENTS AND SCHOOLS:
GETTING INVOLVED,
KNOWING OUR RIGHTS,
ASSUMING
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Center for Literacy

**University of Illinois
at Chicago**

You are your children's first and most important teacher. The more contact you make with the school and staff, the more you will know how to help your children succeed. The more you are involved in your children's learning, the better they will do in school.

-How can I get involved?

GETTING INFORMATION

You have a right to ask for and receive information.

- Ask about school requirements regarding your children's health. For example, find out when the children need vaccinations or health exams. Inform the school nurse about any medication that your children need to take during school hours.
- Learn what to do when your children miss school. Ask for your children's homework so they do not get behind. There are limits to how many days a child can miss school.
- Learn the kind of behavior and manners that the teacher wants in the classroom. Schools have general rules about behavior in the lunchroom, library, restrooms, playground and hallways. Find out how the school disciplines children when rules are broken.
- Get a school calendar at the beginning of the year. The calendar will inform you when there is no school, when there are parent-teacher conferences days, and when there are vacation days. PTA meetings and other special events.

KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS

As a parent of students in a school, you may:

- Review your children's school record if you have questions about his/her placement in a class or performance.
- Talk to the principal, social worker, or teacher if you feel the information about your child is wrong, or if it invades your privacy.
- Visit the school and your children's classrooms. You must set up the visit with the school office and teacher first.
- Ask the teacher about what your children are learning. Review your children's work with the teacher to understand what they are doing.
- Talk to your children's teachers about how your children are doing in school. The teacher or parent may request a parent-teacher conference. You may request a translator or bring your own.
- Participate in decisions about your children being changed to another grade, held back in grade, or put in a special classroom. Ask questions. Do not sign any forms unless you are satisfied with explanations or answers.
- Get help for a child that is not doing well. Ask about support programs such as homework centers or after-school programs.
- Organize and be part of parent groups or programs such as the PTA, bilingual committee, English classes.

• Attend and speak at school board meetings on issues that are relevant to you, your family and your children's education.

ASSUMING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

There are other things that you can do to help your children succeed in school.

- Make sure your children are rested, clean, and well-fed when they go to school.
- Provide a well-lighted area at home where your children can do homework or read and write.
- Make sure your children attend school regularly. Encourage your children to do well in school and praise them when they do.
- Get involved in your children's education. Read with them. Know what your children are learning at school and whether they are able to do their work.
- Answer notes, messages, or phone calls from the school.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Take advantage of community opportunities and events that help learning for the entire family.