

From our March, 2016 Newsletter



## **SPRING CHECK-IN WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER**

Spring is the longest stretch of the school year without breaks. If you are getting the feeling that you still aren't seeing a clear picture of how your child is faring in their current grade, it is a good time to do a little check in with the teacher (and specialists if your child is getting pulled out for any part of the day). This is not the 10 minute Parent Teacher Conference. This is a parent initiated, non-obligatory, non-confrontational conversation.

If your teacher is open to email communication, a friendly "check-in" to see if there is anything that you might want to be aware of is a good way to start.

Depending on the teacher you may get an "everything's great!" reply or, you may get a "maybe we should set some time to talk" response. If you get no response, you can request a meeting at the teacher's convenience, just to connect and make sure all bases are covered.

By this point in the school year, your child's teacher should be fully aware of your child's strengths and weaknesses. If you can become part of the team, you may be able to help your child if social interactions are weak, an area of academics need to be tackled, organizational skills are needing help, pace needs adjustment or if your child is needing to be encouraged to expand learning through your enrichment at home.

For example, if your child isn't having fun during recess, you may be able to expand play dates with friends from school with suggestions for playmates from the teacher. If your child is having trouble fitting in at lunch or recess, you may be able to role play and help your child practice ideas of how to use these unstructured times in the day where they may be struggling. It may help your child to know that you and the teacher are communicating with shared understanding. Some teachers even like having the student present for these conversations.

If you have concerns about your child's physical development and motor control, you may want to check in with the gym teacher, art and music teacher, or question

things like fine motor skills as they affect classroom performance.

It is better to nip issues in the bud while you still have several months to brainstorm with the current teacher. If your child is receiving private therapies, it is also a good time to give the teacher permission to speak with your therapists to enable the best possible school experiences with an eye from other perspectives: OT, PT, speech, psychologists, or learning specialists. Strategies that are working outside of school can often be added to the school day if the teacher is aware of them.

Hopefully, by you making the inquiry, a teacher who is reluctant to alarm you or bring things to your attention will feel a door opening for enhanced communication and teamwork. All for the good of your child!!!!

We love to talk to teachers and do school visits if it is agreed to by all. Often seeing is "eye-opening", and we can help bridge communication.