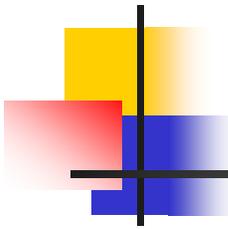


Using the Ladder of Support

To Help All Children Achieve





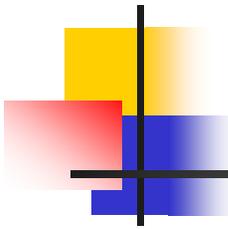
Objectives

Participants will learn:

- About the REACh Initiative
(Responsive Education for All Children)
- The “Ladder of Support”
- Strategies for families and schools to communicate and solve problems

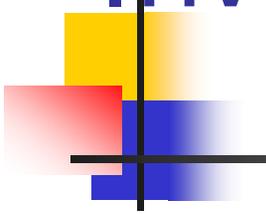
Family Involvement:

what does the research say?

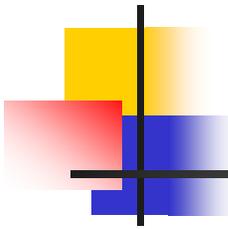


- **Parents** vary in how much they are involved
- **Parents** are most concerned about their children's success in school
- **Parents** need multiple sources of support to help children succeed in school and in their communities

Involved families help students:



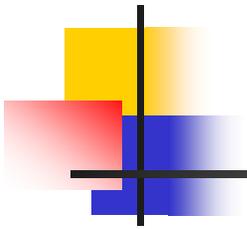
- earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in higher-level programs
- be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
- attend school regularly
- have better social skills, better behavior, and adapt well to school
- graduate and go on to post-secondary education.



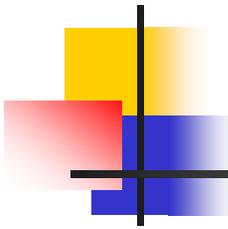
Schools successful at family involvement:

- Reach out in many ways to involve ALL families
- Connect families to children's learning
- Invite families to help the school achieve goals and make decisions
- Make partnerships an important part of how the school operates.

Three key ways to engage diverse families:



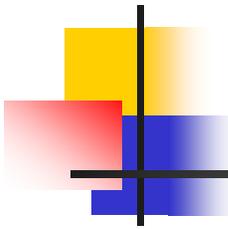
- Focus on building trust and collaborative family-school relationships
- Recognize, respect, and address families' needs
- Share power and responsibility with parents



What is REACH?

A process for

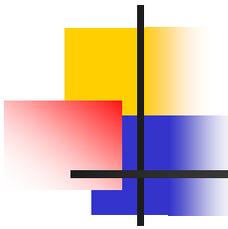
- Staff and families to plan together how children are taught
- Offering families and school staff lots of options and choices about how children learn.



Goals of REACh process

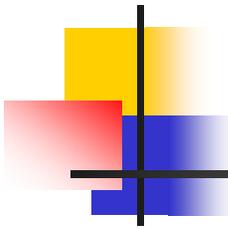
Staff and families work as a team to:

- Prevent learning or behavior problems
- Identify early signs of concern
- Keep small problems from growing
- Work with individual students in danger of failing or dropping out.



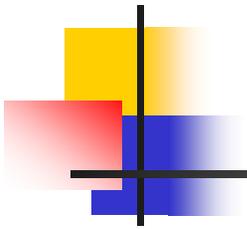
Using the REACH process

- ANY SCHOOL can use REACH
- Many schools most likely do some parts of the REACH process now
- DPI encourages schools to use REACH
- More information at www.reachwi.org



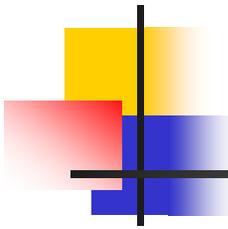
How does REACH work?

- A Building Leadership Team meets monthly to talk about needs of students, teachers, and families
- Teachers meet often with each other to share ideas that help children learn
- Families may meet with teachers to share insights about child and help craft a plan



REACH helps children at three levels

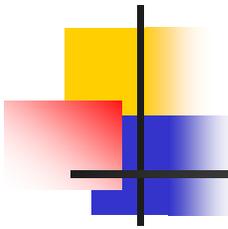
- School-wide: programs to improve teaching, recognize positive behavior
- Small groups of students: provide mentoring or tutoring
- Individual students: counseling, focused academic support, family support, or services before/after school.



Allows teachers to try new strategies

To improve learning:

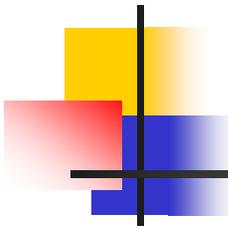
- Hands-on centers or small groups
- Present new information in different ways – see, listen, do
- Peer buddies or partner students
- Display every child's work
- Give extra help when needed.



Allows teachers to try new strategies

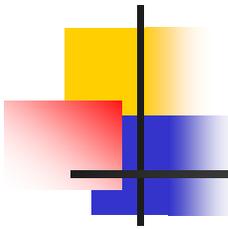
To improve behavior:

- Praise the child; focus on positive
- Offer incentives to the child
- Listen carefully and closely to child
- Use humor; see through child's eyes
- Communicate and work with families and other school staff.



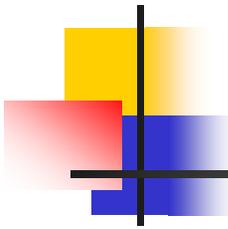
Families involved in REACH:

- Are part of the problem-solving process
- Provide important information about their child to school staff
- Help develop plans for their child
- Serve on the building leadership team
- May volunteer their time at home with child and at school for all children.



Great Quotes

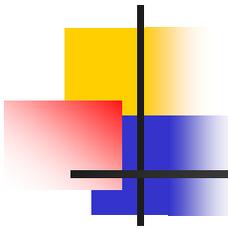
- “Instead of expecting a child to be ready for school, we make sure our school is ready for the child.”
-- school principal
- It’s an overwhelmingly wonderful feeling to have a room full of loving, caring people...working together to assure that (your child) is receiving the best education he or she can.”
-- parent



The Ladder of Support for parents to share concerns

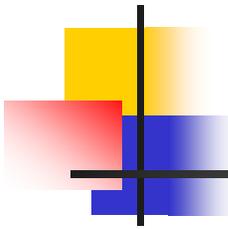
Start with your child's teacher

- Closest to your child
- May have similar concerns
- Will appreciate your observations
- May offer helpful ideas
- May refer you to other school staff



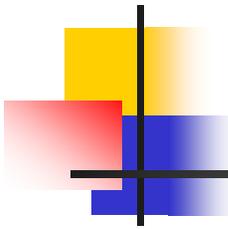
Other school staff: the next rung

- Talk to school support staff: guidance counselor, social worker, school nurse, psychologist, or parent liaison.
- Talk to school principal if you still have concerns. Makes decisions at the building level.
- Principal may call a meeting of school staff. Parents can, too.



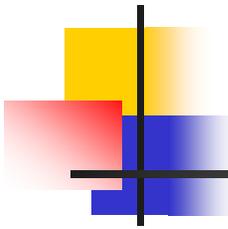
Exploring school policy

- Is there a school policy addressing your concern?
- Policies try to treat everyone fairly
- Policies must be made available to the public
- Ask for help if you don't understand
- How are similar concerns handled?



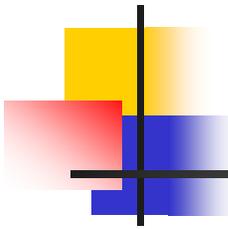
Last stop: the school board

- School board members are elected to represent parents and community members
- Who represents your neighborhood?
- May want to share concerns at a board meeting
- Call district office to find out how



Parents and Families bring many gifts to schools

- As **decisionmakers** who offer the family viewpoint, serve on committees, and help school staff understand family concerns about child's learning
- As **collaborators** who suggest topics for teachers and families to learn about, and activities to promote learning at home and school

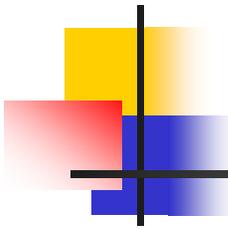


More Gifts Parents Bring to Schools:

- As **volunteers** who work 1-on-1 with children, give time to school programs, and identify community resources
- As **communicators** who help improve school materials, respond to surveys, talk with other families, and promote school events and activities.

More Gifts Parents Bring to Schools:

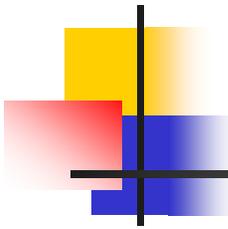
- As **instructors** who advise other parents on how to be involved at school, teachers on how to work with families, and build trust
- As **parents and family members** who offer unique information about child, help child learn at home, develop plans for child, and love child the most. 



Communication Basics: What's My Personal Style?

Answer "yes" or "no" to:

- Effective communication is a core capacity for success.
- Most communication is unstated.
- Communication is all about relationship.
- You cannot NOT communicate.



Sending Messages

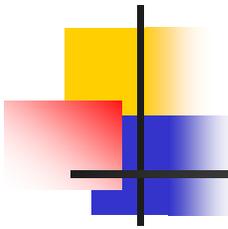
Effective verbal communications

- Are free of jargon
 - Do not create resistance
-

Non-verbal carries 55% of message

Para-verbal, how we say words, carries
38% of message

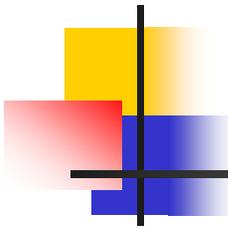
What's left for words to convey? (7%)



Receiving Messages

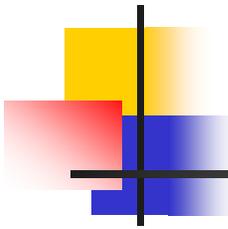
Listening requires:

- Setting aside our own agendas
- Suspending judgment to understand another's frame of reference, emotions, attitudes.



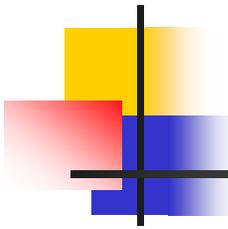
Reflective Listening Skills

- Paraphrasing: restate in your own words
- Reflect feelings: acknowledge speaker's feelings in your own words
- Summarizing: combine above
- Questioning: "I'm not sure I understand..."



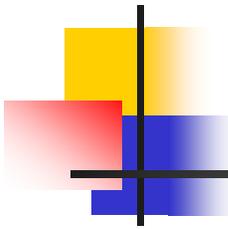
Obstacles to Communicating

- Unfriendly beginning
- No planning ahead
- Attacking
- “You” messages
- Showing power
- Unequal relationships
- Miscommunication
- Different agendas
- Cultural influences



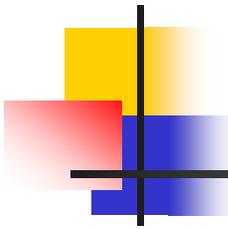
Bridges to Communication

- Friendly beginning
- Planning ahead
- Listening/feedback
- “I” messages
- Student-centered
- Questions/clarification
- Summary and Next Steps



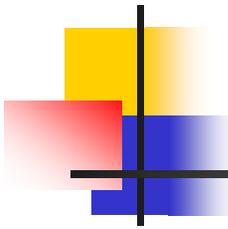
Steps to Resolving Conflict

- Active listening: restate what was said to make sure you understand
- Ask other what s/he would like to see happen
- Try to find common ground and build on it
- Try to get at the “why” of concern
- Decide a next step
- Set a time to review and evaluate.



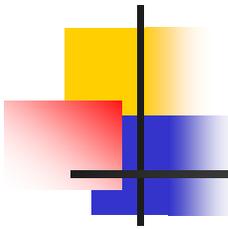
Collaborating to attain a mutual goal

- Interactive: all participants talk; no one dictates
- Participants bring, share varied experience; each person is an equal
- Creative solutions: a composite of shared ideas OK with everyone
- Shared success, failure, accountability: whole group agrees to share responsibility



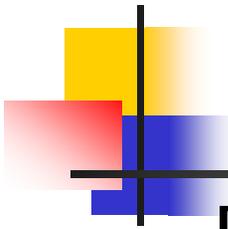
Collaborative Practices

- Define the issues; stay student-centered
- Share perspectives
- Identify interests v. positions
- Generate options
- Choose, implement, evaluate one option



Being an Advocate for Your Child

- Talk often with the teacher about your child's progress.
- Check your child's grades and test scores.
- Find out about the school's expectations for what all students should learn, experience.
- Talk to other families.
- Get to know the school.
- Get to know the principal and counselor.



Family Involvement Resources

- DPI Community Learning and Partnerships:
www.dpi.wi.gov/fscp
- National Network of Partnership Schools
www.partnershipschools.org
- National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools (SEDL)
www.sedl.org/connections
- Northwest Educational Regional Laboratory
www.nwrel.org
- US Department of Ed www.ed.gov/parents