

Title: Connecting with Parents: Mother and Daughter Teacher Stories

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Abstract

A teacher-educator and a first-grade teacher, who are mother and daughter, reflect on the importance of connecting with the parents of students in schools. The teacher-educator listens to her daughter's stories of fractured families, troubled parents, and the role she plays as family counselor. She ponders the ability of her daughter to build personal relationships with parents so that they confide both their troubles and their achievements. The teacher-educator and the first grade teacher consider how teachers can be prepared for the important role they play as partners with the parents of their students. They conclude that the current preparation programs emphasize the institutional aspects of parent involvement (parent conferences at convenient hours, invitations for parents to participate in classroom activities, parent literacy programs, etc.), but neglect the personal aspects of these connections. Those who are learning to teach may realize they will have opportunities to serve as important lifelines for their students; will they also know how to be lifelines for the parents of their students?