



RESEARCH FOCUS: Parent-Teacher Relationships

Teachers and Parents as Partners, known as TAPP, is an innovative, effective approach that helps educators address challenging behaviors and academic problems for long-term success. Decades of research have shown that TAPP consistently improves children's academic, social and behavioral outcomes, while building partnerships between parents and teachers.

Why Does This Matter?

Positive family-school connections set the stage for students to experience school success. Unfortunately, parents of children with behavioral challenges often report feelings of isolation or tension between themselves and school professionals. Positive relationships with teachers can improve a parent's willingness and ability to engage meaningfully in their child's education. Actions to strengthen relationships between parents and teachers are essential to student success.

What We Learned

TAPP significantly enhances relationships between parents and teachers, including those between parents and teachers of students with challenging behaviors. The relationships formed between parents and teachers through their involvement in TAPP are responsible for improving students' social skills and behavioral outcomes.

Supporting Findings

- Parents in rural communities who participate in TAPP report significantly improved parent-teacher relationships compared to parents who do not participate in TAPP.¹
- After participating in TAPP, teachers report significantly greater improvements in their relationship with parents compared to teachers who do not receive TAPP.^{2,6}



- Parents and teachers who participate in TAPP report significantly greater communication with one another relative to parents and teachers who do not experience the TAPP intervention.³
- Gains in parent-teacher relationships that occur through TAPP are responsible for improvements in students' adaptive and externalizing behaviors.^{1,2,5,7}
- Parents who believe they are responsible for being involved in their child's education report greater relationships with teachers than parents with lower perceived responsibility for involvement.⁴
- Individual characteristics of parents and teachers, such as perceived effectiveness at helping their child, may contribute to positive perceptions of the parent-teacher relationship.^{4,5,6}

Takeaways

- Family-school partnerships (TAPP) are a significant and beneficial method for improving a student’s academic and behavioral success.
- Prioritizing parent-teacher relationships through TAPP can positively impact a variety of student outcomes across home and school.
- The TAPP process may increase parent and teacher self-efficacy, which may improve the parent-teacher relationship in the context of TAPP.

Citations

1. Sheridan, S. M., Witte, A. L., Holmes, S. R., Wu, C., Bhatia, S. A., & Angell, S. R. (2017). The efficacy of conjoint behavioral consultation in the home setting: Outcomes and mechanisms in rural communities. *Journal of School Psychology, 62*, 81-101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2017.03.005>
2. Sheridan, S. M., Bovaird, J. A., Glover, T. A., Garbacz, S. A., Witte, A., & Kwon, K. (2012). A randomized trial examining the effects of conjoint behavioral consultation and the mediating role of the parent-teacher relationship. *School Psychology Review, 41*(1), 23-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2012.12087374>
3. Sheridan, S. M., Ryoo, J. H., Garbacz, S. A., Kunz, G. M., & Chumney, F. L. (2013). The efficacy of conjoint behavioral consultation on parents and children in the home setting: Results of a randomized controlled trial. *Journal of School Psychology, 51*(6), 717-733. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2013.09.003>
4. Kim, E. M., Sheridan, S. M., Kwon, K., & Koziol, N. (2013). Parent beliefs and children’s social-behavioral functioning: The mediating role of parent-teacher relationships. *Journal of School Psychology, 51*(2), 175-185. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2013.01.003>
5. Minke, K., Sheridan, S. M., Kim, E. M., Ryoo, J. H., & Koziol, N. (2014). Congruence in parent-teacher relationships: The role of shared perceptions. *The Elementary School Journal, 114*(4), 527-546. <https://doi.org/10.1086/675637>
6. Holmes, S. R., Sheridan, S.M., Smith, T.E. (2020). Unpacking conjoint behavioral consultation: A latent profile analysis of parent-teacher interactions. *Journal of Educational & Psychological Consultation*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2020.1759080>
7. Sheridan, S. M., Witte, A. L., Holmes, S. R., Coutts, M. J., Dent, A. L., Kunz, G. M., & Wu, C. (2017). A randomized trial examining the effects of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation in rural schools: Student outcomes and the mediating role of the teacher–parent relationship. *Journal of School Psychology, 61*, 33-53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2016.12.002>