

# Three Tips for Effective Montessori Parent Education

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# Table Of Contents



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I.	Introduction	2
II.	Tip 1: Ask Parents What They Want	3
III.	Tip 2: Five Questions Parents Won't Ask	4
IV.	Tip 3: Follow Up	6
V.	Summary	8
VI.	About Maren Schmidt, M. Ed.	9

## Three Tips For Effective Montessori Parent Education



### What We Are Working Towards

Providing effective Montessori parent education is one of the components of having an engaged and happy school community.

When your school offers practical information that parents and staff can use immediately the benefits are not only for adults. The trickle down effect creates a better environment for children, at school and at home.

*Isn't that what we're working towards?*

Here are three tips that will help you plan and deliver information that can make a difference.

## TIP 1: Ask Parents What They Want

### Tip 1: Ask Parents What They Want

It seems simple but asking parents for input is the starting point for effective parent engagement and education.

Ask. Simply ask.

Ask your school families key questions to figure out what they need and want, and how they like to get their information.

Here are sample questions for a short survey to offer not long after the acceptance letter goes out:

#### Survey Example

1. What are your most important parenting goals?

Short term

Long term

2. Right now, what are your biggest parenting challenges?

3. How do you like to gather new information about child development and parenting? Check all that apply.

Social Media

Videos

Podcasts

Magazines

Newsletters

Face-to-face meetings

Online courses

E-magazines, newsletters, booklets

Other

4. How do you use the internet to look for information?

Google search

Facebook groups

Pinterest

LinkedIn

Twitter

Instagram

Other

5. How did you find out about our school?

6. What would you like us to know that we didn't ask?

## Tip 2: Answer The Questions Parents Won't Ask

Finding the answers to these types of survey questions will help you understand needs and wants, allowing you to offer on-target information in the ways your families prefer.

### Tip 2: Answer The Questions Parents Won't Ask

In every communication with your school families check to make sure that you've answered the following five questions. Parents want the answers but aren't likely to ask directly.

1. What your school does
2. Why your school does it
3. Why it matters
4. What the results are
5. What parents can do at home

From your dress code to your vacation schedule to your school events, answer these five questions to make it obvious to your families that you are speaking with authority.

When parents understand your reasons behind your school uniform or no-cartoon clothing policies, even if they don't agree they are more likely to accept and follow that guideline.

Your school families are seeking clarity about your school's expectations in order for them to be part of your school community.

Answering these five questions as you explain your school culture will go a long way to help with your parent education efforts.



## Tip 3: Follow Up



### Tip 3: Follow Up

To create effective family engagement and education we first gather pertinent information about what parents want to know more about.

Next, we offer learning experiences in parents' preferred formats.

Those two actions on our part create engagement with our school families.

*But with asking and informing, once is not enough.*

We need to create a continuous feedback loop so we know what is effective and what is not.

Following up is the next step in keeping your school families engaged in learning about child development and Montessori education, as well as feeling a part of your school community.

A simple, yet effective, way to follow up is to have an email link in your newsletters.

## Tip 3: Follow Up

An end of the year survey offers insight into the effectiveness of your efforts.

### Survey Example: Tell Us About This Year

1. Did the information we shared this year help you with your parenting goals and objectives?

Yes

No

2. Did the information we shared help with your biggest parenting challenges?

Yes

No



3. Did we send you information in your preferred format?

Yes

No

If, no, please let us know your preferred format.

- Social Media
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Magazines
- Newsletters
- Face-to-face meetings
- Online courses
- E-magazines, newsletters, booklets
- Other

4. What would you like us to know that we didn't ask?

## SUMMARY



### **Ask. Answer. Follow up.**

It can be that easy to create effective parent education in your Montessori community.

To keep the cycle going, remember to continue asking parents what they want to learn from your school community.

Ask. Answer. Follow up.

Three simple yet crucial steps to help you build the school community that “gets” and loves Montessori education, and loves your school as well.

## About Maren Schmidt, M. Ed.

### ABOUT MAREN SCHMIDT, M.ED.



Since 1980 I've been involved in Montessori education in some way or the other, as a parent, a board member, an AMI trained teacher, a school founder, a school administrator, as well as a national workshop leader.

I've written two books, *Understanding Montessori: A Guide For Parents* and *Building Cathedrals Not Walls*.

Since 2004 I've written the popular blog, newsletter, and newspaper column, Kids Talk. In 2012 I began doing online workshops with parents, teachers, and school administrators all over the world, work I truly love.

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