

Getting Ready: Creating Your Script and Tracking Your Progress

The purpose of creating a script is not to read verbatim, but to merely mentally practice ways to connect with families.

- What is the feeling you want to communication?
- Are you establishing, maintaining, or restoring your relationship?
- What is the key information you want to learn?
- What is the key information you want to share?

Below are three example scripts to start of the school year.

Example 1: Text (useful if you have an out of state or unfamiliar number)

I am so happy to have _____ name in my class this year. Even with covid, we will have a lot of fun opportunities for students and families to learn and play together. Can we set up a time to connect over the phone so I can learn about (student) and your families interests?

Example 2: Phone

I/We are starting off the year reaching out to parents to get to know your child and family and to work with you to start this school year off in a good way. I am really just calling to let you know that I am here and always want to help. I have a few questions for you to help do that.

What is (student name) looking forward to most this year?

What is the best way to share information or get your ideas?

Is there anything on your mind as we get ready for the new school year?

Example 3: With long-time resident colleague.

Hi _____. We are wanting to work closely with families and students this year. I wanted to make sure you met (teacher name). He is new to the community but is really looking forward to teaching (grade and class).

Some General Questions:

- How do you learn, celebrate, subsist together as a family?
- What kind of activities would you like us to do in school?
- What do you want for your (child) after school?
- What do you hope that I will do as a teacher?
- What is (student) really good at?
- What are things that the teacher and family can work on together to support (child)?
- What are the families expectations of you as a teacher/school staff?
- What times and ways?
- Are there other family members that we should include in conversations that live in town or outside of town?

- What would be helpful to you as you are helping (student) with homework and mastering their learning?
- What is most important for your child to learn while at school?
- Anything else?

Some Questions During Covid:

We know there is a lot going on for families better understand our families and students.

Often you can say:

If you don't want to answer these questions now or don't feel comfortable.

We are just wanted to get to know you, your students, and if there is anything we can do to support our community during Covid-19.

Have there been any significant changes going on in their life during Covid-19 that might impact you as a family?

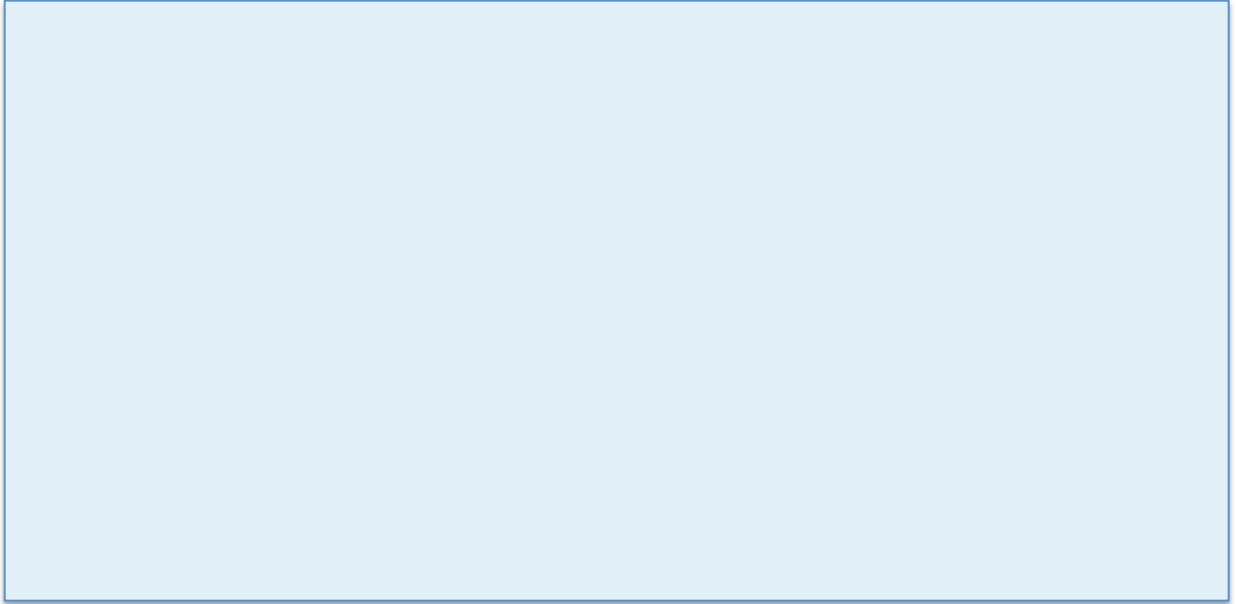
- food
- employment
- housing
- devices-internet
- working and childcare
- stress management- mental
- student ability to do things virtually
- tools and resources for families to support learning

Advice from Teachers Using Relationship Building Strategies:

- I have to be consistent. I have to be reliable.
- I realized I have to lead with vulnerability. I tell families how hard it is not see their child every day now and how hard it is to each by distance. It is OK to be honest.
- I realized sharing a little about my own interests and being myself really helps me when talking with families.
- Families see me as the entity of the school and it takes a little effort for them to change this view. It has taken work for families to understand we can be a team. I realized it was up to me to open the door.
- Text (especially if you have an out of state number) first
- Keep trying. I get more answers now than I did at first and conversations are definitely less awkward.
- I asked other staff in my community to join me and it reassured me and families because they all knew eachother. Over time I was able to call more comfortably.

What is your script or key talking points? Add your script here

- What is the feeling you want to communicate?
- Are you establishing, maintaining, or restoring your relationship?
- What is the key information you want to learn?
- What is the key information you want to share?



Use it! Call two families that you do not very well yet and initiate the conversation and ask questions. Everyone just has to start.

Reflect on what worked well and what would make it even better next time.

