

► **Communicating with Parents**

By now you may have already sent home letters or memos to parents as a way of communicating news about their child. While this is a tried-and-true method, don't forget phone calls and Emails as alternatives. When the situation is serious and needs immediate attention or when there is good news from the day, these methods can be much more efficient.

Remember these tips for phone calls and Emails.

Phone Calls:

- Call parents early and often. Use it as a way to communicate the good news for today.
- Develop a checklist for your phone calls to organize your thoughts:
 1. Identify yourself and make sure you are talking to a parent or legal guardian.
 2. Explain why you are calling.
 3. If you're calling about a problem, state it clearly. State behaviors, not opinions.
 4. Give possible solutions to the problem.
 5. Find a diplomatic way to finish the call.
 6. Let parents know how and when they can reach you.
 7. Date and document your notes from the telephone conversation.
 8. If the conversation becomes hostile, restate your reason for calling and bring the call to a close.

Emails:

- Ask parents for their permission to communicate with them via Email.
- Ask parents for Email addresses.
- Keep your Email communication short.
- Always invite face-to-face or phone communication, especially if the problem is serious.