



This month's Take Home Tips are for educators — thank you for dedicating your lives to supporting students. Your work is not only important, but also essential to ensuring that students grow up healthy and happy.

**What:** Teachers should take time to understand and articulate their own feelings, worries and areas of needed support in their classrooms not only to themselves, but also to their colleagues.

**Why:** When this occurs, an opportunity is created for a collective outpouring of shared experience, perspective and understanding.

When teachers feel comfortable expressing their concerns and areas of needed support to other school staff, this creates a safe space for bouncing ideas each other and an opportunity for giving and receiving support from those who understand it best — other teachers!

**What:** School administrators can promote a culture of consistent and open communication between themselves and teachers, especially early in the school year when teachers and students are adjusting to what it will mean, feel like, and be like to be together in their classrooms all year. When possible, within the difficult demands of the busy school week, allow time for similar grade-bands to come together to share ideas, struggles and strategies.

**Why:** Cultivating a school culture characterized by consistent and open communication sets teachers up for success by encouraging them to seek out support. It may be they are struggling with how to empower a particular student or with understanding how their style of communication translates to a particular child's needs. Whatever

it is, communicating consistently and openly allows teachers the time needed to implement the changes they deem most beneficial.

An example of this might be a behavior contract with a particular student, a check-in check-out with a struggling group of girls, or an extra adult in the class one afternoon so that the teacher can have needed 1:1 time with students who may be struggling with a particular lesson.

**What:** Promote collaboration between teachers, school counselors, and social workers.

**Why:** Understanding the meaning behind the difficult behaviors of struggling students can often leave adults confused, frustrated, and overwhelmed. It's easy to take defiance personally, and to forget that when children act out, they are trying to get their needs met in the best way they know how.

Collaboration can be essential to providing alternative perspectives and to receiving the needed support that every teacher deserves in their classroom. Alternatively, allowing students an opportunity to meet with a school counselor affords them the opportunity to share at their pace and comfort level in a confidential environment.

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