To Be Or Not to Be (Involved), That is the Question
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It is common for parents to become less active in school when their adolescent children move from elementary school to middle school or junior high. Parents sometimes hold beliefs that may explain this reduction in involvement. For example, parents may believe that:

- their involvement in school is no longer useful for their adolescent
- their adolescents communicate the necessary information to them already
- they should not meddle in what they perceive to be their adolescent’s realm

These perceptions are often untrue, and even more importantly, they do not outweigh the benefits of parents being involved in school. Research shows positive correlations between parent involvement and school success for students. For example, children of parents who are involved in school get better grades, attend school more regularly, and have fewer behavior problems (e.g., Baker & Stevenson, 1986; Catsambis, 1998; Oyserman, Brickman & Rhodes, 2007). Moreover, long-term studies have been conducted that show that increased parental involvement can increase students’ orientations toward school and support school success.

But, parents are among the busiest people in any community and it is very difficult to find time to get involved. Involvement in school can take many forms and doesn’t need to take a lot of time out of an already-hectic schedule. For example parents can:

- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Join parent-school organizations
- Volunteer to help with a school event
- Donate money and time for special projects
- Stay in contact with teachers via email

It is worthwhile to forge a connection between parents and the school environment.

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