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Forge a Parent-Teacher Partnership that Works *Start the School Year Right with Open Communication*

ATLANTA (July 12, 2010) – Ensuring your child's success in school requires time and attention, yet one of the simplest ways of guaranteeing success is often overlooked - build a bond between you and your child's teacher. The new school year is a perfect time for parents to lay the right foundation for a successful partnership with their child's new teacher.

"At Primrose, teachers partner with parents to support and guide the development and learning of their children," says Dr. Mary Zurn, vice president of education at Primrose Schools. "Children need consistent messages from their parents and teachers and this takes a relationship of mutual respect and two-way, open communication between home and school."

Primrose Schools offers parents the following tips on how to create a positive parent-teacher relationship that will benefit children all year long:

- 1. Invest the time in orientation—it's worth it!** Orientation is perhaps the most important way to calm your child's—and even your own—nerves. Schools host orientations because they understand how essential it is for parents to know what to expect and to get their questions answered. If you have to miss a scheduled orientation, don't be afraid to make a separate appointment to visit with your child's teacher. Here are questions you might ask that can help start the parent-teacher dialogue:
 - a. What is the daily schedule? Does it change?
 - b. When is it best for us to chat if I have questions or concerns?
 - c. What is the best way to communicate with you (e-mail or phone)?
 - d. How will I know what happens each day and what the day was like for my child?
- 2. We want to earn your trust.** As educators, we want the parents of our students to have confidence that they are leaving their child with someone they trust. Relationships are built over time and trust is earned day to day. Children look for emotional cues from parents' behavior, particularly when they are placed in unfamiliar situations. The more comfortable you are with your child's teacher, the more comfortable your child will be.
- 3. Provide requested information.** Come prepared on the first day of school with your emergency contact information, if it's not already on file. Also, if your child has been enrolled in child care or preschool before, feel free to share any comments from previous child care providers' related to your child's disposition and learning style that you think would be helpful to the new teacher.
- 4. If you have a concern, share it immediately.** Discuss any concerns or questions with your child's teacher as soon as possible. Teachers are often disappointed to find out you were upset about something that they could have done differently before it became a bigger issue. You may notice something with a staff member or classroom routine that you have questions about. Discuss it directly with your child's teacher or privately with

the school's director or principal to see if there is a solution or answer to your concern. Be an advocate for your child!

5. **Ask how you can help extend the classroom at home.** You are your child's first teacher. Don't hesitate to ask your child's teacher for specific activity ideas that help reinforce learning at home.
6. **Check-in regularly.** Along with reviewing reports from your child's teacher, consider setting aside a few minutes every four to eight weeks to ask for a conference or a call to get a better idea of how your child is progressing and if there is anything you can do at home to further your child's development.
7. **Positive feedback is always welcome.** Teachers love to hear parents tell them how their children are showing evidence at home of what they are learning at school.

For more parenting tips from Dr. Zurn, visit www.DrZandMe.com.

About Primrose Schools

Founded in 1982, Primrose Schools is the nation's leader in providing consistent, accredited early childhood education and child care services in more than 200 schools in 15 states. Primrose School's foundation is based on a dedicated and passionate group of early childhood professionals providing high quality education with a balance of learning, character development and play.

Primrose School's Balanced Learning® Curriculum blends teacher-directed and child-initiated activities and is consistently delivered in all Primrose Schools nationwide. This exclusive curriculum is standards-based and enables teachers to help children build a foundation of knowledge and skills that will enable them to move successfully from one level of development to the next. Primrose is the first preschool organization in the country to achieve the gold standard in educational accreditation from AdvancED and to require all of its schools to become SACSCASI or NCA CASI accredited.

For more information, visit www.primroseschools.com.

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