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The United Parents Group



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Parents Supervising Homework *Should Students 'Sink or Swim'?*

By Carol Kalos

In many households, the parents disagree about how much help they should offer their children with homework. Some parents say the children will learn the material and the responsibility for their actions only by being left alone, that is, students should be left to "sink or swim," while others feel obligated to supervise each task. How much help is too much?

The answer, according to Dr. Claudia Lyles, the district's Director of Education, depends on the child's grade level and on the child. But all children need some help, so they do not "sink." For example, Lyles recommends that all households provide a quiet location and a family schedule that encourage a student to take homework seriously. In addition, she suggests parents "monitor" homework, and they should expect to assist a child with long-term projects and preparing for tests.

Likewise, the principal at Cedarbrook, Iris Parker, emphasizes that students in all grades should "work independently."

However, parents should review a student's work by pointing out errors and allowing the student to correct them. Also, fostering independence, parents should answer a student's question by asking questions that will direct the child to find the answer. Parker recommends that if parents see their child is confused, they should e-mail or write the teacher that evening.

Many parents of successful Cheltenham students reveal that they are directly involved with their children's schooling: They communicate with the teachers; stay involved in parent-teacher activities; check homework daily; and help with long-term projects. They also point out that, above all, the type of supervision they offer "depends on the kid."

Parents who want to know more about how to overcome conflicts or how to develop motivational strategies can contact Cheltenham's Parenting Center at 215-663-6411.

News Flash!

- **Speak Up and Eat**, at Cheltenham High School on **Monday, October 18 at 7 p.m.**, will bring together high school students, teachers, parents and administrators. Read more about UPG's intergenerational event on the reverse side.
- **UPG's Diversity Committee** will meet on **Monday, October 18 at 7 p.m.** at Cheltenham Presbyterian Church, 7507 Tookany Creek Parkway. Read minutes from past meetings at UPG's "Parents" link on the School District Web site: www.mciu.org/sdct/site/default.asp.
- **UPG's next Meeting** will be on **Wednesday, October 20 at 7:15 p.m.** in Room 102 of the Administration Building. Free babysitting is available. To reserve a babysitting spot, please call (215) 635-7186 or email <Digiulio@comcast.net>.
- **UPG's Parent Workshop** on **Monday, November 8 at 7:30 p.m.** will cover parent-teacher conferences and the continuing conversation between parent and teacher.
- Volunteers represented UPG as an "umbrella" organization under UPG monogrammed umbrellas at **Back to School Nights** across the School District.
- **UPG is looking for some interesting topical questions to pose to District Administrators** during *Focus on Cheltenham*, the School District cable TV program on Channel 42. If your questions are chosen, you may have an opportunity to ask them yourself during a special taping that will occur this year. Submit your questions to <UPG@Cheltenham.org> and place *Focus on Cheltenham* in the subject heading.

The United Parents Group

Mission Statement

The United Parents Group (UPG), an umbrella organization comprised of parent representatives from all the public schools in the Cheltenham School District, serves as a vehicle to facilitate communication among parents, administration and the school board to ensure the continued excellence of education provided by the District.

Please, check us out on the School

District Web Site at:

www.mciu.org/sdct/sit/default.asp

Click on “**Links.**”
Go to “**Parents,**”
Then “**UPG.**”

If you would like to be placed on our E-mail distribution list or if you have a question or concern

You can contact us at:

UPG@Cheltenham.org

Did you know that the Board of School Directors holds a public meeting at 7:45 PM the second Tuesday of every month in the School District Administration Building? Even if you can't make it, you can follow along on the District's Cable Channel 42 live or in rebroadcast.



SPEAK UP and Eat!

Come for the food. Stay for the conversation.

On Monday, October 18th from 7 to 9 p.m. at the CHS Student Center, high school students, parents, teachers, and administrators will get together for no-judgment straight talk and a chance to see inside each other's worlds. Some of our questions for our young people are...

*What would surprise your parents to know about your life or your ideas?
What is so important that you'd risk your reputation to stand up for it?*

Come with a family member or a friend or come alone to speak up and eat! Donations of dessert or “finger food” welcome (but not required)

From the desk of...the Superintendent of Cheltenham Public Schools

Each issue of the UPG Newsletter features a message from a representative of the Cheltenham School System.

Dear Parents,

I am looking forward to working with the dedicated leadership of the United Parents' Group and the Parent Teacher Organizations. I am extraordinarily proud of the ongoing partnership between the United Parents' Group and the Administration. As I begin my sixth year in Cheltenham, I can look back on a number of joint initiatives that have helped to strengthen the school district and foster better relationships between parents and the schools. I continue to be amazed by and impressed with the deep engagement of parents with the work of the schools.

Our mission as a district remains steadfast:

“prepare all students to pursue their educational and life goals as responsible citizens through an academically excellent program.....”

Your support and guidance enable our teachers and administrators to deliver on this promise. Last spring, our students at all grade levels earned the highest PSSA scores in the history of the district. This was true at all grade levels, but test scores are only a glimpse of the quality of our programs and activities. Like you, I see the quality of our schools demonstrated in every lesson, every performance, rehearsal, practice and competition.

Our long-term success as a community demands that these standards of excellence are enhanced and maintained. Working together, we will continue to deliver!

Sincerely,

Christopher W. McGinley