



The Parent/Guardian and Educator Connection: Raising the Next Generation

Maria de Jesús Silva

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Translated by Jennifer Figueroa, doctoral student, Latin American Studies, UC Santa Cruz

My name is María de Jesús Silva. I am originally from the state of Guanajuato, Mexico. I have three children: David aged 14, Mauricio 9, and Valeria, who is 4. My husband Jesus and I have tried to raise our children in an environment filled with love and respect. I am a firm believer that home is where the foundation of a good education happens, especially as we work to raise highly educated men and women, who are independent and capable of making their own decisions.

The school is no less important in this endeavor, where teachers whose instruction, respect, and dedication combined with a home education will shape the student.

In Mexico, I was educated as a secondary school teacher. I served my students imparting more than just knowledge and experiences, but values that I believe are important to motivate students to make their dreams come true. No matter the conditions or the obstacles we face, everything is possible if one has the determination to get things done.

Based on my experience as a mother, I can attest that we can steer our students to a successful future by creating connections between parents, home, and school. Within our community (and by our community I mean Latino parents) we are motivated when we feel accepted, valued, and above all else when we feel that the teachers and schools are open to the positive and constructive help we offer.

As time goes by, we have seen more and more participation by families in school events. I believe the key component to this success has been reminding parents of where they come from, validating their present situation, and supporting the future they want for their children. The objective for parents is to make their American Dream come true; my own American Dream is to raise children who reach the professional level, but above all, I want to raise children who feel and think freely.

Therefore, I humbly urge parents to get closer to teachers and schools by participating, not just when it is mandatory to do so. We have to take the lead, knocking on doors again and again, until we are heard and seen. In this way, we assume a role in forming what is most important in our lives, our children as they become men and women who are successful, happy, and free.

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Educational institutions, we urge you to make the effort to create more programs for parents, making it easier for us to get closer to teachers and administrators because our contribution is important and significant. We have wonderful things to offer to the educational development of our children, and I mean at all levels, from preschool to college.

I sincerely and humbly hope that my particular point of view serves to motivate other parents and to empower us to pursue the future, for “the most valuable heritage of a people is education.”

Thank you.

Sincerely,

María de Jesús Silva

About the Author

María de Jesús Silva is a resident of Ventura and a parent in the Two-Way Immersion program in the Ventura Unified School District. She is a parent leader and is an active member of the District English Language Advisory Committee (DELAC). Mrs. Silva is interested in everything related to social development, which is why she obtained a degree in Social Sciences in the state of Guanajuato Mexico. As a former teacher and now parent, Ms. Silva values and works towards equal educational opportunity for students and families.