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- - - A B O R I G I N A L V I E W S - - -

LIAISING BETWEEN TEACHER/PARENT/CHILD

* D. Kemp

This role is vital to the teacher aide because it helps him/her to develop a good relationship with teacher, parent and child. This way parents can take an interest in their child's education. Their attitude towards teachers would be much more pleasant and understanding. Parents would be aware of their responsibilities both in the school and at home. It would help the child to recognise his/her good and bad points, how to get on well with other children in the classroom and around the community, and last but importantly, to cope with society.

ASSISTING IN TEACHING PROGRAMS, i.e. PHOTOCOPYING, ART WORK, STORY TELLING AND MATHS PROBLEMS

The teacher aide should be able to read or tell stories to the children, because the children look at the aides as their own parents and English is a problem for Aboriginal children.

Teacher aides should do more work sheets for the class and be able to photocopy them.

It's important for children to have an aide present in their maths lessons, because they get too shy to answer the questions, and sometimes don't understand the teacher.

Some aides are artistic in many things and should help children in their art work.

* Mrs Dorothy Kemp, Aboriginal Teacher Aide, Woorabinda State School, Queensland, 4702

INVOLVEMENT WITH SPORTS, CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Teacher aides should be asked by teachers to arrange sport activities and to participate in Sports Day. There should be more cultural activities in the school, because it's important that children be proud of who and what they are. If children are encouraged they learn to have confidence in themselves and to cope with the different changes around them.

INVOLVEMENT WITH STAFF AND P & C MEETINGS

Parents should be approached by the aides to attend more P & C meetings and to explain the situation and the purpose of the meeting. Many parents don't agree on things and this would encourage them to voice their opinions as to the needs that would benefit their children's education.

Teacher aides should be present at all staff meetings to correct any decision making to the best of their ability.

REWARDS OR PRAISE

Teachers should give rewards or praise to children for work well done in class, as this would encourage them. If a child lives with encouragement, he/she learns to have confidence in the teacher, in his/her parents, the teacher aide, and to get on well with the different changes in society.

DISCIPLINE IN CLASS

A teacher should discipline a child in private and not shame him/her in front of a class because if a child lives with shame he/she learns to be guilty. Guilt feelings can sometimes hurt a child in many ways and they start to lose confidence in everyone.

The teacher should know the lifestyle of a child in areas of being disciplined by their parents. This way the teacher will know how to deal with the problem. Some children will play up because

they are treated badly at home and they think everyone has that feeling towards them.

GENERAL UNDERSTANDING

Teachers should have general understanding of the social life, culture and economic issues. They should recognise Aboriginal leadership in the community, and develop a good relationship with their aide.

New teachers coming to an Aboriginal school should learn about the environment and what's expected of them.

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES

Teachers' attitudes towards children are important, because they learn both to respect them in the classroom and accept them in their community. If a child lives with criticism from the teacher, or for that matter society, he learns to condemn. If a child is treated unfairly in class, he/she loses confidence in the teacher and starts to behave badly.

Teachers should take the opportunity to learn of a child's problems and difficulties and find a solution.

BAD BEHAVIOUR IN CLASS

Any new teacher coming to an Aboriginal school should first learn how to accept Aborigines as being different from any white kids. A teacher should consult the aide, with the help of the parent, on how to handle bad behaviour of their child in the classroom. Some bad behaviour of an Aboriginal child is caused by personal problems at home and should be understood by any new teacher.

If a teacher shows acceptance and friendship to a child, he/she learns to find love in the world.

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