

## EMPOWERING PARENTS AS ADVOCATES: THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

*by:*

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Education is a fundamental right for every child, yet many students face barriers to accessing quality education. Educational equity and inclusion are crucial aspects of ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to learn and succeed. While educators and policymakers play a significant role in promoting educational equity and inclusion, parents can also be powerful advocates for change.

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers, and they have a unique perspective on their child's education. When parents are empowered to advocate for their children and for educational equity and inclusion, they can help create a more supportive and inclusive learning environment for all students.

Parents can educate themselves on issues of bias and discrimination, and work to address any biases they may have. This can help create a more inclusive environment for all students. They can advocate as well for their child's needs and work with teachers and school administrators to ensure that their child has access to the resources and support they need to succeed. In addition, parents can encourage their child to learn about and appreciate different cultures, and advocate for the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences in the curriculum. Moreover, they can support community initiatives that promote educational equity and inclusion, such as volunteering at local schools or advocating for policy changes that address inequities in education. Parents can also build strong relationships with their child's teachers and school administrators, and work collaboratively to create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Developing positive relationships with teachers and school administrators can help parents better understand their child's needs and advocate for them effectively. (Voorhis, Maier, Epstein, & Lloyd, 2013) defined family involvement at school as the actions and interactions that parents and other family members have at the school building. This includes attending parent-teacher conferences and school board meetings which can provide opportunities for parents to voice their concerns, ask questions, and provide feedback to educators and policymakers, volunteering for tasks at the school, and serving in classrooms as tutors, helpers, or guest lecturers and on field trips or in other locations and participating in workshops at school. There are also groups that can provide opportunities for parents to connect with other parents such as parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and advocacy groups so that they can share resources and advocate for educational equity and inclusion. Understanding how the education system works can also help them better navigate it and advocate for their child's needs effectively. Parents can advocate for policy changes at the local, state, and national levels that promote educational equity and inclusion.

Parental involvement in promoting educational equity and inclusion has many benefits.

When parents are involved in their child's education and advocate for educational equity and inclusion, they can help ensure that all students have access to quality education, this is by advocating for policy changes and resources that address inequities in education. They can help create a more welcoming and supportive learning environment for all students, they can improve communication and work collaboratively to create a more effective and equitable learning environment. When they are involved in their child's education and feel that their concerns are being addressed, they are more likely to be satisfied with their child's education and engage more actively in the learning process. This parental involvement in promoting educational equity and inclusion is crucial to ensuring that all students have access to quality education and the support they need to succeed.

Thus, parents play a critical role in supporting educational equity and inclusion. By advocating for their children and promoting policies that promote equity and inclusion, parents can help ensure that all students have access to quality education and the support they need to succeed. When parents are involved in their child's education and work collaboratively with educators, they can create a more welcoming and supportive learning environment for all students. By empowering parents as advocates, we can create a more equitable and inclusive education system that benefits all students, regardless of their background or circumstances.

*References:*

Voorhis, F. L., Maier, M. F., Epstein, J. L., & Lloyd, C. M. (2013, October). THE IMPACT OF FAMILY INVOLVEMENT ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 8. mdr.