



Frank Parent-Teacher Conversations

Transcript

Lauchie MacKinnon (teacher): And sometimes you can do all the planning that you want and all the preparation, but I think one of the things that you (indicates Josie, parent) were really receptive to was having conversations, and I think that you were always willing to talk about the hard things. I always felt like I could talk to you about the hard things, and the kind of relationship that you and we had.... You know, I really felt trusted and as an educator that's really important, because when you are not trusted it's hard to do the difficult things.

Josie (mother of Jonathan): And I'm not really shy, you know. I was able to tell teachers what I expected of them, and I was able to say, "Well, here's his IPP (Individual Program Plan). Who is accountable for the IPP? Is that worth the paper it's written on?" You know... That kind of thing. Yeah, the tough questions, and sometimes they hadn't heard that before. But I wasn't... I didn't think anybody was appreciating that--that you were asking the tough questions.

But then, eventually, I did realize that yes, they want to see Jonathan succeed, and most of the time, teachers like yourself Lauchie, and homeroom teachers, they were proud when they were able to realize that what they instituted in his classes, this was going to make a difference, in 10 years' time, 20 years' time. When I said that to his high school science teacher, that "What you do for him today, that's going to count in 20 years." No one had ever said that to him before and that sort of opened his eyes. I don't know where that came from (in me), or why I was able to say that, but I often was happy that I had the courage to say that to him--because when the (other) children came behind Jonathan, I think that teacher became more accountable for those students as well."

(With thanks to L'Arche Cape Breton for videotaping.)

