

## **So, you want to be a Room Parent?**

Room Parenting 101 - Some Frequently Asked Questions and Some Great Answers!

**Q: *What does the term "Room Parent" really mean?***

**A:** Long ago, the term was "Room Mom", which in this day and age seems like we wouldn't allow Dads in the classroom! Now we have opened the door to any parent, guardian, even grandparents! In a nutshell, you, as Room Parent, are the liaison between the teacher and the parents. You will be asked to coordinate parties and activities throughout the year, according to what the teacher's plans are.

**Q: *Isn't that a lot of work for one person?***

**A:** Not if you know how to delegate! You will receive a list of parents with phone numbers, that you will keep confidential, so that everyone has a chance to participate in the class activities. Your job is to match the right parent to the right task, just by asking them what they are willing to do! If you know a parent who's child is also in the class, ask them to work with you as a Co-Room Parent. This is a great way to share the responsibilities and make lasting friendships!

**Q: *How do I know what to ask for?***

**A:** You will work closely with the teacher to find out what the needs will be for the year and what his/her expectations are. Together, you can make a sign-up sheet for parents to see at the open house. The parents will let you know what they are comfortable with by signing up for the activity that suits their talents or abilities.

**Q: *What information do I need from the parents?***

**A:** A useful tool in dealing with many parents is to find out what the best form of communication will be with each one. Personal contact is always best, but some parents find the benefit of email easier than trying to call many parents in a short amount of time. In this packet you will find a questionnaire that you can use to find out the best way to contact your group. Another important piece of information is learning of any food allergies in the classroom. Find out now before any events involving food have taken place!

**Q: *Can the Room Parent send home flyers in the students backpacks?***

**A:** Depending in the nature of the flyer, most of them need to go through Principal Queta Beltran for approval. Anything having to do with money, *absolutely* get main office approval. If you would like to make up a contact list of parents who want to network with other parents in the room, you may do so with the pre-approved sheet included with this informational packet. *When in doubt - have it checked out!*

Q: *Are there other things I might be responsible for?*

A: Yes, in the grand scheme of things, there are other things that the PTO may ask of you. Because you are the connection to the teacher and the students, you may be asked to help us out with some of the events that we hold during the course of the year. We usually need help with the Fall Fundraiser, Book Fair, Teacher Appreciation Luncheon and the Spring Fundraiser. You will have the opportunity to opt out of these events by signing and returning the attached page to the Volunteer Coordinators.

Q: *What are the benefits of being a Room Parent?*

A: Almost too numerous to mention! You will get to know your child in a different light, and see young minds grow throughout the year. A very important reward is having the chance to help one of the few people who work harder than you do - your child's teacher! Did I mention the occasional delicious cupcake or two?

## Tips and Tools of Successful Recruiting!

How to get all of the help you need!

1. Meet the parents! Arrange a class get-together at the playground or have coffee after the children get dropped off in the morning. This gives faces to the names and instills a spirit of cooperation, right from the start.
2. When asking for help, be specific! Let your parents know **exactly** what you need from them. "Can you be at the party from 1:30 to 2:30?" or "We need 2 dozen cupcakes for the party."
3. Offer a range of ways to pitch in. Some parents like to cook & bake, others use their ovens for storage and love the opportunity to buy paper goods or beverages. Find out who likes arts & crafts, and use their talents when needed!
4. Use the "week before" reminder system. Email or send out notes to make sure your volunteers remember what they signed up for!
5. Send a Thank-You letter or email after someone has volunteered. Share digital photos with those who can't be at the school. When parents know they have made a difference, they'll be more willing to help in the future!

Your involvement in your child's classroom really does make an impact. Thanks for being a Room Parent!

The James Monroe PTO/Dad's Club

During the year, we have our Volunteer Committee coordinate activities and fundraisers throughout the year.

Our Room Parents have been long-time contributors to these events. If you do not wish to participate, for any reason, you may opt-out of being called on. Please let us know your preference and return this sheet to the office.

Attention: Volunteer Coordinators, Maricel Balanon and Tanya Solis.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Room

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

Yes! I would love to be a Room Parent!

Yes! I am also available to help out with these events.

Sorry, I am not available for these events. Thank you for the option!