

IS YOUR YOUNGSTER STRUGGLING WITH FRENCH ?

Speaking with the teacher can help you understand what's going on and how you can help. You may speak during a parent-teacher meeting. You can also arrange another time to talk, either in person, by phone, or by email.

But how can you voice your concerns? Be direct and specific while speaking with the teacher. Pose questions and follow-ups. The goal is to figure out what's going on and what can be done to help.

Here are some discussion starters to help you get started.

Requesting a meeting or conversation "Hi. Mr. Lee, I'm Annabelle's father. I'm concerned about her French performance. Can we make time to discuss it?"

Getting the dialogue started "Thank you for speaking with me. I'm concerned that Annabelle is struggling with French. On the sheets she sends home, we practice verbs and vocabulary words. However, she soon forgets the information we go through. What do you notice with her in class?"

Information exchange "She also becomes agitated on days when there is a French dictée. She doesn't always want to go to school. How do you interpret that?"

Obtaining information "Could you please tell me how Annabelle is doing in French overall? Is she following along? Is there anything in particular that she's having problems with?"

Following up on responses "You said that she had trouble with verbs. I'm not sure what you mean. Could you provide an example?"

Requesting assistance "What can Annabelle do to improve her French skills? Are there any activities you can undertake in class? What do you think we should do at home to help her in French?"

Completing the conversation "Many thanks for your assistance. I have a better understanding of what's going on with Annabelle's and French. Can we discuss things more when I've had a chance to think about it?"

Some parents and caregivers find it difficult to discuss their child's difficulties. They can be hesitant to speak with teachers. Or they may be embarrassed that their youngster is having difficulty with French or with their own ability to speak French. Teachers, on the other hand, can supply information and counsel that no one else can, so don't be shy. You can consult EPCA's additional resources to find other questions you can ask at parent-teacher meetings.