



# The Link

Connecting Parents and their School Community



## A Cooperative Collaboration in the City of Burlington

Parent involvement is the number one indicator of student success in our public schools. Four entities within the city recognized this fact and simultaneously applied for two separate awards from NJPIRC. The Library Company of Burlington, located at 23 West Union Street, and the Adult Education Program partnered for the Library Award. The City of Burlington Office of Early Childhood and Sisterhood Inc. collaborated for the School Partnership Award. Both partnerships are striving to foster positive home-school relationships through the library, the community and the school district. When parents are continuously involved in education, the students can achieve sustained academic success.

The Library Company of Burlington has been committed to the welfare of their community for 250 years. Their dedication to helping the youth of their neighborhoods has never been greater. They believe that education is the key to identifying and combating the problem of child abuse and, hopefully, saving the children of our community from both physical and emotional harm. They have established Teen Movie Night, From Homework to Hangout: Teen Central, Family Reader Club, Homework Help, Tales for Two Storytime, Mayor's Reading Club, Reading Challenge and the Summer Reading Program: Get Creative @ Your Library with a Family Movie Night. With the addition of

their new NJPIRC collection, they can offer families another needed support for a better education.

The City of Burlington Office of Early Childhood provides a high quality full-day program for three and four-year old students who reside in the district. The City of Burlington is a diverse urban community that reflects a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The NJPIRC Partnership Award is an exciting opportunity to increase parent and student literacy through the National Network of Partnership Schools, Joyce Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement and: EPIC's "Ready Set Read", a family literacy curriculum

The cooperative and collaborative efforts of these two partnerships have included workshops, classroom visitations to the Library Company of Burlington, where materials and reading activities have been provided by a teen volunteer group called the *Bookends*, and outside activities involving the Sisterhood Inc. Research has shown that activities such as these will lead to increased time spent reading with the students, increased parental confidence to help students, parenting skills for literacy, parenting techniques for positive attitudes towards education and parent communications with the teachers and the school. All in all, this has been a winning collaboration for the City of Burlington's parents and students.

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The New Jersey State Parent Information & Resource Center

# NJPIRC

another program of



Prevent Child Abuse  
New Jersey

*Building a parent,  
school, and  
community network  
that supports  
student success*



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## Using Technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom

Tips for Parents and  
Educators

1) Create online quizzes students can do at home on sites like [quizilla.com](http://quizilla.com).

(2) Start a class blog. Recap the day's lessons, ask a few questions at the end of each entry, and give extra credit to students who bring in answers to all of the questions. Sites like [blogger.com](http://blogger.com) and [wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com) can get you started.

(3) Teach students how to effectively search online, such as searching for keywords instead of full sentences, and using the + and - signs to ignore certain words.

(4) Save materials to your hard drive or a USB stick as a backup. Internet connections can and will go down occasionally, so it is good to always be well prepared.

(5) Teach students how to bookmark pages when they find something interesting. Whether it is something relating to a topic in class or a reference they will want to include in a paper, it is easier to bookmark it right away than to try and find it again later.

(6) Use software in new and exciting ways. Create graphs in Excel. Make posters and flyers in Word. Create a story book in PowerPoint.

(7) Create crossword puzzles to reinforce spelling or other new words on sites like [edhelper.com](http://edhelper.com).

(8) Don't rely on old technology just because that's how it has always been done. Is a PowerPoint presentation the best way to keep students engaged in the material?

(9) At the same time, don't use technology just for the sake of using technology. Is there a better way to present information, engage the students, and still keep it fun?

## Creating Family Friendly Schools in New Jersey



*Pictured Left: Carl Shaw, NJPIRC Program Coordinator with a parent from Lowell Elementary School, in Teaneck NJ*

If you needed assistance, would you turn to your local school for help? What would it take for you to consider your school a resource? The idea that the school can be a one-stop shop for families is not too far away. In October of 2008, the New Jersey State Parent Information and Resource Center (NJPIRC) awarded grants to

twenty-four of New Jersey's public schools to create their own School-Based Parent Resource Centers, and both schools and parents are noticing how the centers are changing the culture of parent involvement. The NJPIRC sponsored Parent Resource Centers are fully equipped with a brand new computer, a display rack filled with brochures, and a comment box for parent suggestions and feedback.

With the technological advances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is extremely important for parents to have access to computers and the internet. Through the Parent Resource Centers, parents who would not otherwise have had access to the internet have been visiting their children's school to create email addresses, write resumes, and browse the internet for resources and information that can help them better their child's education. Parents are also using the information on the resource display racks to improve their communication skills and assist their children in achieving higher grades and test scores.

Schools are now providing services to the entire community, not just the child, and the impact is significant. One parent was able to secure both housing and employment days before Christmas because she was able to access a computer in her child's school. Overall feedback has shown that the Parent Resource Centers have increased parent presence, enthusiasm, and academic awareness while helping to strengthen the ever important bond between parents and school staff.

Every school is responsible for creating an environment that is welcoming and accommodating to the needs of parents, and in today's technologically savvy society, computer access is what many parents need. To view pictures or to find out if your local school has been awarded a Parent Resource Center, visit us today at [www.njpirc.org](http://www.njpirc.org).

### Websites We Love:

[www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com)  
[www.readingrockets.com](http://www.readingrockets.com)  
[www.bookadventure.com](http://www.bookadventure.com)  
[www.crayola.com](http://www.crayola.com)  
[www.abcteach.com](http://www.abcteach.com)  
[www.brainbashers.com](http://www.brainbashers.com)



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[www.preventchildabuse.nj.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.nj.org)