

BRAIN GYM

When AI Can Write the Essay, What Are We Actually Assessing?

Key Takeways

This article asks a tough question but it's one for which all schools will need to find an answer.

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How Emotional Neglect Creates Dangerous Minds

Key Takeways

- Emotional neglect shapes development as powerfully as abuse, even though it leaves no visible wounds.
- Children who are not heard often adapt through anger, withdrawal, or control rather than emotional regulation.
- Many behaviors later labeled as criminal began as unmet needs and ignored distress in childhood.
- Listening and emotional presence are among the most effective forms of prevention against future violence.

AITSL Standards: 1.1/1.2 paired with 4.4

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This Week's Mini PD

If Parent Meetings Become Challenging

In many difficult parent meetings, the grade, behaviour incident, or school decision being discussed is simply the surface issue rather than the underlying concern. **Often, they are driven by the emotions underneath.** Parents are deeply invested in their child's wellbeing, and concerns about learning, behaviour, friendships, or achievement can trigger feelings of fear, frustration, guilt, helplessness, or anxiety.

When a parent becomes defensive, argumentative, or emotional, **they may be responding to a perceived threat.** They may worry that their child is being judged, misunderstood, or disadvantaged. In some cases, parents bring years of accumulated concerns, previous negative school experiences, or stresses from outside school that influence how they respond in the meeting.

The key to a productive outcome is to **focus on understanding before explaining.** Rather than immediately defending a decision or presenting evidence, acknowledge the parent's concerns. Statements such as, "I can see why you're concerned," or "I understand this is important to you," help parents feel heard and respected.

It is also important to **identify shared goals.** Reminding parents that everyone wants the child to feel safe, supported, and successful can shift the conversation from conflict to collaboration. Asking curious questions and listening carefully often reveals the underlying concern that needs to be addressed.

As meetings become more challenging, teachers should aim to slow the conversation, remain calm, avoid defensive language, and **focus on future solutions rather than past blame.** Empathy does not mean agreeing with everything a parent says; it means recognising their perspective while maintaining professional judgement.

The most effective meetings occur when we move from asking, "Why is this parent being difficult?" to **"What concern or fear might be driving this reaction?"** This shift in perspective often transforms challenging conversations into opportunities for partnership and positive outcomes for students.

Health Spotlight

Protect Your Heart and Brain by Knowing the Signs and Symptoms of AFib

There are a lot of things that can make your heart flutter, race or skip a beat. In a figurative sense, it could be a smile from a loved one, a jump scare in a movie or the moment the roller coaster car tips over the top of the hill. In a much more literal sense, an irregular heartbeat might mean you're experiencing atrial fibrillation, or AFib.

[Learn More Here](#)

Drop of Wisdom

"The more relaxed you are, the better you are at everything. The better you are with your loved ones, the better you are with your enemies, the better you are at your job, the better you are with yourself."

- Bill Murray

Happy, Silly Thoughts

Stop making drama.



You're not Shakespeare.

Disclaimer: This information is not intended to replace the advice of appropriate relevant qualified practitioners.

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