

# SSOOPP Framework

Developing Effective Practices for Engaging Parents



SSOOPP (pronounced SOUP) is a mnemonic teachers can use to develop and filter their practices when engaging parents. It stands for **short, sharp, often, optional, with a purpose, and personalised** to parents and their child.

## EPIC Research Snapshots

	Some useful questions to develop and interrogate your pedagogical practices when planning for engaging parents.	Examples from research – middle and senior secondary years and early years.
<b>S</b> SHORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the activity take you long to prepare and/or organise?</li> <li>Will the activity be onerous for parents and/or students?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have older students email their parents directly to ask questions relevant to the curriculum such as: <i>How are forces used in your everyday home or work context?</i></li> <li>Ask younger students and their parents to respond to personal/high-interest questions or find photos together: <i>Where and when was I born? What is your special place?</i></li> </ul>
<b>S</b> SHARP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will the invitation to engage parents value-add to what you are already teaching in the classroom?</li> <li>Have you included specific details about what the topic/activity is and the process involved?</li> <li>Have you included examples to illustrate what you mean?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have older students video one another in pairs talking about their learning (e.g., a book study). Let students email the video to their parents, with the invitation to: <i>Ask me about my video at home.</i></li> <li>Develop a survey for parents to interview younger students about some aspect of learning (e.g., redesigning classroom spaces).</li> </ul>
<b>O</b> OFTEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you let parents know why, when, and how you will communicate with them about their child's learning and wellbeing (e.g., email, newsletter, class website, text message, homework, diary).</li> <li>Do you communicate with parents at the beginning of each week and also let them know how learning and teaching went at the end of the week?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For all students, let parents know specific topics and areas of focus each phase or week of inquiry.</li> <li>'Close the loop' with students by regularly inviting them to share what they talked about at home.</li> <li>'Close the loop' with parents by letting them know what happened in the classroom when students listened and learnt together.</li> <li>Share with the class what each parent contributes through discussions, or using physical (e.g., library) or online spaces accessible to all students and parents.</li> </ul>
<b>O</b> OPTIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are opportunities to participate framed as invitations?</li> <li>Do you use friendly language?</li> <li>Do you remind parents (and students) they don't need to accept every invitation to engage in their child's learning?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For all students, invite parents to contribute in different ways (e.g., photos, emails, letters, videos, PowerPoints, stories, songs, poems, objects, games, social media posts, classroom visits, demonstrations, presentations).</li> </ul>
<b>P</b> PURPOSEFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you make the connections to students' curriculum learning and wellbeing clear?</li> <li>Do opportunities encourage parents'/students' curiosity, interest, enjoyment?</li> <li>Will opportunities invite meaningful, relevant, parent-student discussions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help parents navigate conversations with their child by providing them with conversation starters.</li> <li>For older students, email suggestions to parents after each lesson/lesson sequence.</li> <li>For younger students, put suggestions on student wristbands before they leave for home.</li> </ul>
<b>P</b> PERSONALISED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do invitations call on parents' knowledge of the world, topic, experiences, and/or their child?</li> <li>Are opportunities to engage personalised to parents as well as their child?</li> <li>Are there opportunities for intergenerational conversations?</li> <li>Are engagement opportunities inclusive of different families (e.g., single parent, blended families, LGBTQ+ parents)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have older students ask their parents to share a story, comment, opinion about a theme in a current book study (e.g., <i>Can you share an anecdote about a first meeting? Why was it memorable? What happened next?</i>)</li> <li>Have younger students talk to parents/grandparents about life in the past (e.g., <i>What has changed/stayed the same? Can we find pictures together of our talk?</i>)</li> </ul>

### REFERENCE

Willis, L.-D., & Exley, B. (2022). *Pedagogies, practices, and processes for engaging parents and communities in children's learning and wellbeing*. EPIC 2022 Final Report. Our Schools—Our Future. Report to Independent Schools Queensland and Queensland Independent Schools Parents Network. School of Education and Professional Studies, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.