



**Welcome Parents**

**WE ARE NEW YORK**  
**Magazine**



**ENGLISH**

# WE ARE NEW YORK

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### CREDITS

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## THE STORY

# Welcome Parents

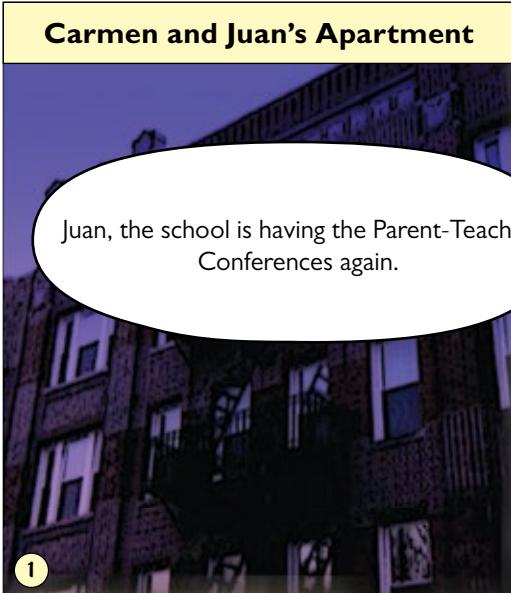
Carmen and Fatima have children who go to the same school. It is time for the Parent-Teacher Conference. Last year, Carmen and Fatima didn't understand the teacher. This year things will be different. They call other parents and work together to practice their questions. Their husbands help out, too. Carmen and Fatima become leaders in their children's school.

**A Parent-Teacher Conference** is a meeting between parents and teachers. In the meeting, parents talk to teachers about how to help their children succeed. The conference happens two times every school year.

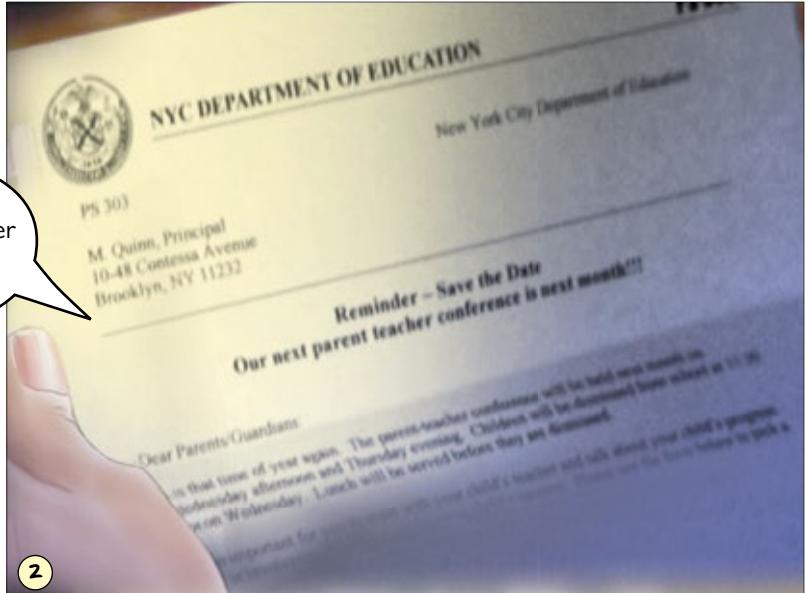
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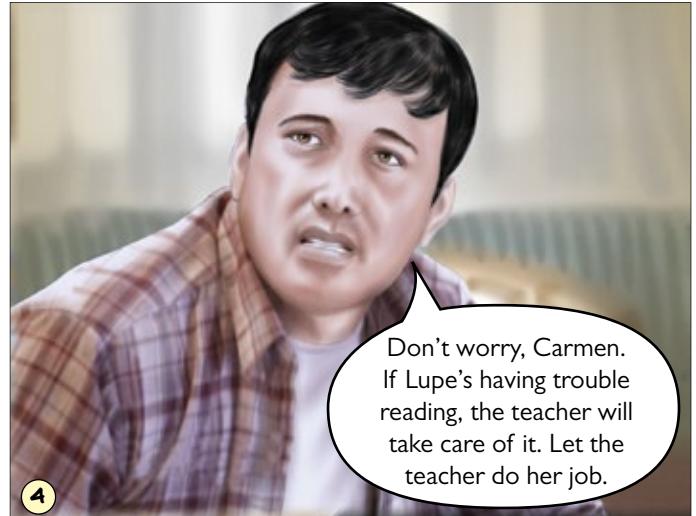
## Carmen and Juan's Apartment



Juan, the school is having the Parent-Teacher Conferences again.



Last year, I didn't understand anything. But this year, I want to talk to the teacher about Lupe's reading.



Don't worry, Carmen. If Lupe's having trouble reading, the teacher will take care of it. Let the teacher do her job.



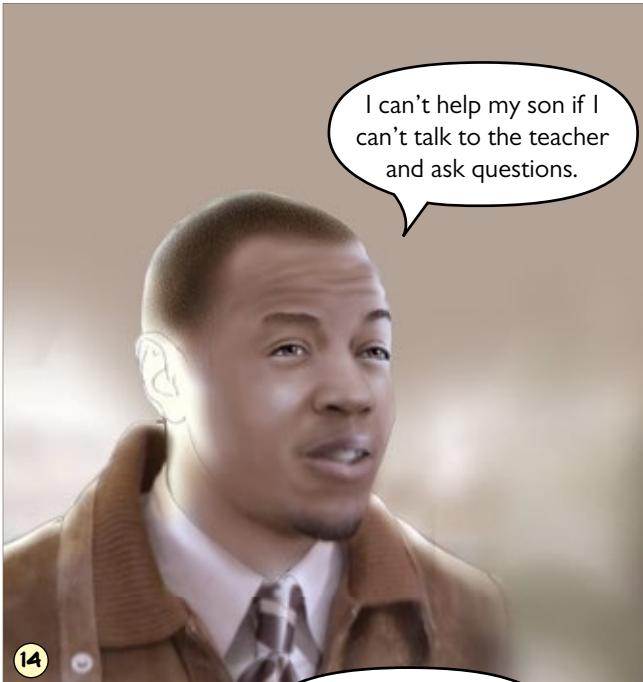
It's our job, too. Why did we come to this country - for our daughter's education! Parents have to get involved in the school.



**Parents Meeting**

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Hello, everyone. Thank you for calling me. I'm glad we are meeting.



I can't help my son if I can't talk to the teacher and ask questions.

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So, let's write some questions and practice saying them out loud.

15



Okay. I'll go first... Is my son doing his homework every night?

Is there any extra reading I can give my son?

16

17



Now, let's give our questions to the Parent Coordinator. She can make copies for the other parents.

18

**At the Parent-Teacher Conference**



## WHO WE ARE



### CARMEN

My family lives in Sunset Park. My husband and I want our daughter, Guadalupe, to get a good education. That's why we came to this country. I never finished high school, but I want her to have that chance. To help her do well, I had to get to know the teachers and the parent coordinator. I found other parents who wanted to get involved, too.



### JUAN

When I was growing up, my parents never came to the school or talked to the teachers. My wife showed me that it's different in New York City. Here, it's important for parents to spend time at the school, get to know the teachers, and meet other parents. I was nervous at first, but now I know a lot and can help others. It makes me feel good to see other fathers like me at the school.



### FATIMA

I am so glad Carmen is my friend. She helped me a lot when I first moved to Sunset Park. My English is not so good, and it's hard for me to talk to the teachers. But Carmen always encourages me. We go to the school together to ask questions. It's easier when someone else is with you.

## PARENT COORDINATOR

I have worked in Guadalupe's school for three years. I love being a Parent Coordinator because I can help people. Schools in New York can be confusing sometimes. Parents come to me for all kinds of help. I can help them get an interpreter or make an appointment with a teacher or the principal. I tell them about the Parents Association and other ways to get involved. I give the parents my phone number and let them know they can call me.



## PIERRE

When I was young, my parents made sure I did my homework. Now, I do the same thing with my son, Jean Claude. It doesn't matter if I can't always understand his homework. I still make sure he does it. And I check with the teacher to see how he's doing in class. I also ask the teacher what the school is doing to help Jean Claude learn more and do his best.



## MING

I live near Carmen and Fatima. I was happy when they called me to prepare for the Parent-Teacher Conference. I get nervous at the conference, and I have a hard time talking to the teacher. After practicing with the other parents, I feel comfortable asking the teacher to slow down and repeat things I don't understand.

## HOW WE DID IT

**Here's how we get involved in the school and help our children do well.**

**Maybe these ideas will help you, too.**

- 1** We called 311 to get lots of information for parents of public school students. We also got the phone number for the Parent Coordinator at the school.
- 2** Fatima and I go to the school for help. We meet the Parent Coordinator. She helps us find answers to our questions. We don't have to be afraid to visit the school.
- 3** Carmen and I ask questions. When we need help, we call our friends. We also call 311. Sometimes we have to  *speak to*  many people to get our problem solved. We don't  *give up.*
- 4** All the parents support each other – no one works alone. We are a team!
- 5** Fathers are important, too. Juan, Sayeed, and Pierre care about their children and talk to the teachers.
- 6** We're all busy at work and at home. Getting involved takes time and isn't always easy. But, our children's education is so important.



## HOW WE DID IT

I used to feel shy and embarrassed to talk to the teacher. But now I feel more in control. I write down what I want to say at home and practice saying it out loud. I want the teacher to know all about my son. The more she knows about him, the better she can help him.



You don't have to speak or read perfect English to be part of your child's school. I learned that I can ask for interpreter. It's my right! I can also ask the Parent Coordinator to help me get written information from the school in my language.



Fathers have to be involved in the school, too. Schools are open to all parents, and we have to be there! The Parent Coordinator is there especially for us, and she can help us get what we need.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

### Here are some ideas for getting involved in your child's school.

Share the information in this magazine with your family and friends. You can make a difference in their lives.

#### Goal

You want to understand the teachers and school documents.

1. Call the Parent Coordinator. Ask for the school documents in your language. You have the right to get the school documents in 8 other languages.

#### Goal

You want the best education for your child.

1. Meet other parents in your child's school. Ask other parents how they got help for their children. Find out about the Parents Association. Go to a meeting.
2. Talk to your child's teacher.  
Talk to the Parent Coordinator.  
Go to the Parent-Teacher Conferences. Ask the school for extra help.

To learn more about schools visit: <http://schools.nyc.gov>  
English Language Learners, visit: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/ELL>

**2.** Ask for an interpreter at the school. The Parent Coordinator can help you get one.

**3.** Call 311 to find the number for your child's school. You can also ask for the number of the Parent Coordinator at the school. 311 speaks your language.

**3.** Every school has a District Family Advocate who gives extra help to parents. Call 311 for the name, address and phone number.

**4.** Find out how your child is doing in school. Visit: **[www.arisparentlink.org](http://www.arisparentlink.org)**  
The Parent Coordinator can help you use this important website for parents.

## WHAT YOU CAN SAY

If you are talking to your child's teacher, you can say:

- I would like to make an appointment to see you.
- How can you help my child do better in school?
- What can I do at home to help my child?
- Can you please slow down and explain what you mean?

If you are talking to the Parent Coordinator, you can say:

- I would like the school documents in my language, please.
- I speak \_\_\_\_\_ .
- I need an interpreter. I speak \_\_\_\_\_ .
- When does the Parents Association meet?

If you are talking to other parents, you can say:

- Let's meet and talk. We can work together.
- Let's call other parents. Maybe they have some ideas.

If you are talking to 311, you can say:

- I would like the phone number for the Parent Coordinator in my child's school.
- Do you have information for parents about the public schools?
- I need an interpreter. I speak \_\_\_\_\_ .

## HELPFUL WORDS

### District Family Advocate

A person who works with many schools to give parents extra help.

Parents can call the **District Family Advocate** to talk about their school.

### Explain

To help you understand something.

Can you please **explain** what you mean?

### Get involved

To be part of something.

When parents **get involved** in the school, children do better.

### Interpreter

A person who can translate one language into another.

Can I please get an **interpreter** to help me understand?

### Parent Coordinator

A person in every school who helps parents get what they need.

Every public school in New York City has a **Parent Coordinator** who works with parents.

### Parent-Teacher Conference

A meeting between parents and teachers in the school.

Every public school has a **Parent-Teacher Conference** two times a year.

### Parents Association

An organization of parents who meet to make the school better.

When does the **Parents Association** meet?

### Practice

To get better at something by doing it over and over.

Let's **practice** asking questions before we talk to the teacher.

### Report Card

A paper with your child's class grades.

Can I please have my daughter's **report card** in Spanish?

### 311

The free telephone number you can call for information about City services.

You can speak your language when you call **311**.

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