

## MAKE YOUR DAY

A SCHOOL-WIDE CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS  
TEACHERS TO TEACH AND ALLOWS STUDENTS TO LEARN



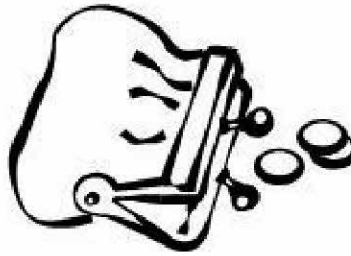
### Earl's Corner - Sensitivity and Hyper-Vigilance

Five years ago, Clover Park School District, south of Tacoma, Washington faced a significant challenge. The district encompasses two military bases and we had just gone to war. Parents, sometimes both parents, were being deployed and students were left with surrogate parents or in single-parent homes. With the uncertainty of the parents returning safely and the uprooting of their family structure, students often carried these anxieties into their classrooms. To the credit of the staffs in Clover Park School District, they maintained focus on providing safe, predictable experiences for their students. Make Your Day helped to provide the much-needed structure that many of the students were seeking.

As I write this column, the Congress has failed to pass the Bail-Out Resolution. People are losing their homes, their jobs, and their sense of security. We can expect that some of our families will be hard hit during these challenging financial times. Some of us may find ourselves facing similar challenges financially. We should expect that this disruption is likely to be felt in our schools. It is our responsibility to maintain the predictability of the school environment for our students and ourselves. Although, academics should never be given a secondary emphasis in school, it may be a greater challenge to get our students through these troubling times. With structure becoming of greater importance, hyper-vigilance is the word of the day.

I thank you on behalf of your students and your parents for your stalwart efforts and undeterred focus. Once again, an example of intrinsic motivation.

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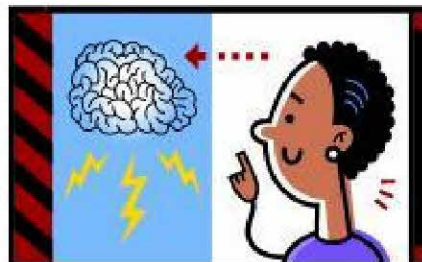
## Cheryl's Two Cents - Parents as Partners

"Is your child ready to return to class?" "Your child is opting out/choosing Steps frequently/not making their day. Do you have some ideas about how I can help your child be successful?" With these questions, we invite parents into the inner sanctum of school. Educators have always acknowledged that partnering with parents is critical to the success of their children, but we have not always asked our parents to give advice or make decisions about their children while they're on "our time."

Many times staff at new schools tell us that the parents at their school are not interested in their child's education and that they are unwilling to help. Just as we assume that students arrive at school each day eager to be successful, we assume that parents do want to be involved in a meaningful way in the success of their child. It is important that we listen to their perspectives because they are the experts in reference to their child and have a life-long responsibility to do the best they can in raising their children.

None of us had perfect parents or perfect home lives and those imperfections created the people that we are today. It is important that we remember this as we work with the parents of our students. Just like our parents, they are doing the best that they can with a child who came into this world without an instruction manual. I encourage you to always actively collaborate with parents without prejudging whether they are "good" or "bad" parents. They are our students' parents and that's all the credentials they need.

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## Brainstorm: Sharing Ideas and Humor

Shared by an administrator...

A first year teacher witnessed a student whack another student on the back of the head as he was walking across the classroom. She said to the student who did

the whacking, "I don't know what step that is, but you're on it!" The victim, who didn't retaliate, said, "I think it's a Step 4." When she double-checked with me, I explained it was an Auto Step 5. But remember, when in doubt, use this line! *"I don't know what step that is, but you're on it!"*

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MYD, Inc.  
5672 E. Hedgehog Place  
Scottsdale, AZ 85266  
866-693-7837  
EarlandCheryl@makeyourdays.com

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