



Parent Night Facilitator Guide

The
Leader
in Me™

General Points

1. Parent Night should be no longer than 1.5 hours.
2. Provide a light dinner or potluck to entice working parents.
3. Keep the pace of the evening moving along, interactive, and somewhat “edutaining.”
4. Depending on where you are in your implementation process, you may want to include students in Grades 3–6 to join their parents and offer child care for the younger students.
5. Context of the evening: “Come and see what your child is learning about leadership.”

Welcome

1. Thank parents for attending Parent Night.
2. Acknowledge that the single most important factor in whether a child will succeed in school is parent/family involvement.
3. Communicate that you realize they are busy, and express how much the staff appreciates their time spent learning about *The Leader in Me*.
4. Introduce staff members and administrators present.
5. Point out Lighthouse Team members and what their role is in *The Leader in Me* process.
6. Explain the end in mind for the event.
7. Review the agenda for the evening. Give a timeline.
8. Invite participants to enjoy any refreshments, and share other logistical information such as location of restrooms, etc.

Introduction

Activity: Forest

- Have the audience stand with arms outstretched. Tell them you are now looking at a forest and, since you are outside the forest, it is easy to see how to get to the back of the room. But if you start walking into the forest, you have branches (arms) blocking your view and it is easy to lose your way.
- Ask, “What would help?” (Eventually someone will mention a compass.)
- Explain how the 7 *Habits* are like a compass—they are common sense and everyone in the room already knows them. However, what is common sense is not always common practice. The 7 *Habits* help us in the “forest” of life. These habits are not just about school, they are about life.

Brief Overview of *The Leader in Me*

The Leader in Me process was designed to help teachers develop leadership skills in their students. Helping students discover their own unique strengths allows teachers to find opportunities for every child to shine—to be a leader. Incorporating the common language of the 7 *Habits* into all curriculum areas deepens student understanding and acknowledges what the school and teacher believe to be important. Discussing which habits a historical figure or a character in a story use are just a few of the simple ways to incorporate the 7 *Habits* into what teachers are already doing.

“Leadership” is the umbrella term to encompass the many character traits and basic life competencies that parents, business leaders, and educators are voicing as the desired skills necessary to thrive in the 21st century:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Initiative and Self-Direction
- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Productivity and Accountability
- Leadership and Responsibility

Video: *Developing Leaders One Child at a Time* (3:42)

Leadership is a concept we don’t normally consider when thinking of children. However, children are very capable of learning leadership skills and using them at home and at school. By developing well-rounded children who know their strengths, we help them unleash their potential to lead their own lives and to influence others.

A crucial part of this process is that it be schoolwide—everywhere, all the time (ubiquitous). In this way, students get the leadership message from everyone throughout the school day. As the children understand and use the 7 *Habits*, they become more motivated, organized, engaged, and will take ownership of their learning.

Video: *Rippling Across the Globe* (7:05)

One-Hour Overview of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

In 1989, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* was written by Dr. Stephen R. Covey. The book caught a wave, particularly in organizational arenas, and today the 7 *Habits* are still thriving in boardrooms, government offices, and universities around the world.

Shortly after the book was published, a superintendent thought the content would be beneficial to teachers and administrators also. To date, nearly a half million professional educators have been trained in the 7 *Habits*. Then, in 1998, Sean Covey wrote *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* and the training of secondary-school students began.

In 1999, a principal from North Carolina had the idea of teaching the 7 *Habits* to elementary school students. She needed a new approach for her school and, based on stakeholder input, decided “leadership” would be that approach. She used the 7 *Habits* as the main content to establish her leadership culture. Since then, many other schools have joined her in bringing the 7 *Habits* and other leadership principles to elementary school students. They have experienced amazing results. The intent is not to prepare students to become CEOs or world leaders, but rather to teach them how to lead their individual lives and how to succeed in the 21st century.

Video: *Kids Teach the 7 Habits* (5:10)

Overview of the 7 Habits®

Habit 1: Be Proactive®

I am a responsible person. I take initiative. I choose my actions, attitudes, and moods. I do not blame others for my wrong actions. I do the right thing without being asked, even when no one is looking.

Activity: You're in Charge

- Have participants share words that describe reactive behavior. Ask, "What is the opposite of reactive?"
- Ask the audience for words to describe proactive behavior.
- Take out a pop bottle labeled "reactive" (preferably a clear bottle) and a water bottle labeled "proactive" and ask for two volunteers to hold the bottles. (This works better if the bottles are half full.)
- Say, "I am going to read five statements and you decide which person should shake his/her bottle."
- "Your neighbor's leaves are all over your yard. You go over and yell at him."
- "Someone cuts you off in traffic so you drive closely behind the person."
- "Your boss is in a bad mood, but you don't let it affect you."
- "Your feelings get hurt, but you realize the person is having a bad day, so you let it go."
- "Your friend planned to meet you for lunch but didn't show up, so you left him/her a nasty message."
- Ask, "What will happen to our proactive volunteer if I ask him/her to open the bottle? What about our reactive volunteer?"
- Continue with, "Reactive people are like this bottle of pop. It gets shaken up and eventually will explode. Proactive people are more like the water bottle. They think before they respond. You can shake them up all you want, but nothing happens!"

Habit 2: Begin With the End in Mind®

I plan ahead and set goals. I do things that have meaning and make a difference. I am an important part of my classroom and contribute to my school's mission and vision. I look for ways to be a good citizen.

Activity: Have a Plan

- Ask for a volunteer. Tell the volunteer that you want him/her to move from you to a person you designate who is 20 or 30 feet away.)
- When the volunteer has walked about 5 feet, bring him/her back and either blindfold him/her, or ask the volunteer to close his/her eyes. Assure the volunteer that you will walk behind and not allow him/her to walk into anything.
- Ask the other participants to help by giving directions. Eventually, the volunteer will get to his/her destination.
- Ask, "Before you were blindfolded, you could see where you were going and you had a plan on how to get there. After you were blindfolded, your plan was not as clear, so you listened to your 'friends.' You had to rely on others to get you where you wanted to go. Not having a plan is like waiting for someone to get you where you want to go. Begin With the End in Mind is having a plan and being in control of the plan.

Habit 3: Put First Things First®

I spend my time on things that are most important. This means I say no to things I know I should not do. I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan. I am disciplined and organized.

Activity: Work First, Then Play

- Needed: Two containers of the same size, eight large rocks, aquarium gravel
- Fill one container halfway with gravel.
- Ask participants for examples of their most important roles—the big rocks.
- Now ask participants for examples of the unimportant tasks that take up time during the day—the small rocks.
- Tell participants that each container represents a day.
- Ask for a volunteer to place his/her big rocks in the container with the gravel, staying below the rim. (They will not all fit.)
- After a few minutes, ask, “What would happen if you started with the big rocks (a day) and then added the small rocks?”
- Explain that the result will be that all of the big rocks will fit, and most, if not all, of the small rocks will also fit. And even if all of the small rocks don’t fit, it doesn’t matter, because the big rocks are accounted for. This is putting first things first.

Activity: Parents stand and learn the hand signs for Habits 1, 2, and 3.

Habit 4: Think Win-Win®

I balance courage for getting what I want with consideration for what others want. When conflicts arise, I look for a win-win solution.

Activity: Everyone Can Win

- Ask the audience to pair up.
- Have Person “A” make a tight fist. The goal of Person “B” is to have Person A open his/her fist. (This will usually end up with Person B trying to force it open.)
- Now, ask for a volunteer to arm-wrestle. Explain that the volunteer will get 10 cents each time he/she wins and you will get 10 cents each time you win. Begin, but let the volunteer win; again and again.
- Eventually, try to see if he/she will let you win. After a few minutes, explain that by letting you win, you both receive the reward.
- Try the fist activity again to see if anyone’s paradigm has changed.
- Ask, “How many people does it take to Think Win-Win? That’s right, only one. If one of you thinks win-win, how does the outcome change?”

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood®

I listen to other people's ideas and feelings. I try to see things from their viewpoint (paradigm). I listen to others without interrupting; I listen with my ears, my eyes, and my heart. I am confident in voicing my ideas.

Activity: Listen Before You Talk

- Have participants pair up.
- Instruct them to tell the story of *Goldilocks* or *The Three Little Pigs* taking turns saying each word.
- For example, the first person will say, "Once," and the second person will add, "upon." They should continue for 1 minute. At the end of 1 minute, stop them and ask, "How many of you thought, during the activity, "My partner sure doesn't know this story!?"
- Point out that each of you knows the story from your paradigm; neither is "wrong," but your version may be a little different.

Habit 6: Synergize®

I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, even people who are different than me. I work well in groups. I seek out other people's ideas because I know that by teaming with others, we can create better solutions than what any one of us could alone. I look for Third Alternatives.

Activity: Together Is Better

- Instruct participants to write, or keep a list in their heads, of as many three-letter body parts as they can.
- After 1 minute, have the audience get into groups of six with the goal of listing 10 three-letter body parts in 1 minute.
- Ask, "Were you able to think of more three-letter body parts alone or together? That is called synergizing."

Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw®

I eat right, exercise, and get enough sleep (body). I learn in lots of ways and lots of places, not just at school (brain). I spend time with family and friends (heart). I take time to find meaningful ways to help people (soul). I balance all four parts of myself.

Activity: Balance Feels Best

- At this point, you should start to wrap up the presentation, so no specific activity is recommended.
- Tell the audience to think of a car: four tires are needed to operate smoothly. We are like a car; we need all four parts of ourselves to operate smoothly.
- If we ignore any one part, it will affect all the other parts. Balance is the key.

Activity: Parents stand and learn the Hand Signs for Habits 4, 5, 6, and 7. Continue with the hand signs for all of the habits.



Question and Answer Session

- Open up the opportunity for participants to ask any questions they may have.
- If applicable, this is a good time to let parents know when and where a more in-depth training of the 7 *Habits* will be offered and how to sign up.

Close and Thanks

Learning the habits will allow your children to make purposeful, meaningful decisions based on what they want for themselves and not what peer pressure or the media is telling them.

Your child is about to embark—or already has embarked—on an exciting journey, and our hope is that you will ask your child how he or she is doing along the way. Have your child reteach the content to you! It will give him or her an even deeper understanding and will give both of you an opportunity to learn together. Soon you will discover many ways to reinforce leadership in your home.

Remember Dr. Covey's words:

“Leadership is communicating a person’s worth and potential so clearly that they are inspired to see it in themselves.”—Dr. Stephen R. Covey

I want to thank you again for taking the time to support your child. I encourage you to read through the handout as well as the Parent’s Place, available at www.TheLeaderInMe.org. We’ll close the event with a video called *Rethinking Leadership*.

Video: *Rethinking Leadership* (3:27)