

START HERE

Family Counts

A study of the effects of home visits on the parent-teacher relationship

Aimee DiBrienza
Westminster College, 2018

Research Aims

- 1 Determine the effect of a teacher home visit on subsequent parental participation in parent education, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), volunteerism on campus, and school events.
- 2 Discover trends in the quality and frequency of parent-teacher communications.
- 3 Explore the responses of teachers and parents to the process and effects of teacher home visits.

Parents don't volunteer more, they collaborate & trust more!

Home Visits: A better way to open the door

- Positivity
- Vulnerability
- Informality
- Motive

- Trust
- Goal Agreement
- Accountability

Effects of Open Doors

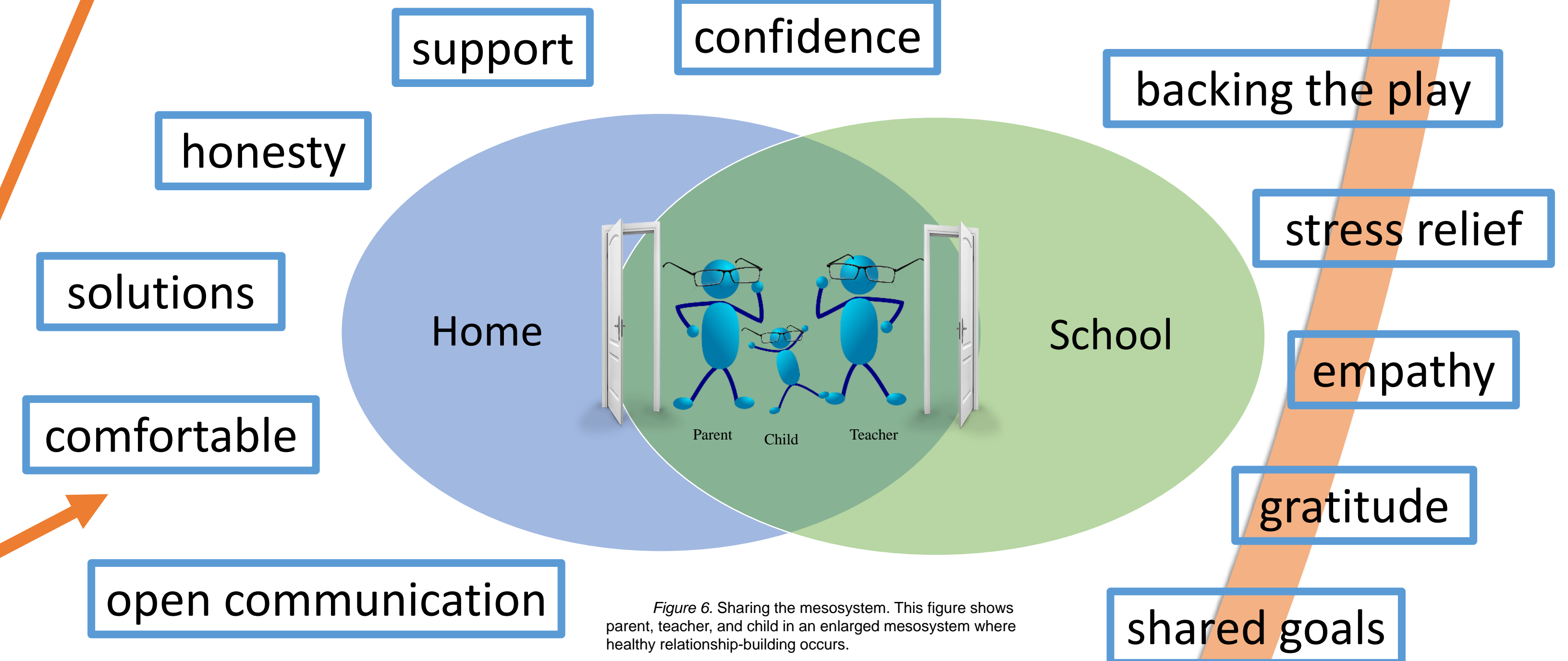


Figure 6. Sharing the mesosystem. This figure shows parent, teacher, and child in an enlarged mesosystem where healthy relationship-building occurs.

Home Visits: Realistic View

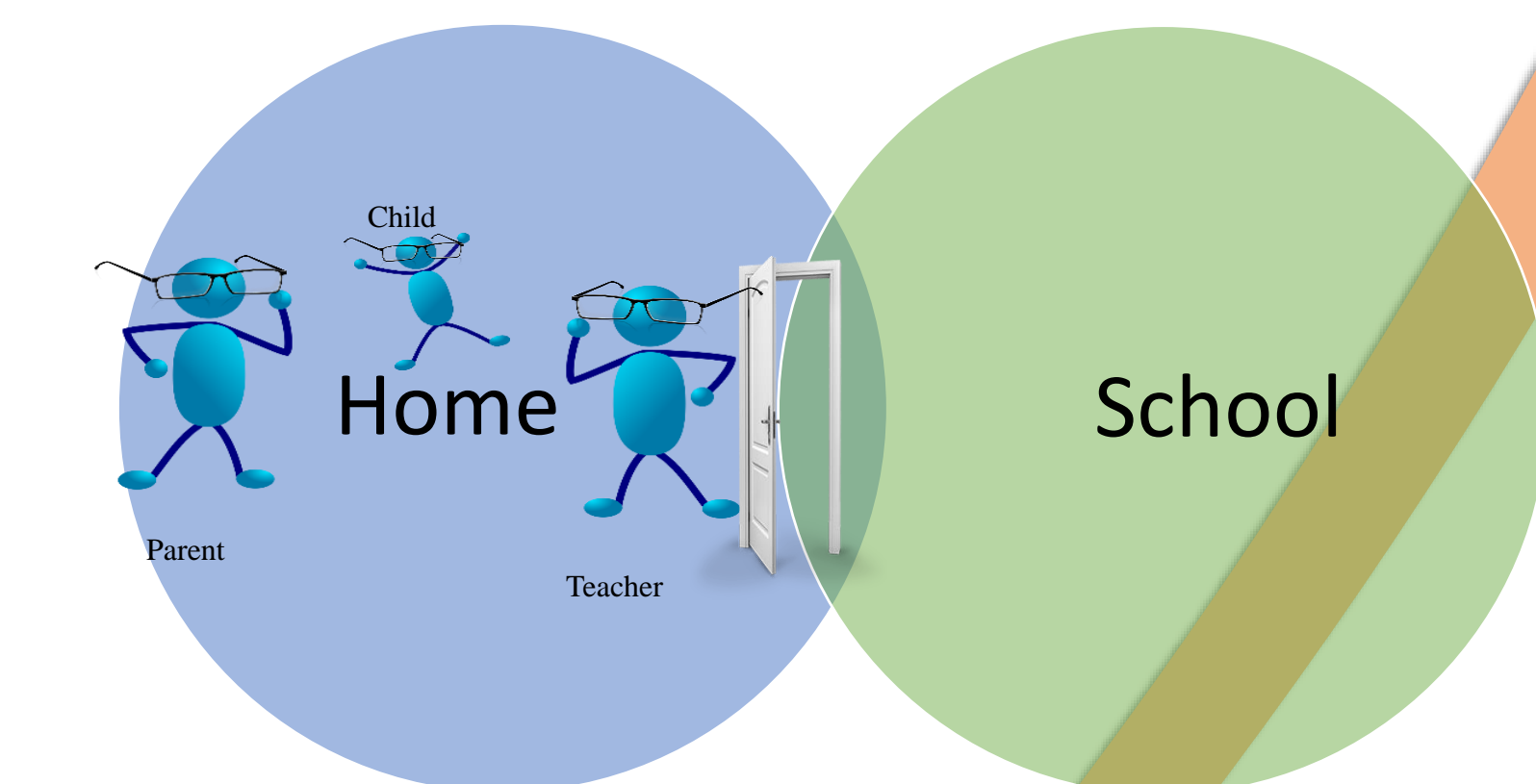


Figure 5. A realistic view from the home visit. This figure shows parent, child, and teacher seeing each other in a new way during a home visit.

- Culture
- Family Dynamics
- Parenting Styles
- Child's role in the family
- Home environment, including special things
- Teachers enter as learners
- Settling of ROLES
- Levels the playing field – no power differential (equal ground)
- Let go of assumptions and fears

Qualitative Case Study

- Parent Teacher Relationship Survey
- School communication & participation data
- Teacher Interviews
- Parent Focus Group Discussion
- Constant Comparative Method

Perceptions of Separateness

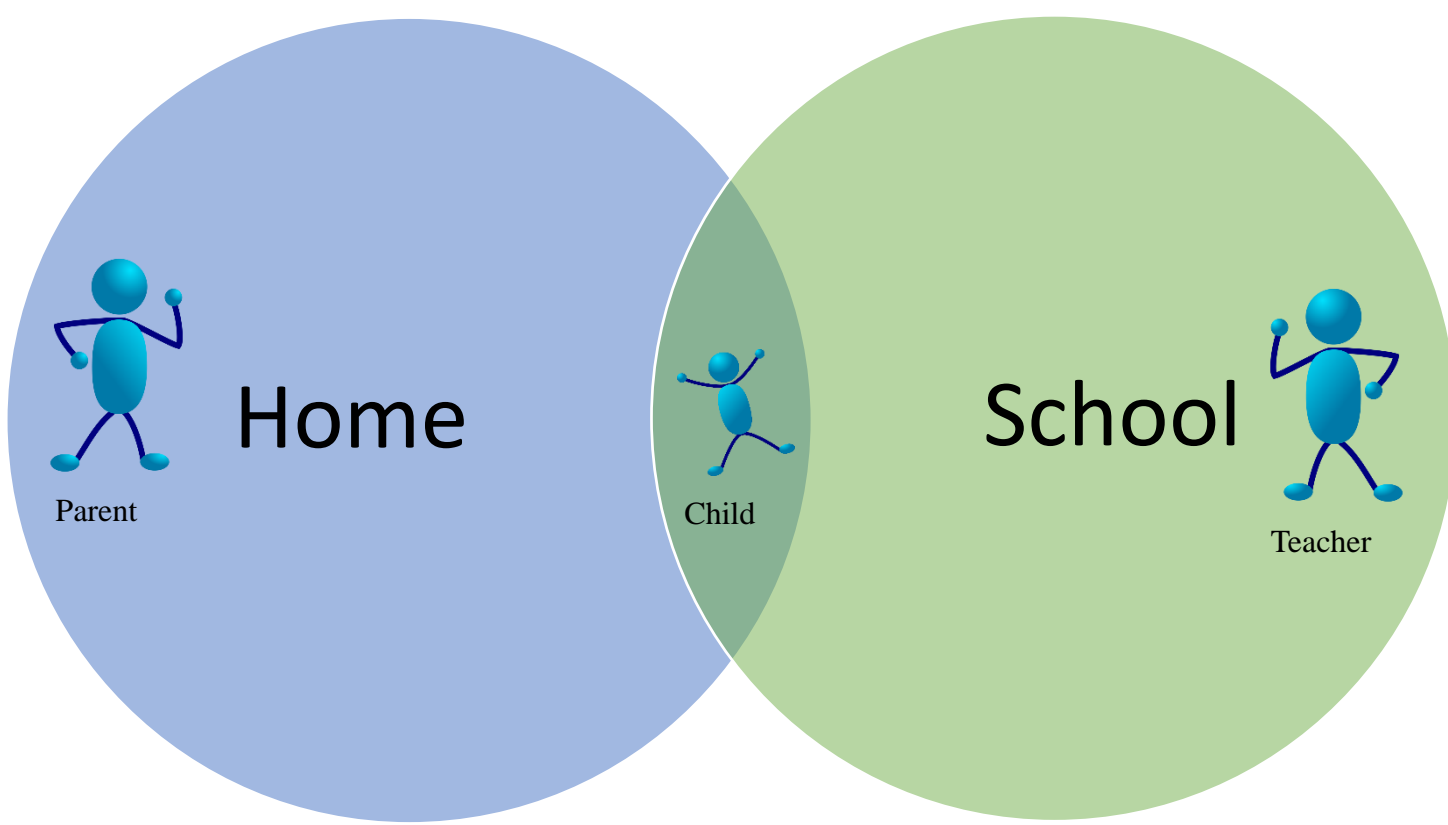


Figure 2. Positions within microsystems. This figure shows the separation of parent and teacher in separate microsystems, with the child only in the mesosystem, or overlap.

Key ideas:

- Parents and Teachers don't start out on the same team
- Parents fear judgment
- Teachers fear offending
- Both feel disconnected

Closed Doors

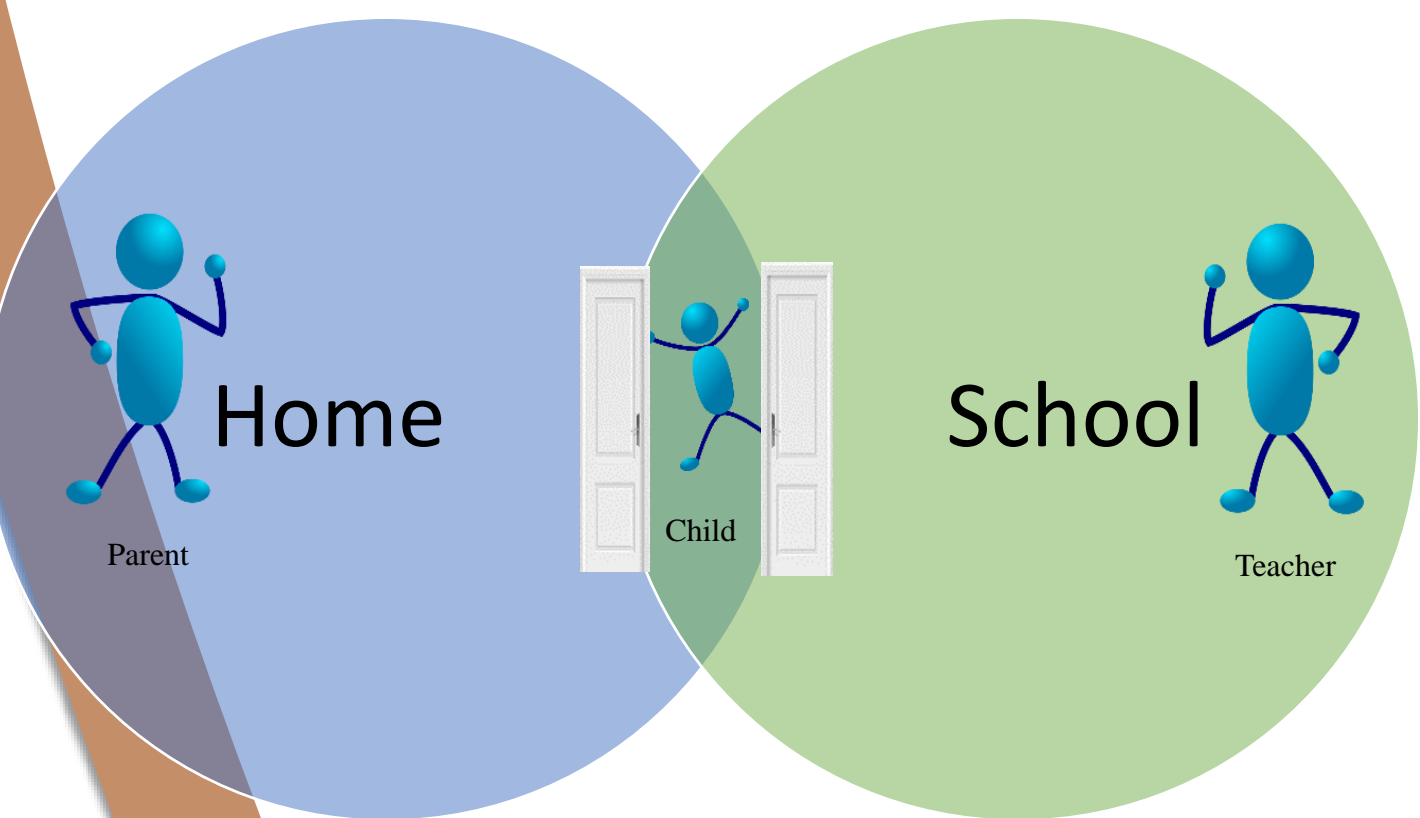


Figure 3. Microsystems with a closed mesosystem. This figure shows closed doors into the microsystem, representing the fears that keep teachers and parents separate.

- There are doors on both sides
- The child has free access to both, but teachers and parents often feel the doors are closed to them
- Teachers feel frustrated when they repeatedly reach out, but parents don't respond or reciprocate

Opening School Doors

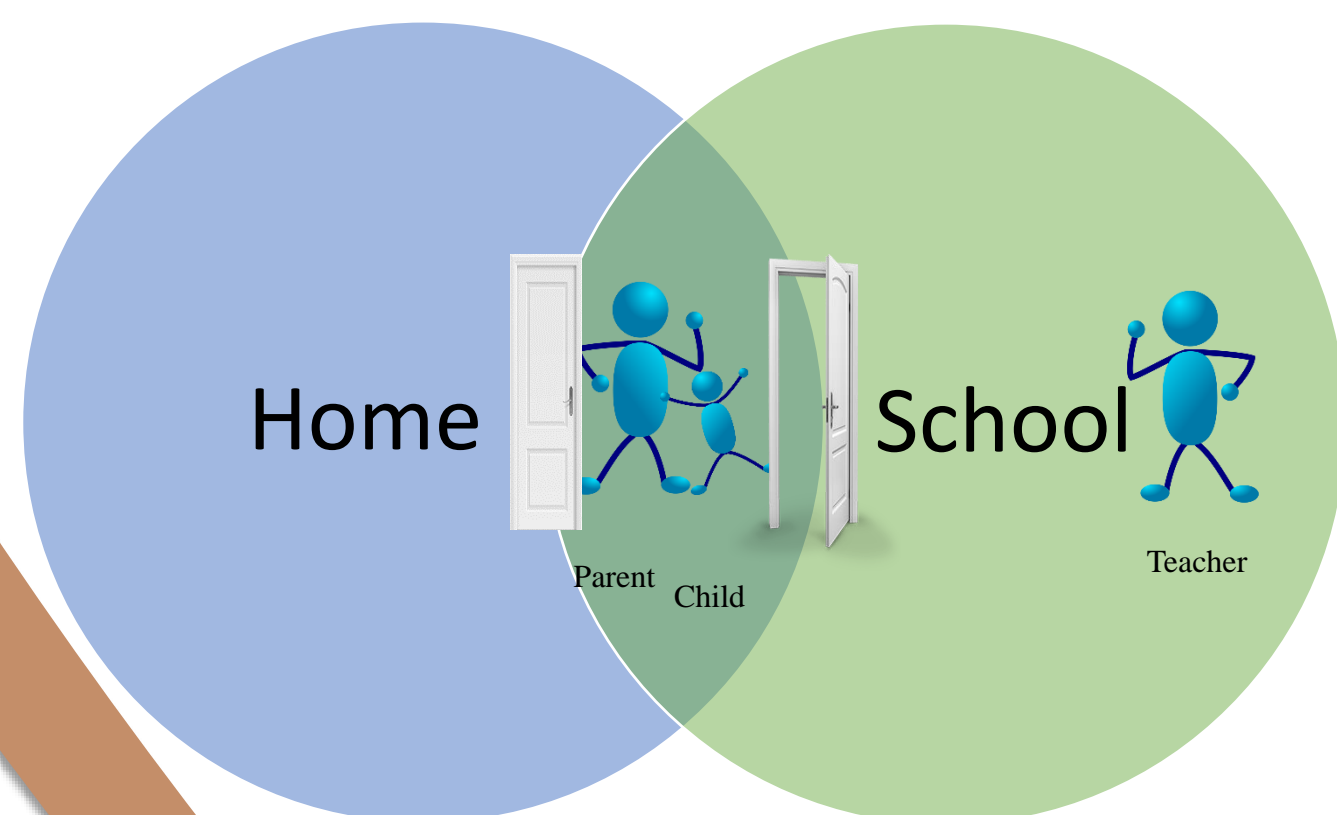


Figure 4. Parent on campus. This figure shows the parent in the mesosystem, but with his own door closed and still in a separate space from the teacher.

- Teachers want more parents to volunteer at school, and recognize those who do as involved

BUT

- Opening the school's doors doesn't cause parents to feel a part of the school community

- 48% BTSN attendance
- 18% of total parent body enrolled in PTO
- After BTSN, 4% contributed 44% of volunteer hours
- Community logged 324.5 hours, parent body logged only 283.5.

- BTSN doesn't inspire involvement



webpage

- Resources accessible at home
- No-contact support



text

- Fast, short, easy
- May contain graphics & pictures
- Informal
- Answer now or later
- Google text from office
- Higher among HV participants



email

- Include Admin, save in folder
- General information
- Attachments
- Detail
- Now or later response
- Time to craft and word carefully
- Most frequent use
- Begin individual conversations



face-to-face

- Body language helps
- Most effective at achieving detail, compassion, and teamwork
- Before & after school, hallways, carpool, Walmart...
- Higher comfort for teachers and parents after HV



phone

- Sense of urgency creates anxiety in both parents and teachers
- Parents assume problems
- Improvisation makes teachers nervous
- Teachers fear misinterpretation
- Generally a last resort
- Easier after HV

Theoretical Framework

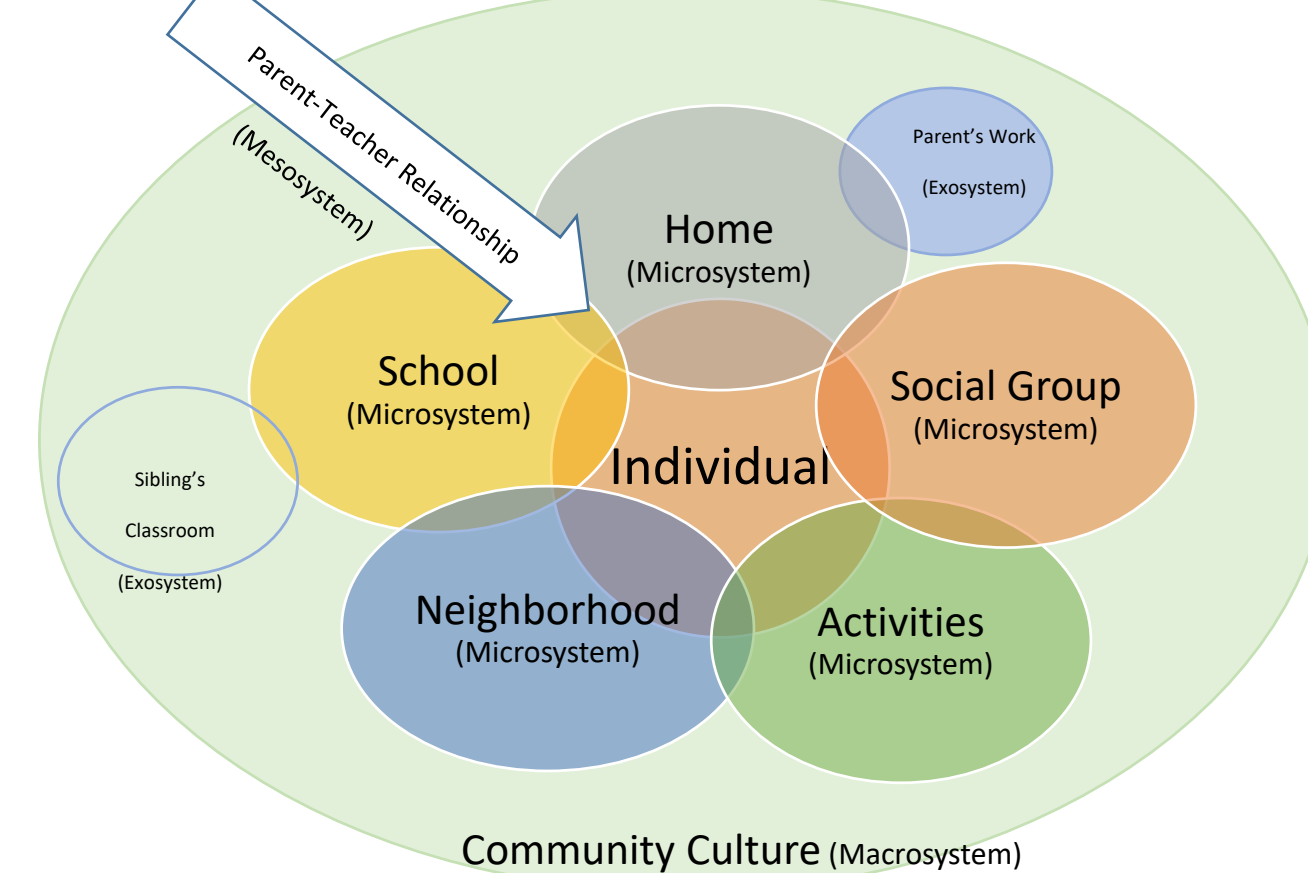


Figure 1. Ecological Systems Theory. This figure shows examples of microsystems, exosystems, the macrosystem, and the significant mesosystem with which this research is concerned.

- Ecological Systems Theory
- Social Capital Theory

Communication Continuum



email

- Include Admin, save in folder
- General information
- Attachments
- Detail
- Now or later response
- Time to craft and word carefully
- Most frequent use
- Begin individual conversations



face-to-face

- Body language helps
- Most effective at achieving detail, compassion, and teamwork
- Before & after school, hallways, carpool, Walmart...
- Higher comfort for teachers and parents after HV



phone

- Sense of urgency creates anxiety in both parents and teachers
- Parents assume problems
- Improvisation makes teachers nervous
- Teachers fear misinterpretation
- Generally a last resort
- Easier after HV