

AP-OD Family Connections

Message from AP-OD

A new school year brings a fresh start full of possibilities and opportunities to help children develop habits for school success. This month, we are talking about something that matters from day one: showing up. Research shows that regular attendance in early education, even in preschool, can help build a strong foundation for a child's learning and future success. And as a parent or caregiver, you play an important role in helping your child build routines that support regular attendance and a positive connection to school.

Grandparents and grandparent figures play such a special role in our families and communities. With National Grandparents Day coming up on September 13, it is a great time to celebrate all they do. Join our fun community challenge for a chance to win a special prize!

In this issue, you will also find free Vroom printable tip cards to help build your child's school readiness skills at home, and a beautiful spotlight on Angélica, a proud mother and AP-OD graduate whose story reminds us that small, intentional steps can truly transform a family.

Thank you for being part of this community and supporting your child every day!



AP-OD Parent Spotlight



Angélica — Every Lesson Mattered

Angélica is a proud mother of three and an AP-OD graduate who joined the program with her husband, ready to grow together as parents and find resources to support their children.

Through AP-OD, Angélica found new ways to build trust at home by having more open conversations with her kids and daily routines that bring the family together. Most importantly, she discovered something that so many AP-OD parents come to know: she was already her children's most important teacher. And with the right support, she could show up for them with greater confidence.

"Every lesson mattered," she shared. A reminder that small steps can make a big difference for your family.

[Read Angelica's story](#)

Tip of the Month



Show Up, Start Strong!

Did you know that going to school every day, starting in preschool, can make a big difference in your child's future? Research shows that children who miss more days of school, especially those who are chronically absent, show fewer gains in math and literacy during the preschool year. Children who are chronically absent in kindergarten are 7.2 times more likely to be chronically absent in 1st grade, which means the habits we build early really do matter.

Tip of the Month



The good news is that parents and caregivers can help children build positive attendance habits from the very beginning. A consistent routine, a warm goodbye, and your encouragement go a long way in helping your child feel ready and excited for school! Arriving on time each day also helps your child start the day feeling calm and ready to learn. Simple things like setting a regular bedtime, laying out clothes the night before, and packing backpacks together can make school mornings so much smoother for the whole family.

[Download this free tip sheet from Attendance Works](#) for more simple ideas to help your child build strong attendance habits starting in preschool and kindergarten.

Learn more from the research:

★ **[Absenteeism in Head Start and Children's Academic Learning](#)** — Ansari & Purtell, Child Development (2017)

★ **[The Persistence of Chronic Absence Between Kindergarten and 1st Grade in California](#)** — Gee, Chang & Leong, Attendance Works (2026)



Help Your Child Get Ready with Vroom!

Getting your child ready for school is about more than just showing up — it's about building the skills they need to learn and grow every day. The Vroom printable tip cards below are full of fun, simple activities you can do at home with children ages 0–5 to build school readiness skills together:

★ **[Literacy](#)** — help your child fall in love with words and stories

★ **[Math](#)** — counting, shapes, and patterns made fun

★ **[Science](#)** — spark your child's natural curiosity about the world

★ **[Physical Development](#)** — move, play, and grow strong together

★ **[Working with Others](#)** — build the social skills that help kids thrive in school

Print them out, stick them on the fridge, and try one activity a day. Every small moment counts!

Upcoming Events and Workshops



Family-to-Family Real Talk Series: Somos Familias Latinas

A free virtual conversation series from the Brazelton Touchpoints Center and The Children's Partnership that celebrates the strength, wisdom, and lived experiences of Latino families. Attendees will discuss the important roles that faith, solidarity, community care, and love play in familias latinas living in uncertain times. All conversations are offered in English and Spanish.

- ☀ September 28, 2026 – [Holding Our Families Together in Uncertain Times](#)
- ☀ October 19, 2026 – [Fe y Familia: Faith as a Foundation](#)
- ☀ November 9, 2026 – [Dime Con Quien Andas: Solidarity in Community and Collective Power](#)
- ☀ November 30, 2026 – [Con Amor y Sacrificio: The Guilt, Dignity, and Deep Love of Caring for Our Elders while Raising Our Children](#)

Register

Upcoming Events and Workshops



Family-to-Family Real Talk Series: Parents Rising to Child Developmental Challenges

A free virtual conversation series from the Brazelton Touchpoints Center that offers a warm and inviting opportunity for parents and families of children with differences in or challenges to their development to connect with each other. Through four engaging conversations with parents who know what it's like to raise children with developmental differences, challenges, delays, or disabilities, we share the unique and common experiences of loving and raising children whose developmental journey is delayed or atypical. All episodes have live Spanish translation and captioning available.

- ☀ September 14, 2026 – [Stepping Up: Kinship Care and Family Resilience](#)
- ☀ October 26, 2026 – [A Three-Perspective Approach: One Provider's Story of Neurodivergence, Parenting, and Practice](#)
- ☀ November 2, 2026 – [When the Personal Is the Professional: A Mother's Journey with Autism](#)
- ☀ December 7, 2026 – [This Is What I See, What Do You See? A Family's Journey through Complex Diagnoses](#)

Register

August 31, 2026



Upcoming Events and Workshops



[OPERATION PARENT] WEBINARS

The Brains We're Building: How Screens, Substances & Stress Shape Youth Wellbeing

September 29, 2026 | 10 AM PT / 1 PM ET

This free webinar from [Operation Parent](#) asks: What happens in the developing brain when young people experience stress, use substances, spend time on social media, or learn to manage big emotions? Neuroscience educator and 22 Forever founder Dr. Kristen Gilliland will explore the science of neuroplasticity and how these experiences can shape youth wellbeing. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the developing brain and practical ways to promote resilience, healthy coping, and wellbeing before a crisis begins.

Live captions will be available in English and Spanish.

Register

August 30, 2026



Community Building

Celebrate the Grandparents in Your Life!

September 13th is National Grandparents Day, a day to recognize the grandmas, grandpas, and grandparent figures who make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families. From sharing stories and family traditions to offering encouragement and unconditional love, thank you for all you do!

Whether you are a grandparent or a parent celebrating a special grandparent figure in your child's life, we want to hear your story! Share a photo or video on Instagram or Facebook and tell us:

- ☀️ **Parents & families:** "One thing I love about the grandparent figure in my child's life is ____."
- ☀️ **Grandparents:** "One of my favorite things about being part of my grandchild's life is ____."

Tag us @AP_OD_National to enter for a chance to win one free year of the AP-OD Family Membership! The AP-OD Membership gives families ongoing access to trusted resources, learning opportunities, and exclusive family savings.

The winner will be announced in our next issue, September 15, 2026. Don't miss your chance to celebrate the grandparents in your family and win something special in the process!

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to join the fun!



Saying "What we learn as a family lasts a lifetime."