

PORTLAND

lifestyle & family

ACTIVITIES

ARTS & CULTURE

COMMUNITY

FOOD

EDUCATION

HEALTH & BEAUTY

PARENTING

PARENTING / OCTOBER 10, 2016

Ask Ariel: Kindergarten Disconnection



Dear Ariel,

I went back to work recently for the first time since my daughter was born now that she is in Kindergarten. While she was in a co-op preschool I was very involved in her school. I spoke with her teachers everyday. I volunteered in her classroom. I knew what was happening in her "school life." Now that I am working full-time, I feel really disconnected from her new school. I haven't even met her teacher in person yet. Do you have any suggestions on how to be more involved with my daughter's school?

Signed,

Full-Time Working Mom

Dear Full-Time Working Mom,

The transition to Kindergarten sounds like a big one for your entire family. Not only has your daughter shifted to a "big kid school" but also you have returned to work for the first time since before she was born. Don't underestimate what a big deal it is for these two changes to be happening simultaneously.

It sounds like you are grieving a loss of your previous life as a full-time parent. Those precious first years are such a gift to creating a strong foundation in the relationship with your daughter and that change from full-time mom to full-time worker *and* full-time mom is a rough one. I remember how much I cried the first day I returned to work after my maternity leave. It's a big family milestone. Part of that loss is the lack of connection to your daughter's "school life."

Of course you can email her teacher and go to Back to School Night but those fleeting interactions are not the same as being at school everyday for pick-up or drop-off time. My suggestion is to try and make a little space in your work life to be a part of your daughter's school life. Being a chaperone for a field trip is a great way to foster that connection and get to know her teacher on a different kind of



IN PRINT

READ THE PDF

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

PAST ISSUES

FIND PORTLAND FAMILY

SUBSCRIBE

ADVERTISE



FREE PRINT SUBSCRIPTION

If you would like to request a free print subscription of Portland Family Magazine, please complete the following form and we will follow up with you.

Your Name (required)

Your Email (required)

Address

Address 2

school day. Maybe make a monthly lunch date in the cafeteria with her, if you can escape your workplace during your own lunchtime.

Drop-off and pick-up times are a great way to see how the school functions and see what her class and teacher are like. Even if you only go once a month, it can really help bridge the gap between home life and school life. I recently learned of my son's empathic streak during a special morning drop-off at his preschool. His teacher had enough time to share with me that he created a "happy dance" to help the other kids feel better when they cry when their moms and dads drop them off at school. I never would have learned about this if I didn't rearrange my schedule that morning to be able to take him to school. I know it can be hard to ask for extra time in a new job. Many companies understand that the well being of their workers is dependent on the well being of their worker's families. Being a part of your child's school community is obviously important to you and I would guess, also important to your child.

City

State

Zip Code

SEND

0 SHARES

Ariel Frager



Ariel Frager is a school counselor and has a private therapy practice that specializes in treating children, adolescents and families. She lives in Portland with her husband, son, dog and kitty cat.



Ready to move your life and career forward?
Marylhurst can help.

[LEARN MORE](#)

MARYLHURST
UNIVERSITY

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH!