

# Building Trust: In the Car Line

## Video Transcript

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Sound familiar? The sweet bustling sounds of an elementary school's dismissal. Hi, I'm Madison Leach. I'm an assistant principal and community liaison at an elementary school. One of the most important and often overlooked moments of connection and building trust with our multilingual families happens right here in the car line.

Arrival and dismissal are so much more than just logistics. These few minutes are golden opportunities to build trust, learn about our families, and create an inclusive, welcoming school culture. In the car line, we see who's carpooling, sharing their cars, walking together, maybe a grandparent, an older sibling, or a neighbor. These are key people in our students' lives. A simple, "Good morning," "Buenos días," or "How was your day?" can open doors to deeper conversations.

It's often where parents will tell me exciting news, like a cousin's visiting; an immediate need, like, "I lost my job;" or ask a question, "Can you explain more information about the field trip next Wednesday?" As community liaisons and school leaders, we need to pay attention. Presence is important in the classroom, hallways, and at arrival and dismissal. Take the time to notice who's new to the area, who's connecting with whom. These observations help us identify family leaders, those informal connectors who help others navigate school life.

These insights help us align our school resources with real community strengths. We have one parent who takes two trips through our car line and transports between 12 and 18 students to school each day. She is the perfect example of a community connector. And when we spot a need, whether it's language access, housing support, or after-school care, we know exactly who to connect with. Bilingual staff, family mentors, local organizations, our school support team, the list goes on. So the car line, it's not just a routine, it's a relationship builder. It's where we listen, connect, pay attention, and build a bridge between school and home, one car, one family at a time.

Let's continue to meet families where they are with intention, with heart, and with the belief that every moment counts even in the car line.