

# Ways to Get Parents Involved in the Destination ImagiNation® Program

1. Make sure you keep parents in the loop. Invite parents to a meeting early in the program season. Provide them with a copy of the Team Challenge, *Rules of the Road*, and the Interference Contract.
  - Review with parents what you expect of them, what they can expect from you, and what you expect from their students.
  - Review the rules of Interference with parents, including a discussion of the Interference Triangle found on page 14 of *Rules of the Road*.
  - Parents should not expect you to foot the bill for snacks, *Instant Challenge* supplies or *Team Challenge* materials. Have a realistic discussion about expenses, and ask parents for a contribution.
  - This is a great time for you to exchange contact information with each other.
2. Ask parents to organize a snack plan for team meetings, as well as a meal plan for later in the season, when meetings tend to increase in frequency and length. Team Managers should not have to pay for pizza and pop, sweets and treats at every meeting!
3. Ask parents to organize a car pool for getting students to meetings.
4. Early in the program season, provide parents with the cre8iowa Calendar, along with suggested meeting times. Request that parents notify you ahead of time about conflicts so that you can modify the team's meeting calendar to accommodate everyone as much as possible. Recognize that not every student will be at every meeting, and allow the team (not you!) to problem solve for these situations.
5. Continue to stay in touch with parents, using a system agreed upon by all. This might take the form of a meeting notebook for students with a section for Notes to Parents. Some Team Managers prefer to e-mail parents instead, or create a meeting blog online that parents can check every week.
6. Ask parents to teach **general** skills, making sure they understand the rules of Interference. Sample skills might include:
  - How to use a sewing machine
  - How to use tools (especially power tools) safely
  - Electrical wiring
  - Using adhesives safely
  - How to mix colors . . . and more!

7. Ask parents to organize *Instant Challenges* for team meetings. You may wish to have them provide supplies so you or a Co-Manager can facilitate, or you can rotate that responsibility through the parents.
8. Invite parents (perhaps on a rotating basis) to sit in on meetings so that they can see what goes on at meetings. Make sure they understand the rules of Interference!
9. Invite one or two parents to assist you as Co- or Assistant Managers.
10. Schedule an *Instant Challenge* Family Night, and invite parents to solve *Instant Challenges*.
11. Invite a parent to be the team's Tournament Appraiser. This same person is allowed to provide *Instant Challenge* feedback during *Instant Challenge* practice.
12. Schedule a dress rehearsal at least 2 weeks before the Tournament, and invite parents to attend. Make sure they understand the rules of Interference, and do not provide feedback to the students.
13. Ask parents to organize a transportation pool for field trips, as well as getting team members and props to Tournament(s).
14. Ask parents whether they can provide meeting space, or lend the team tools on an as-needed basis.
15. Encourage parents to extend their children's creative journey by playing creative games with them, or organize a Family Game Night with students and their parents to play such games as:
  - Pictionary®
  - Cranium®
  - IMagiNiff...®
  - Scattergories®
  - Outburst®
  - Apples to Apples®
16. Ask parents to help you organize a celebration at the end of the program season. No matter what the results of competition are, this brings closure to everyone, and ends the season on a fun note.