

THE AGENTIC BLACK PARENT EBOOK

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PARENTS
WANTING TO GET THE MOST OUT OF
THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL



BY DR. CHARLES COLE, III

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

All of the parents and guardians that wished their parents had a guide like this. This book is dedicated to our community where Black children and Black families are often the most let down by a system meant to serve them.

This book is for the families that may have been struggling with the system but want to fight back.

I wrote this book because it is the book my own parents needed as we fumbled through the system ourselves.

We are on our own!

ABOUT CHARLES



Dr. Charles Cole, III is an educator focused on the advancement of youth, more specifically, Black males. This passion comes from his experiences growing up without proper support, including being homeless and attending more than ten elementary schools across the country while his parents battled addiction and incarceration. Throughout that experience, no adult, no group, or no organization ever asked him how he was achieving success nor how he was surviving. Schools were not a place where students in similar predicaments were learning. This experience helped lead to the publication of his first book, *Beyond Grit and Resilience*.

Charles' life goal is to better the communities he grew up in, which include Maywood (Chicago), Paducah (KY), and Oakland.

Charles Cole, III

“

If you put a goldfish in a small bowl, it can't grow. People like me do better when we set the stage for ourselves - when we set the standard HIGH for ourselves.

DR. CHARLES COLE III

”

MODULE 01



CHAPTER 1: YOU DESERVE BETTER

In my work, I specialize in supporting Black families in getting the most out of public education. It is a broken system where we [read: Black people] far too often shoulder the brunt of this system's shortcomings. The hardest part of my job is convincing our people they deserve better than what they are getting.

Here is a short case study of two Black mothers that exemplifies what I am saying.



The first mother is my own. My parents struggled with addiction. We lived in abject poverty to the point where we were chronically homeless. My mother at the time did not have a high school diploma. Both of my parents cared deeply about my education even though they did not have “the language” to properly advocate. My father was the disciplinarian while my mother was the advocate. So every time she stepped into those schools to advocate for me, she had her own levels of inadequacies to juggle in her head. Every time a teacher called her about my behavior, it was another notch to her failure as a parent. School meetings were not a space of collaboration for my mother’s eldest son, it was a battlefield where she fought for her own dignity while also battling addiction in her life.

Premise number two is a Black mother I worked with years later and worlds apart from where I started. This woman was married to a very supportive husband. She had a graduate-level degree and was firmly middle class. However, she had similar struggles in the school building to my mother’s. This woman also struggled to get the most out of the education system while protecting her son from a place that was constantly committing what I like to call *Education Malpractice*. Her experience also became a battleground. One thing to remember is that people that find themselves caught on a battlefield without knowing war is happening is effectively a casualty. We can no longer afford that. This booklet plans to change that. We do not want this to be a war, but we require our people be properly prepared regardless and that preparation starts by us all understanding that **WE DESERVE BETTER**. That starts with the individual. You are worthy of great things. I do not care if you are a high school dropout or have multiple degrees and a good salary. Black children deserve more from the broken system that thrives off them regardless if it does right by them or not.

If you are going to take the education your child(ren) deserves, it starts with your own sense of agency. It does not matter if you have a Ph.D. or a 6th-grade education; you and your advocacy are required.

“

**To put it simply, AGENCY is discernment + action
for you and your family’s well-being.**

”

You don’t have to be perfect, in fact, you won’t be. You have to know and own that you are the captain of your child(ren)’s journey. Accept and welcome that task. Don’t worry, I got your back. Before we get to your kids, we have to put your mask on first, though.

HERE ARE 3 THINGS YOU MUST KNOW THAT WILL HELP YOU WITH YOUR OWN SENSE OF AGENCY:

- 01 YOU deserve better/great things.
- 02 YOU are the expert on your child.
- 03 NO ONE else is coming to save us so you must be the catalyst of your child's education.



WILL ME MADE AVAILABLE IN VOLUME II

INTRO + YOU DESERVE BETTER



MODULE 01

CHAPTER 2: ARTICULATING THE BEAUTY & STRENGTH IN MY CHILD

Part of being an agentic parent is being able to articulate the best qualities of your child to others so they can best serve their needs. We know how you feel about your child(ren), but it can be helpful to expressly write those things out so you can properly articulate them to their teachers.

For instance, if you know your child works best in a certain environment, then it behooves you and your family to ensure that their educators know as well. By sitting down and writing it out, not only does it help you communicate with their educators, there's magic in the process of doing this exercise as you deeply reflect on many of the things that bring your child joy. Trust me, it is difficult to do this process and then NOT fiercely advocate.

AGENTIC TOOL #1

**HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS THAT WILL HELP US ESTABLISH A
STRONG ADVOCACY BASE FOR YOUR CHILD(REN):**

ARTICULATIONS OF MY CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE

ARTICULATIONS OF MY CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE

What makes my child smile?

What settings bring out the best in my child?

Who are the people my child admires?

What are all the things my child is good at?

What motivates my child?

In what type of environment is my child most productive?

How does my child best take in information? (e.g. verbally, by reading, by trying, etc. - list all)

What upsets my child?

How does my child respond when frustrated?

What are some triggers my child has regarding learning?



The previous exercise is important as we head into the next few chapters. It is important because in those chapters, we will be building support both inside and outside of the school building. We have to train and teach people how to support us. The previous exercise is the foundation to the house of support we are about to build for your child(ren).

SO DON'T SKIP IT!

MODULE 01

CHAPTER 3: GOAL SETTING

"Where there is no vision, the people will perish."

- Proverbs 29:18

The importance of goal setting is that it provides a guide/path towards your desired outcome. Goals are a roadmap of a series of Agentic moves made by you. It is critical that you have a strong vision to guide your advocacy. You don't need to have all the answers, but you need to go in with a strong vision for your child and a clear advocacy plan. Without a roadmap, you will get lost. This is not to say that you won't change course or make alterations, but you cannot embark on this journey without a strong vision. Vision leads to goals, and goals lead to actions. Action leads to desired outcomes. This section helps with that process.

I have created a Vision + Goal Setting Worksheet to assist you with this process. Fill out this worksheet and create that roadmap that's personalized to you and what you want for your children. So just start writing. Don't overthink it. Just go. Set a timer for 20 minutes if that helps you get started.

AGENTIC TOOL #2

IMAGINE THE BEST POSSIBLE FUTURE YOU WANT FOR YOUR CHILD. IF THEY ARE OLD ENOUGH, YOU CAN DO THIS ACTIVITY TOGETHER. WE KNOW CHILDREN ARE THEIR OWN PEOPLE AND WILL HAVE TO MAKE DECISIONS, BUT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO BUILD A NORTH STAR TO ENSURE THEY START THAT JOURNEY IN THE BEST POSITION POSSIBLE.

VISION + GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

VISION + GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

Imagine the best possible future for your child. **Where do you want them to be in 20 years?** Be vivid. Again, your child(ren) will ultimately have to make their own decisions but let's picture it.

[THIS IS YOUR VISION]

What needs to be true **10 years** from now?

What needs to be true **five years** from now?

What needs to be true **two years** from now?

VISION + GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET (CONTINUED)

What needs to be true **one year** from now?

What needs to be true **six months** from now?

What needs to be true **three months** from now?

What needs to be true **one month** from now?

What do we need to do in the next **two weeks** so we
can achieve our **1-month goal**?

WE ARE ON OUR OWN, BUT YOU ARE NOT ALONE

While no one is coming to save us, you can build a team around you. You do not have to do this alone. We will show you how to build a team around you that can help ensure your child(ren) is getting the support they need to be successful. In this book, we will help build your **AWARENESS** regarding the education system and how it operates. We will also help you **NAVIGATE** the realities of an education system that were not built to properly and humanely serve you. After which, you will then exercise your **DUTY** to build out the best education plans for your child(ren) and share your new-found strategies with other parents so **THEY** won't have to be alone either.

VIDEOS



THE AGENTIC FUNNEL

WILL BE AVAILABLE IN VOLUME II



THE AGENTIC FUNNEL + GOAL SETTING FOR PARENTS

MODULE 02

INTRO: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

School systems often bank on parents not knowing their rights. They know you can't follow up or make formal complaints if you don't know their lingo. However, this e-book will help you with that. By the end of this module, you will have a better understanding of how to utilize your rights to protect you and your child's educational experience. More importantly, you will know just how powerful you really are.

Not knowing your rights will not absolve you from the consequences associated with an education system that does not have the best track record with our community. It is unwise to blindly trust this system. If you do, your child will miss out. Your child will not get what they deserve. You have to be an active leader in your child's education journey, which starts with a comprehensive understanding of your rights as a parent/legal guardian.

AGENTIC TOOL #3



PARENTAL RIGHTS LIST

PARENTAL RIGHTS SHORTLIST

Here is a short list of parental rights to get you started. This is not an exhaustive list, but it is a strong one sourced from the Center of Parental Information and Resources website. Start here. It is important to note that these are just a few parental rights you may have. Parental rights vary by state, so you should google yours BY YOUR STATE.

- The right of parents to receive a complete explanation of all the procedural safeguards available under IDEA and the procedures in the state for presenting complaints
- Confidentiality and the right of parents to inspect and review the educational records of their child
- The right of parents to participate in meetings related to the identification, evaluation, and placement of their child, and the provision of FAPE (a free appropriate public education) to their child
- The right of parents to obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of their child
- The right of parents to receive “prior written notice” on matters relating to the identification, evaluation, or placement of their child, and the provision of FAPE to their child
- The right of parents to give or deny their consent before the school may take certain action with respect to their child
- The right of parents to disagree with decisions made by the school system on those issues
- The right of parents and schools to use IDEA’s mechanisms for resolving disputes, including the right to appeal determinations

MODULE 02

CHAPTER 1: YOUR ROLE WITH YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

Having a thriving relationship with your child's teachers may end up being one of your strongest weapons in ensuring your child gets what they need. Having strong relationships can play into your child's favor in a multitude of ways. For instance, one of the findings from my first book (*Beyond Grit & Resilience*) was that many students with high academic achievement had support and favor from an adult inside their school building.

Taking from this, it would serve you to build relationships with adults inside your child's school with the goal of cultivating a strong ally. Hopefully, that ally can be your child's teacher, although sometimes it is not (more on that later). You want allies, and we will help you get them.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES

A large part of being an agentic parent is clearly communicating. Know what you need, and communicate those needs. That includes communicating with your child's teachers. It includes communicating your child's strengths and explaining the environments in which your child learns best. It includes communicating your expectations. It is your job to ensure both the teacher(s) and the principal know who you are. Every semester, regardless of the grade level, there should be multiple points of communication.

You want to make sure that the communication is intentional and meaningful. The communication can be in person, via phone, email, text, etc. Whatever it takes to get your child the outcomes they deserve. In Agentic Tool #7, we set a baseline of twice per semester. That is the minimum. When you are communicating with any adult from your child's school, spend some time beforehand to get clear on your goals and intentions. Write down what success looks like before the meeting.



MODULE 2 - CHAPTER 1 (CONTINUED)



In addition to the Agentic Tools, here are some communication strategies for you to remember:

- Always have a goal in mind when communicating. Envision what success looks like beforehand.
- **Ask yourself:**
 - **What do I want the teacher to know by the end of this talk?**
 - **What is the outcome I am asking for?**
- Whenever communicating with school officials, keep track of what was said and share it for clarity. For instance, if the conversation was in-person, take notes if possible. When you get home, summarize the main points and all follow-up steps and email them to the person. This ensures the next steps are completed, and you have a record should you need it later.
- Make sure the teacher(s) and principal know the best way to contact you and the best times.
- Communicate when the teacher, school, etc. do something well. They are human, and everyone likes to be recognized when they are giving it their all. Also, people can hear criticism better when there's a real relationship.
- Practice active and quality communication with others in the building as well, not just with teachers and principals. Back to an excerpt from my book (*Beyond Grit & Resilience*) the data showed that having an adult inside the building on your team can be a game-changer. It did not say it had to be or just be a teacher or principal.
- Also, relationships are two-way streets. Do not forget to ask them what they need as well and how you can support their work.

HOW TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

Let's start with building a relationship with the teacher(s). Utilize Module 1, Ch. 3 to initiate communication.

You want teachers to recognize five things immediately:

- 1. My child and I want to be in partnership with you**
- 2. My child is a bright and capable human with likes and strengths**
- 3. My communication lines are wide open**
- 4. I have high expectations for my child and this school**
- 5. You can have high expectations of me**

For this to be effective, be sure to fill out the Goal Setting Worksheet fully (Module 1, chapter 3)

You can introduce yourself to your child's teacher in person or via email. Here is a template to get you started, you can reference this as an in-person template of talking points as well.

AGENTIC TOOL #4 + 5

FOR THIS TO BE EFFECTIVE, BE SURE TO FILL OUT THE GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET FULLY (MODULE 1, CHAPTER 3)

YOU CAN INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER IN PERSON OR VIA EMAIL. HERE IS A TEMPLATE TO GET YOU STARTED, YOU CAN REFERENCE THIS AS AN IN-PERSON TEMPLATE OF TALKING POINTS AS WELL.

TEACHER INTRODUCTION LETTER
PRINCIPAL INTRODUCTION LETTER

Teacher Introduction Letter (Template)

Greetings Mr./Ms. [Insert Teacher's Last Name],

I wanted to take some time to introduce myself. I am [your preferred name], and I am [your child's name]'s parent. We are so excited to have our child in your class. In my family, we have high expectations for our baby. We want to be partners with you to ensure that our child masters the content of your class.

To help you out, here are a few things to know about [your child's name]:

[Name 3-5 things that you filled out in Agentic Tool #1 which focused on your child's strengths]

Should you have any questions or issues with [your child's name], feel free to reach out at [add both an email address and cell phone number and let them know which one you prefer].

I/we would also love to check in with you next month just to see how things are going, assess where our child is thus far, and further partner to get the best out of everyone involved, us included.

Sincerely Yours,

[Your name]

Principal Introduction Letter (Template)

Greetings Mr./Ms. [Insert Principal's Last Name],

I wanted to take some time out and introduce myself. I am [student name]'s parent. We wanted to introduce ourselves. We are looking forward to this school year at your school, and I hope that you and I will have a good relationship. I have also sent letters to [student name]'s teachers as well. I am committed to my child and my family getting the most out of this school year. I wanted you to know that you have a partner in me.

If you know of any additional resources that may be useful to my family in ensuring that my child thrives, please share them with us.

To help you out, here are a few things to know about [your child's name]:

[Name 3-5 things that you filled out in Agentic Tool # __ which focused on your child's strengths]

Should you have any questions or issues with [your child's name], feel free to reach out at [add both an email address and cell phone number and let them know which one you prefer].

Sincerely,

[Your name]



5 Q'S EVERY PARENT SHOULD BE ASKING

Consistency in communication is key. Whether you have time to check in with your child's teacher once every month or quarter or semester, or even year - BE CONSISTENT. My recommendation (if you can) is to touch base with your child's teacher at least twice per quarter. This way, you ensure a few things. One, that you are making it known that you will be holding your child's teacher accountable to the quality of your child's care and education. Two, it allows you to hold yourself accountable to following-through with YOUR goals of being available to support your child as well as your child's teacher throughout the school year. Three, you fireproof any issues before they arise (more on "escalation" later in the module).

KEEPING CONSISTENT CONTACT WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER



AGENTIC TOOL #6

I HAVE CREATED THIS COMMUNICATION TRACKER FOR YOUR USE. UTILIZE THIS TRACKER BY FILLING IT OUT, AND UPDATING IT AS YOU FOLLOW-THROUGH WITH YOUR COMMUNICATIONS PLANS. IT WILL HOPEFULLY MAKE THINGS MUCH MORE MANAGEABLE FOR YOU, SO THAT YOU CAN STAY ORGANIZED AND KNOW THAT YOU'RE ON TRACK WITH YOUR GOALS.

MY CHILD'S COMMUNICATION TRACKER

My Child's Communication Tracker (Template)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

	Phone #	Email	Communication Tracker	Notes
Teacher:				
Principal:				
Add any other staff as needed:				



MIDDLE + HIGH SCHOOL

SEMESTER 1

Semester 1					
PER IOD	Subject	Teacher	Email + Phone	Meet 2x	Notes/Goals
1				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
2				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
3				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
4				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
5				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
6				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
7				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
8/A				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

MIDDLE + HIGH SCHOOL

SEMESTER 2

Semester 2					
PER IOD	Subject	Teacher	Email + Phone	Meet 2x	Notes/Goals
1				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
2				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
3				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
4				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
5				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
6				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
7				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
8/A				<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

As we mentioned earlier, part of building a relationship with your child's teacher is to ensure it's a two-way connection. When meeting with your child's teacher, ask them about ways YOU can be supportive. Here are just a few suggestions:

- **How can I support you in supporting my child?**
- **What can we do on the weekends/summer to continue growth?**
- **Are there any upcoming events where you need parental support?**
- **Are there any other parents you think I should link up with in this class?**

Remember, people are more likely to invest in a relationship where they themselves feel seen and supported. It is only in your best interest to show support to your child's educator so that they are more inclined to go above and beyond for you and your child.



MODULE 02

CHAPTER 2: YOUR ROLE WITH OTHER PARENTS

- Why it's important to collaborate with other parents
- How to collaborate with other parents

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER PARENTS

Everyone has heard the adage, “It takes a village...”, well, it definitely doesn’t hurt. One of the best allies is someone going through the same experience with just as much to gain or lose. By partnering with other parents, you bless yourself with active partners. Having other parents as partners means you can do everything from split up different school events to having a team of others when it comes time to advocate. You do not have to do this alone.



HOW TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER PARENTS

Work to build relationships with other parents. Start by introducing yourself. Everyone needs a little help because no parent or guardian can be everywhere at once. It is helpful to have a village, and other parents or guardians can help with that. From a practical standpoint, if two to four parents in one class group up, they can have an exponentially higher advocacy impact. One parent can be at the parent-teacher conference, one can go to the football game, one can go to the play, one can check in on the afterschool program, etc. Also, if something does go wrong, you have a team of advocates by your side. In this section, we will help you collaborate with parents, deal with escalation, and offer templates to help you and your community of other parents advocate for your children.

MODULE 02

CHAPTER 3: ESCALATION

UNDERSTAND HOW THE ESCALATION LADDER WORKS

In education, things do not always go the way they should. The process for complaining or getting issues rectified can be difficult at times. There is a process that many parents don't know. You should always ask about your school's policies.

Here are some universal tips to help you properly escalate an issue and advocate for your child.

AGENTIC TOOL #7 + 8



**TIPS FOR ESCALATION CHECKLIST
LETTER OF COMPLAINT**

AGENTIC TOOL: TIPS FOR ESCALATION



Rule number one, always document. Document everything. Even verbal conversations, jot down the details as soon as possible.



Always write down your 2-3 intentions/goals. Write it down! Take it with you. These can be emotional conversations, and when that happens, it is easy to lose focus on the thing you came to do. This helps keep you on task and forces you to concentrate on what is important before the conversation.



Try to have a cordial conversation first with the teacher first. If you followed the steps in Agentic Tools #5 & #6, you would already have a cordial relationship with your child's teacher by now (which is why showing personal care towards the educator is important). With the foundation of the relationship in place, there is a good chance the teacher may be more than willing to work with you on whatever issue that arises without having to move the conversation elsewhere.



Agree to measurable and time-bound terms. When advocating for your child, you want to be as clear as possible. Being vague will not help you get to what you want. The process of drilling down and being able to define success adds confidence to you and a clear path forward for the school. This does not mean you are locked in or unwilling to have these goals evolve. What it does is add much-needed clarity to a conversation that gets you and your child closer to getting what you deserve and require to be successful.



Involve your in-the-building-ally if possible. Talk with your support network both inside and outside of the school. If you have the village, then do not do this alone. If you have other parents in the building, ask them if they want to join your meeting or offer any written support. If you have other staff in the building that are allies and utilize them as a back channel to gain their insight. Do not expose them and jeopardize your relationship (there are caveats to this). You want to have that tacit knowledge they possess regarding your school. They may be invaluable.

TIPS FOR ESCALATION (CONTINUED)



Escalate to the principal. Remember how you have been documenting everything with measurable and time-bound terms? Yes, you are going to attach all of that when you approach the principal. If it is appropriate, bring in some of your parent partners in the school. A united front can transform a school. Escalating an issue to a principal happens after you have made a valiant attempt to solve the problem with a teacher.



How to formulate a letter of complaint

If it comes to needing to escalate an issue to a principal, you want to spend some time doing some planning first. Gather all of the information and communication that has occurred thus far between you and the teacher. Make sure you have written out what happened and all of the steps taken thus far to resolve the issue(s). The organizer below will assist you before we get to drafting the actual letter of complaint.

Letter Of Complaint Organizer

<p>[The Incident] Describe the incident at hand. Stick to the facts. Add dates to the best of your ability. Use bullet points to help you.</p>	
<p>[Previous Communications] Reiterate what was discussed and agreed upon thus far.</p>	
<p>[Personal Goals from this Conversation] Clearly articulate your ultimate goal for your child. Keep it to 2-3 measurable and time-bound goals if possible.</p>	
<p>[List of Potential Supporters]</p>	

Letter of Complaint (Template)

Dear Mr/Mrs [name of educator here],

Thank you for leading the staff and students at [Name of school here]. I know you have a tough job, and I commend you for your service to our community. My children are enjoying the [fill this part with a positive experience your child is having]

However, I am unhappy with a recent incident involving [nature of the complaint]. On [date] [The Incident]

I have discussed this with [name of educator]. [Reiterate was discussed and agreed upon thus far]

I would like to share the details of these messages and discuss the [nature of complaint] with you. What I would like to see is [your ultimate goal - 2-3 measurable and time-bound goals if possible]

Please contact me as soon as possible at [contact number]. I am best available at [list times, format, etc.]

I feel this issue needs to be addressed immediately. Thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[your name]

MODULE 03

CHAPTER 1: INVISIBLE INSTITUTIONS & HOW TO BUILD YOUR CHILD'S SUPER-SUPPORT TEAM

In this module, we build out the old adage “It takes a village..” Like I said earlier, we are on our own, but you do not need to be alone. Let me explain. The idiom explains that it takes many people to work together to accomplish a common goal. Typically when this is quoted, it implies that there is an acknowledgment that each person’s role contributes in a unique way, in our instance, to the holistic development of a child.

Though you are the leader of the village, your job is to curate a set of trusted members of your community who are committed to the overall health and development of your child and are dedicated to offering guidance that you may not be able to. Most importantly, they are providing you with personal support to ensure you do not go about this journey alone. A Super Support Team for you and your child.

I sometimes like to call these support groups “Invisible Institutions”

NOW, WHAT IS AN “INVISIBLE INSTITUTION”?

During times of slavery, Black folks didn't have a lot of spaces where they could gather independently. With the determination to meet as a collective in private, The Invisible Institution was born. The Invisible Institution was a secret gathering space that was alluded to through codes and cryptic messages. Invisible Institutions would eventually become praise houses and the very spaces that would house civil rights movements. Though they may not need secret codes anymore, Invisible Institutions still exist in modern form TODAY. In this section, I will be talking about knowing where YOUR Invisible Institutions are and why it's crucial that you get connected to them for the communal development of your child.

Some examples of **Invisible Institutions** or other groups who can make up you and your child's Super-Support team are:

1. Churches
2. Community Development organizations
3. Friends & Family
4. Mentors



Here is a [Super Support Team template](#) I created to assist you in curating and maintaining your village:



AGENTIC TOOL #8



THE SUPPORT TREE

THE SUPPORT TREE (TEMPLATE)

Directions:

1. List out the names, email addresses, and phone numbers of the people that (1) play a key role in your kid's life and (2) is someone they tend to listen to. Ex: Coach, favorite aunt, mentor, etc. Aim for at least 5, but the number is up to you.
2. Ask for their permission to put them on either (or both) a text chain or email chain.
3. Once that is established, one message keeps your child's community informed on things you may need support with.
4. **Here are some examples of when you would use this:**
 - a. Sarah has a basketball game at the YMCA on Saturday at noon. Can 2 folks commit to coming?
 - b. Mark is gearing up to take his SATs in two weeks. Can you all send some support and ask if he needs anything else?
 - c. Britt has an IEP meeting at school next month, and I need my village there. Can y'all come? It's on the first Friday of October at 11 am. Here are the goals from the last meeting and how I felt about the support she's been getting.
 - d. Max had a rough day yesterday and got into a big fight with me and his dad. Can someone check in on him and get him out of the house so he can cool down and process in a healthy way?

Name, Role they play in child's life, email, cell, and notes

MY SUPPORT TREE			
Name + Title	Phone + Email	Role in my child's life	Notes
EXAMPLE: Ron, basketball coach		[My child] loves basketball and loves his coach. He wakes up at 5am for a workout when he's told. Utilize Ron to help keep [my child] motivated and to reinforce lessons I am trying to instill.	Ron is good at calming my kid down and pushing him harder than I can. Ron supports a lot of kids so I want to call him in sparingly. Ron is committed to my son's success.

MODULE 03

CHAPTER 2: TEACHING REAL HISTORY AT HOME

INa'im Akbar wrote a book called *Know Thy Self*. In it, he lays out how lost we can be as a people when we don't know who we are or where we come from. In my personal life, I didn't have much access to my personal history. I do not know who my grandparents' grandparents were. I do not know where in Africa my people originated along with all of the other places my lineage hits. It is hard to know who you are when you do not know where you come from.

MODULE 3 - CHAPTER 2 (CONTINUED)



Never depend on the school system to teach you about yourself. **Never** depend on the school system to teach your kids who they truly are. If they do, then you are blessed, but this is your work. While this miscarriage of historical justice is not your fault, it is your responsibility to raise full and whole children. You do not have to know everything either. Chances are, you are like me and also may not have a full understanding of who you are, but you can put your child in a position to understand their history. Students perform better when they know who they are. That process is ongoing. Utilize our invisible institutions to help (video below). As stated earlier, our invisible institutions live in our religious institutions, elders, community organizations, etc. Our invisible institutions are invaluable in the development of our youth and ourselves.



INVISIBLE INSTITUTIONS

BONUS CHAPTERS

Coming in Volume II

**IEP's
Health & Fitness**

Good Morning

Math #7

③ Is $\sqrt{16}$ closer to 3 or 4?

$(\sqrt{4^2})$

⑤



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