

More than educators: Parents relying on teachers for children's mental health and social support

Teachers are supporting children far beyond academic learning, according to new research released to mark National Thank a Teacher Day

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, June 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Teachers are supporting children far beyond academic learning, according to new research released to mark National Thank a Teacher Day, a day to recognise and celebrate all those who work in education.

The research shows teachers are increasingly taking on wider emotional and social support responsibilities, with parents saying they hold roles of Mentor (76%), Counsellor (61%), Carer (41%) Social worker (36%) and Psychologist (31%).

The research highlights the growing importance of appreciation for teachers, and acknowledges how their role has evolved beyond traditional learning. A huge majority of parents (80%) say they believe teachers do more than simply teach academic subjects. Two in three parents (65%) said a teacher had supported either them or their child in an unexpected way, while more than a third (36%) said a teacher had alerted them to emotional or mental health struggles affecting their child.

For many parents, teachers are helping children develop life skills, resilience and emotional intelligence. 60% credited teachers with supporting behaviour and discipline challenges, and more than half (56%) said teachers support pupils' mental wellbeing. Meanwhile, 30% also recognised the practical support teachers provide younger children with self-care skills such as teeth brushing and toilet training.

Teachers were also said to be among the most influential people in children's lives outside the home. Parents ranked teachers third overall for influence, only behind friends (61%) and family members (48%), and ahead of social media (37%).

Commenting on the research findings, Mary Palmer, Chief Executive Officer at The Teaching Awards Trust says: "Parents clearly recognise that teachers today are doing far more than delivering academic lessons. From spotting changes in behaviour to building confidence and providing stability, teachers are often the trusted adults that families turn to when children are struggling."

“At a time when schools are facing growing pressures and learning is becoming increasingly complex with new technologies, this research helps shine a light on the enormous contribution teachers make to children and their families every single day. National Thank a Teacher Day is an opportunity to recognise and celebrate that impact, and we encourage everyone to get involved and show the teaching community just how valued they are”.

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About the research:

The Teaching Awards Trust commissioned market research agency, Censuswide, to survey 2,000 parents (aged 20+) of school-age children (aged 5-16). The data was collected between 5th May and 7th May 2026.

About the charity:

The Teaching Awards Trust was established in 1998 by David, Lord Puttnam CBE, as a means of recognising and celebrating the UK's educators. The charity's mission is to raise the profile of the teaching profession, highlight the positive impact teachers and school leaders have in our society, and show teachers how much they are valued. It does this through its public-facing 'Thank A Teacher' campaign www.thankateacher.co.uk, the Pearson National Teaching Awards www.teachingawards.com, and its Education Insights events series <https://educationinsightsevents.com/>.

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