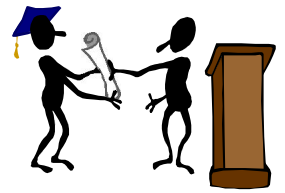




Parenting for Success in School

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- 1. Be positive with your child.** Positive expectations lead to positive results. Focus on the accomplishments and exercise caution when dealing with lack of achievement. Always concentrate on improving the performance and not ridiculing the individual. Parenting can be very difficult and tough decisions must be made. Always remember, you must do what is best for your child and not what your child wants you to do. You are the adult with mature problem solving ability and a solid foundation of self-esteem.
- 2. Establish a time schedule.** Illustrate to your child how to make a list and establish priorities. Schedule in key activities and explain the need to minimize time wasters such as television, computer games and telephone time. Establish a certain amount of time when television is acceptable. Don't turn off the TV or throw it out, but exercise your parental responsibility to establish proper guidelines.
- 3. Keep extra-curricular activities in perspective.** All research indicates students who participate in school activities achieve more academically than those who do not. Encourage music, drama, sports, etc. but stress that doing their best in the classroom comes first. Help your child to make good decisions in this area and never threaten to take away participation as a punishment for poor grades. Seldom will a student study during the time normally spent practicing for an activity.
- 4. Homework is essential.** Much has been written about students being burdened with excessive homework. Most often the problem is more one of procrastination and poor time management. Check with your son or daughter to guarantee they have a workable time schedule and help them eliminate time wasters. Many teachers provide students work time in class or often a study hall is available. Getting a jump-start on homework during the day can be a big help in reducing frustration with a lack of time at home. Talking with friends and straying off task at school can be a tremendous time waster.
- 5. Make the commitment to find time to take interest in schoolwork.** When you ask, "What did you do in school?" or "How is school going?" the customary reply is "nothing" or "good." Ask follow up questions and express interest in seeing the daily work and special projects. It is easy to get wound up in your work and have a busy social schedule at the expense of spending quality time with your children. Find the time to schedule your children in your day.
- 6. Tell your children you are proud of them.** Unconditional love is essential and must be expressed, but communicating a sense of worth to your son or daughter is most meaningful. Stress you are proud of who they are and not what they accomplish. Too often children compare themselves with others and invariably come up short. Emphasize that doing their best is more important than being the best.
- 7. Help your child find his/her gifts.** Students will display a variety of talents in and out of class. Work with the teachers to help provide your child with opportunities to develop their skills. Music, drama, art, athletics, etc. provide them with valuable learning experiences.

- 8. Part time jobs.** Many students work too many hours while attending high school. About two thirds of U.S. high school students hold part-time jobs and work an average of 15 to 20 hours a week. This concept is unique to the United States. Explain to your teenagers their number one job is to do their best in school. Too often the money earned is used to purchase materialistic goods that are not needed. 'Putting money aside for college' is often the stated reason for working, but mostly it is spent in less essential ways. Be sure to investigate the availability of scholarships and financial assistance to attend college.
- 9. Spending time with friends.** Students may spend 20 to 30 hours a week just 'hanging out' or wasting time with friends. Your influence as a parent must be greater than the influence of friends. Socializing may take the time that could be devoted to homework. Obviously teenagers shouldn't be locked in their room, but parents must accept the challenge of positive leadership. Numerous studies indicate teens feel they need restrictions and value parents who are willing to establish specific guidelines for them to follow.
- 10. Introduce yourself to teachers.** Make it a point to get to know your child's teachers. Too often parents feel they have this responsibility during the primary grades, but become less visible as the student matures. It is extremely important to continue to monitor your child's progress throughout high school. Always attend parent conferences and if you are unavailable, make an appointment to visit with the teacher at another time.
- 11. Support the school professionals.** If an incident takes place where there is a serious difference between the teacher or principal and the student, have confidence the school professionals are doing what is best for your child. Listen to your son or daughter, but follow up by communicating with the teacher before you jump to conclusions. Set up a conference with the people involved and establish a plan to work out individual differences. If the teacher has made a mistake in judgment, realize the complex nature of the profession and maintain your decorum while tactfully working out a solution.
- 12. Allow your child to make decisions.** Students develop self-confidence and a sense of ownership when they help make the choices that influence their lives. Be sure you have taught the proper steps to making good decisions prior to giving your child that responsibility. By providing them with incremental decision making experiences you are building a foundation for future growth. Simply saying, "It's your decision to make" doesn't take into consideration the vital steps of gathering information and evaluating the evidence. Emphasizing the value of considering the consequences and accepting personal responsibility is important.
- 13. Stay calm and keep failures and successes in perspective.** Overreaction by parents to achievement or disappointments can lead to a feeling of intense pressure to succeed or the inability to deal with failure. It is important for children to learn at an early age that failure is never fatal and success is never final. Each setback should be viewed as a learning experience.
- 14. Always have logical consequences.** Maintain control of the outcomes when discussing consequences with students. Too often decisions are made in haste and emotion is involved. Simply grounding someone, banning television, dropping extracurricular activities or invoking some other unrelated penalty is punitive in nature and doesn't teach any life-long lessons. The consequence must be a learning experience and relate to the indiscretion.