



Back to School

With fall just around the corner, many families are gearing up for a new school year. According to the U.S. Department of Education, studies show that parent involvement in children's learning can have a positive effect on students' achievement and reduce the school dropout rate. Here are some tips for getting involved.

What you can do

Meet the teacher: At the start of the school year, introduce yourself to your child's teacher(s) and exchange contact information. As the school year progresses, check in occasionally for informal updates. Also, try to introduce yourself along with your child to the office staff.

Discuss expectations: Talk with your child about what you expect from them in terms of schedule (i.e. bedtime), behavior, homework, grades, and so forth. Let them voice their thoughts and discuss any concerns. At the same time, discuss appropriate consequences if expectations are not met.

Help out: Remember that your child's classroom and school is a community, and his/her successes and struggles are influenced by this community. However, for a community to thrive, it needs support. Find out how you can help out in the school or classroom, encourage your child's classmates, and trust your child's teacher. If issues or obstacles come up, seek ways to collaboratively resolve them.

Be positive: Remember that how you view education and school influences how your child feels about it. Be mindful of the language and tone that you use when addressing your child's education. For example, if you view school events or homework as a hassle, most likely they will too.

Reward effort: In order to help your child understand the value and purpose of education, make sure you don't only focus on the end goal, such as grades or test scores. Make it clear that effort is what is most important, especially in subject areas that are especially difficult for them.

Find a balance: Gauge your child's response to their activities and be flexible, if possible, yet provide them with enough safety and structure to help them occupy their after-school hours in a fun and productive way. Try to hold-off on scheduling activities until your child has fully settled into school, or after the first quarter of the academic year.

Stay involved: Often times, once a child is past elementary school, parental involvement starts to decrease as students are expected to take an increasing role and responsibility for their own education. However, don't let age or grade level stop you from being involved.

For more information about family concerns, contact your Employee Assistance Program via the website or toll free number listed below.



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