

How to Help Your Child Succeed in School

Success in School Means More than Good Grades

Successful Students:

- Believe they can succeed in school and in life
- Want to learn and try new activities
- Can set goals and work on their own to reach them

Successful students are more likely to become successful adults

You and Your Child are a Team!

You play a big role in helping your child

- Build a winning attitude. Kids need to know that school matters – and that they matter. You can help your child feel good about school and about him or herself
- Develop key skills. You can't learn for your child, but you can help your child build the skills he or she needs to be a better listener.

Even if you weren't a star student, yourself, you can help your child. Find out how...

Be a Good Role Model

Your child will follow your lead

- Be positive about learning. Talk about school in a way to show you value learning. Learn a new skill or take up a new hobby with your child.
- Enjoy learning. Let your child see how much you like learning. Read books, newspapers and magazines often. Watch TV shows that teach you something new. Talk about current events at home. Visit museums, libraries, etc., together.
- Have a "can-do" attitude. Face problems head-on. Let your child see that you try your best when you face a tough task.

Show interest in Your Child's Education

Let your child know that school is well worth the effort

- Ask questions about school every day. Ask about more than grades, tests and papers. Ask about friends, problems getting along with others, funny events, etc. Try to get the whole picture of your child's life at school.
- Listen to your child. Ask your child to share his or her thoughts and feelings with you. This helps your child learn to express him or herself more clearly.
- Get involved in school life. Talk to our child's teachers. Ask for parent-teacher conferences. Go to school events whenever you can. Join the parent-teacher group at school or help out in some other way.

Send your child the message that school is "cool"!

Help Your Child Feel Successful

Your child can succeed in class if you:

- Know what to expect from your child. Not every child can be at the top of the class. Ask your child to do his or her best, but don't demand more from your child than he or she can do.
- Set goals together. Help your child set clear goals to work toward. These goals should be a challenge – but not out of reach.
- Reward effort, not just results. Praise your child for trying his or her best – no matter the result.

Help your child find out what success feels like!

Encourage Independence

Prepare your child to take advantage of his or her own life and learning.

- Give your child responsibilities. Assign your child household chores that he/she can handle. Gently make it clear that you expect results. Increase responsibility as your child is ready.
- Offer support. Let your child know you are there to help him or her meet responsibilities. Offer advice, but be sure your child does the work.
- Expect success, but don't punish failure. Encourage your child to always keep trying. Don't punish your child for mistakes. Instead, help your child learn from them. Look for improvement next time.

Being independent is a powerful skill that lasts a lifetime!

Create a Good Study Routine

Most kids work better with a routine. Help your child:

- Establish a study time. Your child should spend time learning every day. If there's no homework, your child can spend time reading.
- Make a schedule. Work with your child to make a plan for homework and activities. Try to respect your child's choices about when he or she works and plays – within reason.
- Stick with the schedule. Remind your child that meeting responsibilities is important – including sticking to his or her own schedule. Rework the schedule if necessary.
- Set up a special study place. Help your child pick a place to do homework and make it comfortable. Provide good lighting and all needed supplies.

Make Homework Meaningful

Homework is a daily part of being a successful student. Help your child make the most of it.

- Remind your child how homework helps. Point out that homework teaches important lessons about sticking to a task. Doing the same exercises again and again helps build skills that won't be easily forgotten.
- Encourage good work habits. The goal of homework is to learn by doing – not just finding the right answers as fast as possible. Remind careful, complete effort. Focus on the way your child studies, and let the teacher worry about the right and wrong answers.

Remember, homework is your child's responsibility. Be sure your child does the work.

Help improve Your Child's Reading Skills

- Have lots of reading material around. The more your child reads, the better his/her skills will be. Have books, newspapers and magazines handy. Try to visit the library often.
- Make reading fun. Read together. Then, share ideas about what you've read. You will both learn from this!
- Teach your child to read with a purpose. This method can help your child get more out of reading:
 - Scan the piece – read the bold words, headings and captions. Look at graphics and pictures, too.
 - Ask yourself, "What does this piece seem to be about?"
 - Read the piece carefully.
 - Write down the main ideas of the piece, or tell someone what they are.
 - Review what was learned from the reading.

Practice Writing Skills at Home

- Encourage writing in everyday life. Suggest that your child write more letters and notes, and use the telephone less. This will help your child discover the importance of writing clearly.
- Stress a step-by-step approach to writing. Have your child follow these steps when writing a report or essay.
 - Think about the question the report or essay will answer
 - Make an outline to organize information and ideas
 - Write a first draft and use it as a starting point. Don't expect everything to be perfect the first time around.
 - Read the draft. Fix errors and make improvements.
 - Rewrite the report or essay
 - Proofread – check for spelling errors and other mistakes.
- Read your child's writing. Be sure to tell him or her what you liked about the writing.

Help Build Math and Science Skills

- Use "real life" problems. Help your child see how you use math and science every day. Point out the use of math and science in money problems, sports, cooking and so on. Work on household projects together.
- Have your child teach you. Ask your child to explain in detail something he/she learned in class today. Teaching others is a great way to learn.
- Find sources of help. If your child seems to need more help you can give in math, science or any subject, call your child's school. Ask what help is available.

Work to Improve Test Scores

Help your child show what he or she knows on test day

- Avoid "cramming" at the last minute. Use a study schedule for upcoming tests.
- Be physically ready – make sure your child gets plenty of sleep and a good breakfast before a big test.
- Use memory aid such as:
 - Flash cards

- Make up words using letters that stand for key information. For example, the word “HOMES” can help your child remember the five Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie and Superior).
- Review test-taking tips for your child:
 - Read all directions before answering questions
 - Budget time. Don’t spend too much time on one problem or section.
 - Answer all easy questions first.

Test-taking is a skill. You can help your child master it!

Other Ways to Help

- Encourage good health – teach your child healthy habits. Make sure your child eats a variety of healthy foods and gets plenty of rest and exercise every day.
- Be alert to warnings of trouble at school. Seek help if your child:
 - Shows no interest in school
 - Has trouble sleeping or eating
 - Shows a major change in grades or behavior
- Don’t use schoolwork as punishment or threat
- Help your child be proud of who he/she is. Teach your child his or her ethnic background – and to respect others!
- Work to improve your child’s attitude and skills – even if he or she gets good grades.
- Spot health problems before they interfere with learning. Make sure your child has speech, hearing and vision tests.

Help Write Your Child’s Success Story!

- Get involved in your child’s education
- Understand the importance of a good attitude
- Work with your child to build skills for success

Bring out the successful student in your child

Source: Channing Bete Company