



Help Your Child Succeed in School: 12 Tips for Parents

This handout is a list of tips discussed in the *Ways Busy Parents Can Help Children Succeed in School* presentation for you to keep and review.

1. **Make sure your child comes to school on time each day.** Learning builds day by day, which means attendance is crucial. Even the best teachers can't do the job if your child isn't in class.
2. **Use time in the car to talk to your child.** Turn off the radio. Ask your child, "What would you like to talk about?" This is a perfect time to talk about school, friends or any problems your child may be having.
3. **Exchange notes with your child.** Notes don't have to be long—just a few words when you have a free moment. Tuck one into your child's lunch or book bag. Ask your child to write back.
4. **Schedule one-on-one time; set priorities.** Make an actual appointment to spend quality time with your child at least once a week.
5. **Encourage reading.** Experts agree that one of the best ways to help kids succeed in school is to encourage reading. Get the whole family involved. Be a reading role model for your child.
6. **Limit TV, computer and video game screen time.** Get the screens out of your child's bedroom. Issue screen time tickets for viewing privileges. Set some rules for TV and computer usage. Provide alternatives to screen time, such as books and magazines that relate to your child's interests, science kits and art supplies.
7. **Get to know your child's teachers.** Share information. Know what the teacher expects. Join the parent-teacher organization. Communicate regularly.
8. **Set a regular time for homework.** Do your own work while your child studies, even if it's just paying bills. Have your child do homework at the same time for 21 days—experts say it takes 21 days for something to become a habit.
9. **Provide learning resources at home.** A quiet place to study and a few basic reference books—a dictionary, an atlas, an almanac—will make study time easier and more productive.
10. **Open the lines of communication with your child and make it fun!** When you know your child needs help with homework, say that you want to help—but ask if it's okay. Sit next to your child and look at each other as you work together.
 - Work at your child's pace, one problem at a time.
 - Never do the homework for your child.
 - Express confidence that your child has the ability to do her own work.
 - As a general rule, help as little as possible, and only when your child asks for your help, unless your child is having serious problems in school.
11. **Discuss school tests with your child.** Talk about what he got right and what he got wrong. Together, try to understand why he answered as he did—and how he can do better next time.
12. **Ask about what's going on in school every day.** Ask her specific questions. Talk about your day, too.