

# 10 Things Parents Can Do to Help Child Succeed in School

1. **Build relationships with your child's teachers.** Find out what each teacher expects of your child and how you can help him or her prepare to meet those expectations.
2. **Read.** Reading is the foundation for all learning. Expose your child to a wide variety of reading materials (newspapers, magazines, books, Internet Web sites) and be ready to discuss what he or she has learned. Helping your child develop strong reading habits and skills is one of the most important contributions you can make to your child's education.
3. **Practice writing at home.** Letters, journal entries, e-mail messages (done grammatically correct), and grocery lists are all writing opportunities. Show that writing is an effective form of communication and that you write for a variety of purposes.
4. **Make math part of everyday life.** Cooking, gardening, paying bills, balancing a checkbook, and even shopping are all good ways to get to the right answer and encourage your child to explain his or her method.
5. **Ask your child to explain his or her thinking.** Ask lots of questions. Teenagers should be able to explain their reasoning, how they came up with the right answer, and why they chose one answer over another.
6. **Expect that homework will be done.** Keep track of your child's homework assignments and regularly look at this or her completed work. Keep in touch with teachers either by e-mail, by phone, or in person to be updated on your child's progress and his or her assignments.
7. **Use the community as a classroom.** Feed your child's curiosity about the world 365 days a year. Take your child to museums, local government buildings, state parks, and workplaces. Encourage your young adult to volunteer in a field or area of interest in order to show how learning connects to the real world. These activities will reinforce what is learned in the classroom and may help your teen decide what to do with his or her future.
8. **Encourage group study.** Open your home to our child's friends for informal study sessions. Promote outside formal study groups through church or school organizations or other groups. Study groups will be especially important as your child becomes older and more independent. The study habits our teen learns now will carry over into college. And beyond.
9. **Help other parents understand academic expectations.** Use your school and employee newsletters, athletic associations, booster clubs, a PTA or PTO meeting, or just a casual conversation to help other parents understand what academic standards mean for them, their children, and their school and how they can help their children learn at home.
10. **Spend time at school.** The best way to know what goes on in your child's school is to spend time there. If you're a working parent, this isn't easy, and you may not be able to do it very often. But "once in awhile" is better than "never."