

## TIPS FOR PARENTS

**H**ome is your child's first classroom and you are your child's most important teacher.

*Research shows that when parents and family members find the time and make the effort to get involved in their child's learning, students are more likely to succeed. Children are better able to handle challenges at school when their parents are involved.*

### GENERAL TIPS FOR ALL SUBJECT AREAS

Keep track of your child's progress in school. Visit your child's classroom to learn how your child is doing in school and how you can help your child become a better student.

Agree on a regular time and place for homework.

The most important way to encourage a love of reading in your child is to read aloud. Set aside at least 15 minutes every day and read.

Be role models. Your child should see you reading, working through problems, and learning from the mistakes you make.

Monitor the amount and kind of TV your child watches. Choose educational TV programs that encourage learning, and talk to your child about what he/she watches.

Use short periods of time while you are waiting in lines or driving in the car to work with your child on memorizing math facts, spelling words, vocabulary, etc. Working for 5-10 minutes at a time can really accomplish a lot.

Give your child responsibility for some household chores.

Establish a regular bedtime for your child, no matter what their age. Children need at least 8-9 hours of sleep to perform their best in school.

Encourage your child to eat a healthy and well-balanced diet.

Spend some quality time with your child. Play games, take a walk, prepare a favorite food, or plan a picnic.

Expect achievement and offer praise. Praise your child for skills and effort.

*Learning the art of really talking and listening to children is one of the most powerful ways parents can show their love... and help their children succeed in school and in life.*

## **Reading**

**S**tudies show that children who read outside of school are far more likely to succeed than those who don't.

Help your children develop the read-in-bed habit. Younger children can often be encouraged to read by pushing back bedtime by 20-30 minutes for anyone who's reading in bed. Ask an older child to read to a younger child.

Reading is not learned in isolation. It is closely related to listening, speaking, and writing. By listening to stories, nursery rhymes, songs, and poems, children learn language patterns they can then apply to reading and writing. The more books children are exposed to, the better. The more parents involve their children in these activities at home, the more likely it is that their children will become good readers.



Cooking together can build reading and math skills. Read the recipe aloud as you measure the ingredients together. In restaurants, read the place mat, napkins and menu together. Often children's menus have games that you can read and play together.

Take your child to storytelling times at your local library. This will make reading a fun activity.

Set aside some time every week to visit your local public library. Help your children get their own library cards and let them pick out their own books. Books with humor can make even the most reluctant reader see that there's a payoff to reading.

Read with your children in their native language. Practicing their first language will help your children learn to read English.

Simple activities can prepare your child to be a reader. Read everything you see from directories to maps to instructions, labels, and recipes. Playing rhyming games or singing silly songs together while driving in the car or cooking dinner are other ways to promote language development. This will help your children see that reading is important in everything you do.

Having magnetic letters on the refrigerator can help children with the alphabet. You can start out by spelling and saying some simple words like cat or hat or your child's name.

Encourage your children to make their own books as gifts. They can write and draw a story on pieces of paper stapled together.

## *MATHEMATICS*

**W**ork with your child frequently using flashcards to help them learn their addition and subtraction. While driving in the car, have your child practice their facts until they are committed to memory. (Example:  $8 + 6 = 14$ ,  $9 - 6 = 3$ )

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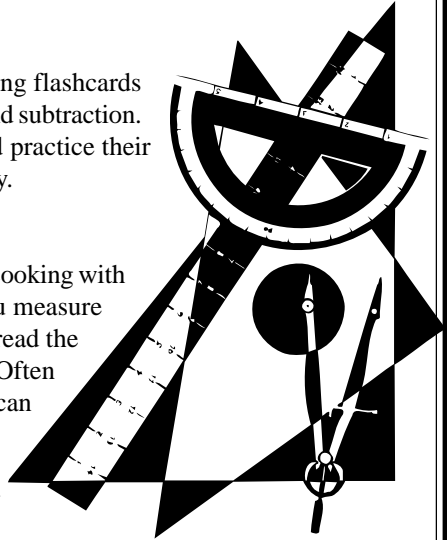
When you or your child use math in your everyday activities, point it out. Did your child glance at the clock to see how many minutes remain before dinner? That's math. Did he figure how many weeks' allowance it will take before he can buy a new video game? That's math too.

Have your child practice reading and writing numbers. License plates and newspapers are excellent sources for large numbers.

Play games that help children develop decision making and mental math skills. There are many games sold commercially, such as board games, that involve patterns and probability. Try schoolyard games such as jump rope, hopscotch and jacks. Games require children to use strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and develop an understanding about numbers and how to use them (number sense) and computational skills.

Go to the store together and have your child choose the correct change to give the cashier, weigh fruits and vegetables, and estimate the cost of multiple items.

Use computer games, flash cards, or board games to help your child learn and use math skills.



## *WRITING*

**E**ncourage your child to write for different purposes (grocery lists, thank-you letters, invitations) and praise his/her work. Practice in writing will help your child to become a better writer.

Have your child write notes to you to tell you where he is going and what he is doing when he goes out to play.

Work with your child to write letters to friends and relatives. Give stamps, envelopes and writing paper to your child as a gift.

Have your child write letters, notes, or reminders for you. Make original greeting cards and envelopes.

Write stories together about things that interest your child.

Provide your child with notebooks and pencils when you go on vacation. Encourage your child to draw pictures and make notes of things of interest along the way. Write stories together about places you've been and things you've done together.

Help your child make up their own stories either verbally or in writing (in any language).

Encourage your child to keep a journal or diary of what happens each day.

Play word games with your child such as Scrabble or Boggle.

Read and listen to your child's finished writing and let them know that it is important to you. Put writing up on the refrigerator just like artwork.

Encourage your child to practice using good printing skills.

