

Reading Tips for Parents

1. Read to preschool children at least 20-30 minutes a day. Have older children read to you.

Reading is the most basic of the basic skills. Make reading a natural part of your child's daily routine.

2. Keep good books, magazines and newspapers in the house.

Get a library card and use it. Make it easy, both for adults and children, to find something interesting to read.

3. Add to your children's enjoyment of reading by discussing each book they read.

It helps them learn to express themselves. You'll enjoy the conversations, too.

4. Make sure your children see you read for at least 20-30 minutes a day.

Remember, you're their primary role model.

5. If you have difficulty reading, tell your children stories.

Hearing about your family history and your experiences will help your children develop an appreciation of language, storytelling and the past.

6. Limit TV viewing and monitor what your child watches.

Studies show that excessive television viewing is directly linked to poor school performance. Inappropriate television programming can also adversely affect your child's behavior.

7. Meet with your child's teacher to find out what your child should learn and how you can help.

Know what kind of homework is expected from your child and make sure he or she completes it.

8. Provide your children with a regular, quiet place where they can do homework.

Make it easy for them to find a place to work. Set up a place with few distractions, but close enough so they can ask you questions.

9. Expect every child, not just those considered bright, to take tough academic courses.

Advanced Math, Science, English, History, Arts and Foreign Language courses provide the kind of knowledge and skills they need.

10. Demonstrate your own commitment to high standards. Don't ask teachers to give your children unearned grades and promotions.

The goal is a good education, not a good report card.

11. Support school efforts to develop and maintain rules for student discipline.

Children thrive in an environment where they know what is expected of them.

12. Familiarize yourself with academic standards in your state.

Find out whether your state has academic standards and make sure they are rigorous enough. Learn what schools are doing to achieve these standards.

13. Find out whether your school has high standards and clear expectations for its students.

Ask what children should know and be able to do by the fourth grade in math and reading...by the

eighth grade...and by graduation. What about history? English? Science? Make sure your children are acquiring the skills and knowledge they need in all subjects.

14. Ask for REAL data and information about student performance and progress.

Ask how your school ranks compared to other schools. Find out if advanced courses are offered, and whether students have additional learning opportunities before and after school and during summers.

15. Challenge the notion that your school is one of the "better" ones. Chances are its standards are still not as high as those in many other industrialized nations or the best schools in your state.

Support teachers, principals and superintendents who want to make improvements.

16. Give time to your school.

Put your time into meetings, tutoring, research, discussions - whatever it takes to improve your school. Join or build a partnership with local businesses, colleges, teachers and parents to improve teaching and learning.

17. Find out about after-school and summer programs in your community.

Help interest your child in learning outside of the school day. Give your child the opportunity to explore new skills and participate in art and music programs.

18. Join or develop partnerships to support students who want or need more learning time beyond the regular school day. If they exist, help make them better. If they don't, help start them.

There may not be enough hours in the average school day to support excellence. Set up additional time for learning to give students more opportunities to master tough subjects. Help ensure that ALL students are able to meet high standards.

19. Follow the advice of many experts.

Students should not work at a part-time job more than 15-20 hours a week during the school year. Recognize that study time and homework will result in far greater Earning power over the long-term than a part-time job. If children Need to work, make sure their work is an experience from which They can learn important academic or workplace skills.