



Actions Parents/Guardians Can Take to Help Their Children Succeed in School

Parental involvement in their children's learning, not only improves a child's morale, attitude, and academic achievement across all subject areas, but it also promotes better behaviour and social adjustment. In all these ways, family involvement in education helps children to grow up to be productive, responsible members of the society. There are many ways for parents/guardians to become involved in children's learning. Here are some ideas to build upon the supports for your children to help them do well in school (list adapted from Henderson & Berla, 1994):

Establish a daily family routine:

- Provide time and a quiet place to study
- Assign responsibility for household chores
- Be firm about times to get up and go to bed
- Have dinner together

Monitor out-of-school activities:

- Set limits on TV watching
- Check up on children when you're not home
- Arrange for after-school activities and supervised care

Model the value of learning, self-discipline, and hard work:

- Communicate through questioning and conversation
- Demonstrate that achievement comes from working hard
- Use reference materials and the library

Express high but realistic expectations for achievement:

- Help your child(ren) set goals and standards that are appropriate for their age and maturity
- Recognize and encourage special talents (this builds confidence and helps your child feel successful)
- Share successes with friends and family!

Encourage your child(ren)'s development and progress in school:

- Show interest in your child(ren)'s progress at school
- Help with homework
- Maintain a warm and supportive home
- Discuss the value of a good education and help your child explore possible career options (to consider later into junior high and high school)



- Stay in touch with teachers and school staff

Read, write, and create discussions among family members:

- Read, listen to children read, and talk about what is being read
- Meal time is a great time to discuss events of the day
- Tell stories and share problems (this provides opportunities for your child(ren) to develop critical thinking skills)
- Write letters, lists, and messages – stay connected to each other!

Use community resources for family needs:

- Enroll in sports programs or lessons
- Introduce children to other role models and mentors – create a community of support for your child(ren)
- Access community services – everyone benefits from supports!

One of the most important things that parents can do is to support the goals and the process of education in that school. It's important that there is a real partnership between the schools and the families; then there's a commonality of interest developed. When parents take interest with their child(ren) at home about what's important and energizing to the children at school, it reinforces the notion that school's a great place to be.

In Start Smart Stay Safe (S4), parents are invited to participate in the learning with their child(ren), making the child(ren)'s class discussion much richer and the academic material more relevant to the students.

Find out what your child is learning in school as part of S4! Ask your child's teacher for family connection activities, or check online at <http://startsmartstaysafe.ca/s4-your-family/family-resources/> for other activities to try with your family at home to support your child(ren)'s learning.

References:

Henderson, A., & Berla, N. (Eds.). (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement*. Washington, DC: National Committee for Citizens in Education, Center for Law and Education.