



### Harvard Family Research Project Harvard Graduate School of Education



## Tips for parents to support their children's learning and education at home and at school

### At Home

- Have high expectations for your child's learning and education and convey them to your child regularly. Discuss the value of education, of the importance of working hard at school, and of developing good study habits. Share things you are learning with your child so he or she sees the value you put on education and continuing to learn.
- Create a stimulating home environment with books and other educational materials and be responsive to your child's curiosity

and learning interests. Enjoy learning activities together with your child.

- Read and tell stories to your child, encourage your child to read, and listen to him or her do so. Discuss what you or your child is reading. Create your own family story books for fun.
- Talk about your family and its values with the child, conveying what you think is important, and discuss how these values operate in everyday life and with respect to school, learning, and interactions with others.

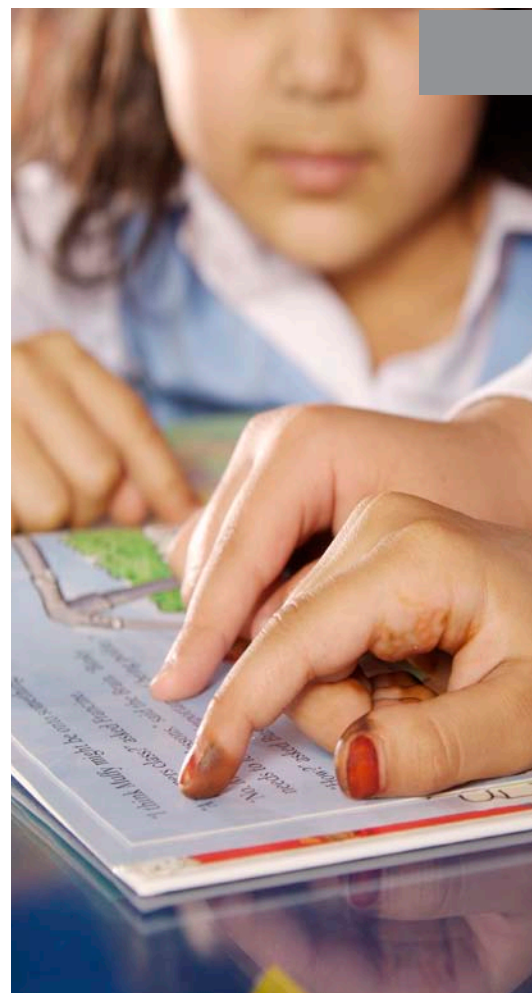
- Talk with the child's teacher to get information about what the child will be expected to learn, how he or she will be tested, and how you can support learning at home. Monitor attendance at school.

- Track your child's progress at school on a regular basis. Show interest in and help the child with school projects. Offer encouragement and praise when the child works hard, or finishes a task or project, and make sure he or she knows that you are proud of his or her progress and efforts.

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- Ask your child about how things are going at school regularly and discuss what he or she is learning. Ask what your child finds particularly interesting in the lessons, and support emerging interests and curiosity.

- Make sure that your child's homework gets done by providing a quiet place to do it, checking in to see how it is going, and helping if possible. If the child is having difficulties with a project or course, avoid negative labels and avoid doing the work for him or her. Instead, help the child get additional help from the teacher or through another means.

- As your child matures, help find non-school learning opportunities to build on his or her interests in science, arts, sports, culture, etc. Help the child make good use of non-school time, and enjoy recreation together.

- As your child moves into the teenage years, don't stop monitoring school attendance or homework. Know where the child is, what he or she is doing, and in what company, to insure that the child stays on track.

### **At School**

- Build a relationship with your child's teacher and find out how you can be in touch with him or her if you have questions, concerns, or information you would like to share about your child. Find out about the courses, standards and learning expectations for the year.

- Ask the teacher directly, and attend workshops or other events, to get information about things to do at home to support your child's learning and school success.

- Go to school events, including open school nights, parent information and curriculum sessions, and cultural and sports events. Take every opportunity to learn all you can about the school, meet the teachers and other staff, and talk with other parents.

- Regularly attend parent-teacher conferences to learn about your child's progress and areas of strength and weakness, and how they are being addressed. Prepare for the conference by noting your own thoughts and concerns about your child's schoolwork, and discuss them with the teacher.

- Volunteer at the school. Help in the classroom or do a classroom activity, chaperone a trip, help in the library, or do whatever else you can to assist children's learning and support the school.

- Talk with other parents at school to learn about what is happening there, things they do to help the school and their children, and to get to know the parents of your children's friends.

- Join the school's Board of Trustees.