

Getting better grades in school

*This and more parenting information can be found at:
<http://www.parentswhocare.com/>*

Here are ten steps to helping your child succeed in school this year.

1. Develop a schedule. Many families today are incredibly busy. In the rush to meet all the demands upon each family member from school, work, sports, arts and socializing - school sometimes gets crowded to the rear. One way to prevent that from happening is to develop a firm but flexible schedule - allowing sufficient time to meet each of the essentials.

2. Don't Overextend. Many times, when a family begins creating a schedule, it becomes clear that there are simply too many activities to fit. School success may require being a little less involved in extra-curricular activities. It may also mean that parents find they have to cut a few of the extras out of their lives, too.

3. Get plenty of rest. Many students simply do not get enough sleep. Eight hours is actually the minimum number of hours a child should sleep each night. It is best to get more sleep. Adequate sleep is needed for each day to ensure optimal school performance.

4. Eat right. Poor nutrition and skipped meals lead to the same feelings of exhaustion and weakness that come from lack of sleep. Schedule in meals that include a good breakfast and minimal fast food. Make sure there are plenty of healthful snacks available for after school - like fruit, raw veggies, cheese and popcorn.

5. Stay well stocked. Purchase good school supplies and keep them in stock. Nothing is more frustrating than discovering you are out of glue or your markers are all dried up, just as you are beginning the project that is due tomorrow.

6. Make homework a priority. Skipped homework can shipwreck an otherwise excellent grade average. Allow sufficient time for homework to be completed in a distraction-free atmosphere. Preferably the time should be after the student has had a chance to unwind from school yet still early enough to feel fresh and alert.

7. Lavish praise. Be certain he knows that many people struggle in that subject; it does not mean he is stupid. Praise each success as he progresses no matter how small. Offer help, or even tutoring if needed, but don't force help if your child prefers to work independently. Sometimes the goals that are met after a tough fight are the most enjoyable.

8. Keep communication open. Take time every day to listen to your child. Be certain every conversation is not dominated by you. Let your child tell his experiences at school, with his teacher and with other students, then if problems arise, you have a better understanding of the circumstances that may have led up to them.

9. Keep expectations realistic. Keep goals reachable to avoid frustration and poor self-image.

10. Be honest. Many children naturally want to do as well as their parents - or better! So, when you reminisce about your own school days, be certain to tell about your failures as well as your successes.