

Parent Partnership Handbook

A Parent Guide to School Partnership

New Year Resolutions

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At the New Year it is timely to review the HOME WAYS that relate to school success, to assess their current level of effectiveness, and to set goals for the remainder of the school year. This newsletter identifies HOME WAYS that lead to school success and positive self-esteem.

Study Skills

1. Prepare an environment that is free from distraction, well lit and ventilated, and equipped with furniture suited to study and with necessary materials.
2. Determine the order of events for task completion; for instance, math first, then social studies or chapters one and two before dinner, followed by chapter three.
3. Use personal and multiple learning styles: visual (sight), auditory (sound), kinesthetic (body movement), and tactile (touch).
4. Develop learning techniques or methods like outlining, mapping, note-taking, flashcards, and a method of reading for meaning.
5. Increase memory ability. (A) Use organizational skills (identify main ideas, details, make connections/links/associations, summarize). (B) Use your body. Stand, talk aloud, change voice, use hands and body parts for emphasis, exercise, etc. (C) Use your brain to visualize and to create mnemonic (memorization) techniques; for instance, link the material to a memory, make a rhyme, or create a nonsense sentence where the first letter of each word represents a memory item. (D) Commit an item to rote memory and recite it repeatedly.

Resourcefulness

Respond, "Be resourceful" if your child complains of boredom, saying that there is nothing to do. Resist the urge to problem-solve for him/her. Have on hand puzzles, art materials, books, items of interest. If necessary create a chart of things to do: write/telephone Grandmom, organize the bookshelves, make greeting cards for a nursing home, read to a sibling, alter the environment of the family prayer table/corner, make placemats for the next holiday, collect toys for the poor, etc.

Foster Autonomy (Ages 2-4 and beyond)

Autonomy, or self-reliance, is the sense of respectful independence, inner authority, and responsibility that permits a person to make appropriate decisions without the need of supervision. Parents support the development of autonomy when they

- provide prudent supervision, not intrusion,
- encourage rather than praise,
- allow responsible independence,
- encourage respectful assertiveness,
- expect accountability for choices & consequences,
- model self-control,
- do nothing for a child that the child is capable of doing independently, and
- emphasize effort more than result.

Develop Initiative (Ages 4-6 and beyond)

Initiative, or self-confidence, is the interior motivation to originate plans and the personal capacity to conquer tasks as a self-starter without requiring the coaxing of another person. Parents support development of initiative when they

- allow exposure to varied experiences,
- give patient, respectful answers to questions,
- enforce natural consequences,
- establish standards & deadlines,
- demonstrate freedom balanced with responsibility and the common good,
- encourage "risk taking,"
- intervene only when harm is predictable or a child infringes on the rights of another,
- model how to recover after a mistake,
- provide materials, tools, and resources that support varied interests, and
- value ideas and process more than product. ▲



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