

Elementary School Parents[®]

Avoyelles Parish School District

make the difference!



Five things families can do to help students thrive in school

Every family—and every child—is different, but there are ways all families can set children up for success. Studies show that students are more likely to achieve in elementary school and beyond when their families provide a supportive environment.

To set your child up for a great school year:

1. **Set the bar high.** Insist on your child's personal best, but don't demand perfect grades. Praise effort and progress—even if your child falls short.
2. **Assign chores.** Children who have household responsibilities learn how to be responsible. Make a short list of weekly tasks and expect your child to complete them.
3. **Teach social skills.** A productive learning environment hinges on students' ability to get along with others. Promote cooperation and courtesy.
4. **Nurture your relationship.** Make time to have fun together. Share a hobby. Play catch in the yard. Express your love by being attentive and supportive.
5. **Take care of yourself.** If you're always stressed, your child will be, too. Carve out time to relax, exercise or curl up with a good book. A calm, peaceful home starts with you.

Source: R. Gillett and R. Premack, "Science says parents of successful kids have these 11 things in common," *Business Insider*.

Teach your child how to be conscientious



Conscientiousness is a student's ability to set and meet goals, make informed choices, and fulfill responsibility to others.

While this trait should naturally develop as your child grows, studies show there's an easy activity that can hone it. And believe it or not, it's schoolwork!

Here's how to help your child strengthen conscientiousness with assignments:

- **Remind your child not to rush.** Students should take their time and complete tasks carefully.
- **Ask your child to check work.** After finishing an assignment, have your child spend a few minutes going back to confirm answers are correct.
- **Cheer your child on.** Is that art project challenging? Is that math assignment taking a long time? Encourage your child to keep at it and not give up! Conscientious students do their best to meet deadlines even when the going gets tough.

Source: R. Gollner and others, "Is doing your homework associated with becoming more conscientious?" *Journal of Research in Personality*, Elsevier Inc.

It's time to get your family back in the school groove



The start of a new school year is a fresh start for families and students.

Here are some practical ideas to help you and your family gear up for a productive year of learning:

- **Make a weekly schedule.** Include time for schoolwork, play, activities and family.
- **Establish a family reading time** where everyone reads for at least 30 minutes.
- **Keep a family calendar.** Mark each family member's activities in a different color.
- **Reestablish bedtimes** and wake times for weekdays. Allow plenty of time to get ready in the morning.
- **Scale back passive screen watching.** Set a weekly limit for watching TV, movies and videos.
- **Create flexible learning spaces.** Allow your child to work where most comfortable—whether that's at the kitchen table or on the couch. Just make sure that the space has adequate lighting and is as distraction-free as possible.
- **Collect important contact information** for teachers. Update your work, medical and emergency contact numbers with the school.

"I hope you realize that every day is a fresh start for you. That every sunrise is a new chapter in your life waiting to be written."

—Juansen Dizon

Communication is the key to a strong family-school team

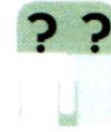


Research shows that family engagement in education has a positive effect on students' academic success. When

teachers and families work together, the results can be powerful. To foster effective two-way communication:

- **Set the tone.** It's natural to have questions for your child's teachers. When you ask them, show support for your child and the class. Encourage the teacher to keep you informed.
- **Be positive.** Talk with the teacher about your child's strengths. But also prepare to hear about weaknesses and how to address them. You and the teacher both want your child to do well. Addressing struggles is the only way to find solutions.
- **Role-play.** Some parents are nervous about talking with the teacher. If this describes you, consider practicing with a friend. If you aren't comfortable speaking English, have an interpreter join you. Still worried? Using email may put you at ease.
- **Choose words carefully.** It's more effective to make polite requests than demands. A helpful tip is to use the word *we* instead of *you*. "How can we stay in touch to help Jordan?" works better than "Call me immediately if Jordan is falling behind." You and the teacher are teammates, and effective teamwork is a win for your child.

Are you helping your child have healthy habits?



Healthy habits make it easier for students to concentrate and learn during the day. Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions

below to see if you are promoting wellness for your child:

- ___ **1. Do you enforce** a regular bedtime? Elementary school kids need at least nine hours of sleep each night to function at their best.
- ___ **2. Do you make sure** your child eats breakfast every morning? Kids' brains need fuel to learn.
- ___ **3. Do you encourage** your child to get moving every day? Studies show that exercise improves kids' memory and focus.
- ___ **4. Do you remind** your child to wash hands frequently? Hand washing reduces the spread of illness.
- ___ **5. Do you make sure** your child understands rules about safely interacting with others?

How well are you doing?

More *yes* answers mean you are instilling physical habits that support learning. For *no* answers, try those ideas.

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Practical Ideas for Parents
to Help Their Children.

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