



10 Tips for Parents

As adapted from Ronald F. Ferguson, PhD's document *Research-Based Tips for High-Achievement Parenting* by the Center for the Improvement for Student Learning. Visit www.yourlearningcenter.org for additional resources.

1. Reading is critical to the success of your child.

Have a variety of reading materials in your home. Encourage your child to read at home every day. Talk with your child about what s/he is reading.

2. Your child will be more successful in school if s/he has slept and eaten well.

Make sure your child is getting enough sleep on school nights so s/he is not tired at school. Make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast before attending school.

3. Interactions with your child should be a balance between warmth and discipline.

Spend time with your child and listen carefully to what s/he has to say. Tell him/her you are proud. Set guidelines for homework, television watching, chores and bedtimes, and hold your child accountable for these expectations.

4. Talk about school as an opportunity for fun and for building a better future.

Help your child think of school as a positive place where they are expected to grow, not a boring place where they will waste their time.

5. Focus on effort and comprehension instead of "being right."

Help students see the difference between "learning" and "grades." Don't put pressure on your child to be perfect. Mistakes can often be an opportunity for growth.

6. Know your child's friends and their parents or guardians.

Ask questions about your child's friends and about their parents. You want to make sure you agree with the expectations and standards of the people your child spends the most time with.

7. Try to end every reprimand with a positive statement.

After you have disciplined a child, be sure to reassure him/her that you still love him/her and believe s/he is a good person.

8. Get out-of-school time help for your child if s/he is struggling.

Find tutors for your child if s/he is struggling in a subject area. Sometimes students need more than a school day to grasp a concept. There is no shame in needing help.

9. Find ways at home to extend what your child is learning at school.

Do activities like cooking and buying groceries with coupons to help reinforce reading and mathematics skills. Talk about the news as you watch or listen. Ask teachers for ideas about in-home science projects you could do together.

10. Refer to your child using positive language.

Avoid using negative terms such as "idiot", "stupid" or "good-for-nothing" to refer to your child, even when they do something wrong. Children will often live up to whatever they are called.