

Bringing the Lessons Home



Parenting these days has required flexibility, creativity, dedication, and persistence. Over the last 17 months we have adjusted, adapted, gotten into a routine to then readjust. These constant changes have probably made us second guess our abilities as parents, question how effective our parenting is, and how supportive we are to our children. As children prepare for a new school year, most likely one that will be different than the last school year, how we continue to support their school experiences has not changed. Here are some helpful tips for you as parents/caregivers to keep in mind:

- **Meet your child's teacher:** If your school does not have an orientation night or meet and greet, find ways to connect with your child's teacher. Now with an increase in technology it is equally as easy to meet virtually as well as in person. This meeting allows you to introduce yourself, ask questions about the year ahead, share with them some of your child's strengths and what they like to do, and how they will keep you informed of your child's progress.
- **Support expectations for schoolwork outside of school:** This includes completing homework assignments, reading, or other learning apps that may be available to your child. Find a space and time that is dedicated and away from distractions for your child to complete these tasks.
- **Take advantage of opportunities for parent involvement:** Find ways you can support the teacher and class by volunteering at school, sending in snacks, or participate in other school-wide events and organizations. Check in with your child's teacher to see how you can help and what the best fit is for you.
- **Support your child's social and emotional well-being as well as academics:** If you have a concern regarding your child's health you reach out to his or her doctor. Similarly, if you have concerns regarding how your child is fairing academically, socially, and emotionally a great place to check in is both with his/her teacher and the school social worker, counselor, or psychologist. They are there to provide you with resources, and if additional support is needed, can share options and guide you.
- **Be a positive role model:** Model protective behavior, teach children to follow safety protocols, and praise them for caring and showing concern for others. Discuss what's going on in the world in a way that honors your child's developmental status. If they are to experience hope, optimism, and gratitude, it will be because we show it to them.

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. When parents and families are involved in their children's schools, the children do better and have better feelings about going to school.



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