



IT IS HARD TO WALK AWAY...
BUT LEARN WHEN TO LET GO!



Starting school is a big step for your child. Letting go of them on that first day can be extremely difficult for you but it is particularly important for your child. The steps listed below are widely recommended by area elementary school teachers to help parents and children enjoy learning.

Step 1: Practice walking/driving to school.

- ✧ Learn what transportation arrangements are needed for your child to travel to and from school and practice the routine with your child before the first day of school. Introduce safety rules that apply to riding the bus and/or walking to school.
- ✧ If possible, have your child meet the bus driver or crossing guard before the first day of school.
- ✧ Discuss with your child alternate transportation arrangements in case of early dismissal or emergency.

Step 2: Visit the school before the first day.

- ✧ Review the student handbook for your elementary school prior to your child's first day of school.
- ✧ Visiting your child's school before the first day allows them to develop a sense of security when they go there for the first day of school.
- ✧ During your school visit get to know your child's teacher and other school staff.
- ✧ Familiarize your child with classroom rules and expectations so they are prepared and feel confident. Do not assume your child knows the rules and procedures.

Step 3: Keep it positive!

- ✧ Keep a positive attitude towards the school and school staff. They are there to help you and your child. Your child will easily pick up your negative attitude.
- ✧ Create in your child the idea of looking forward to school experiences as a great adventure rather than something to be feared. Try not to transfer any negative feelings about your own past school experiences to your child.
- ✧ Create a ritual for saying goodbye, such as giving a kiss and waving at the door.
- ✧ Encourage them to remember the best thing about their day so they can share it with you when they come home.

The key is to make learning fun!

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE...THE BEST WAY TO GO!



Regular school attendance is very important and contributes to the success of your child's school experience. The steps listed below are widely recommended by area elementary school teachers to help parents and children value and enjoy learning.

Step 1: Model a good relationship with your child's school.

- ✧ Be aware of the school's attendance policy and the consequences of non-attendance. Be responsible for notifying the school each day your child is absent.
- ✧ Be sure to send an excuse for **each** absence. Refer to your schools' attendance policy.
- ✧ Refuse to write false excuses for your children.
- ✧ Do not keep your child home from school for minor ailments, especially if he or she has a poor attendance record.
- ✧ Review student handbook for specific attendance rules.

Step 2: Encourage involvement.

- ✧ Encourage your child to get involved in clubs and activities to increase their interest in school.
- ✧ Show an active interest in your child's activities, both in and out of school.
- ✧ Stress the idea of school as a beneficial experience.
- ✧ Participate in school activities yourself, such as PTA, parent-teacher conferences, open houses and school programs. Take advantage of classroom volunteer opportunities.
- ✧ Check your child's backpack every day to stay informed and up-to-date.

Step 3: Keep it positive!

- ✧ Encourage your child to develop good personal habits that deal with time schedules for going to bed, getting up, leaving for school, etc.
- ✧ Compliment your child on their accomplishments. If they feel they are succeeding, they will want to attend.
- ✧ Discuss your child's school day with them. Keep the lines of two-way communication open with your child and with the school.

The key is to value learning so your child will too!

To learn more about school readiness or how to help your child prepare for school, contact Community Action, Inc.'s Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) Project at (814) 938-3302, ext. 204, toll-free 1-800-648-3381 or email

LEARN@jccap.org.



This document was financed in part by grants from the federal Department of Health and Human Services under the Administration of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development; the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning and the Brookville United Fund.



Revised: 9/9/11