

THE ROLE OF PARENTS.

This chapter explores the roles the parents should play to ensure that their children maximizes their schooling process and realize optimum performance and also achieve their lives' dreams and aspirations.

If as a parent, you can follow these guidelines, you can improve your parenting expertise and help your child to become a great person in school and in the future life.

THE DUTIES OF PARENTS IN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE.

1. Parents should help the children on developing and defining their Visions and goals in life.

When a learner goes to school, He/She should be aware of the reason WHY there is need for schooling, the parent should seek ways of helping their children find the relationship between their schooling and their future lives.

The parents should also seek ways to help the learner in acquiring the best Study practices in line with the personality of the learner.

The mission to reaching the vision is important than the Vision itself, For the learner need to develop the action plan on how to reach there, and also know what can hinder Him/her from reaching the set objectives.

Parents should help their children in time management to ensure academic discipline.

2. Parents can help their children in ensuring that the children have learnt the best virtues, habits, beliefs and values.

- What defines your child?
- Does your child know the value of Education?
- Is your child's WHY well defined?
- What values are being developed in your child as the child mingles with other children?
- What Vision does your child have in life?
- In which areas can you help your child grow?
- ✓ All these questions can be answered by regular communication with your child.

For a child to be great in future there are some attributes which need to be developed and preserved and parents are vital in this.

- ✓ Self-Awareness.
- ✓ Self-Belief.
- ✓ Self-confidence.
- ✓ Self-Respect.
- ✓ Self-esteem.
- ✓ Self-identity.
- ✓ Core values and principles to hinder Indiscipline and negative Peer-pressure.

3. Parents should help the children in developing positivity in the schooling process.

- Positive attitude towards self.
- Positive attitude towards life.
- Positive attitude towards Godly principles.

- Positive attitude towards School.
- Positive attitude towards the schooling process.
- Positive attitude towards School rules and regulations.
- Positive attitude towards Subjects.
- Positive attitude towards teachers.
- Positive attitude towards School administration.
- Positive attitude towards workers in the school.
- Positive attitude towards people directly involved in their studies, including their classmates.

- ✓ Positive attitude is significant for our children to remain focused and positive in their studies.
- ✓ It is paramount for parents to try and talk positively about the factors mentioned above when the children are around and this will go a long way in helping the children, for it is the dream of every parent that their children prosper in school and in future life.
- ✓ When communicating with children, it is important we choose our words very well, so that we never interfere with the positivity of our children in school.

4. **Be a role model for learning.** In the early years, parents are their children's first teachers — exploring nature, reading together, cooking together, and counting together. When a young child begins formal school, the parent's job is to show him how school can extend the learning you began together at home, and how exciting and meaningful this learning can be. As preschoolers grow into school age kids, parents become their children's learning coaches. Through guidance and reminders,

parents help their kids organize their time and support their desires to learn new things in and out of school.

Children learn more from the parents and therefore it is important as parents to engage in behaviours, activities, tasks and discussions which we want our children to embrace, for they are watching and copying us.

5. **Pay attention to what your child loves.** “One of the most important things a parent can do is notice her child. Is he a talker or is he shy? Find out what interests him and help him explore it. Let your child show you the way he likes to learn.
 6. **Tune into how your child learns.** Many children use a combination of modalities to study and learn. Some learn visually through making and seeing pictures, others through tactile experiences, like building block towers and working with clay. Still others are auditory Children who pay most attention to what they hear. And they may not learn the same way their siblings (or you) do. By paying attention to how your child learns, you may be able to awake his interest and explain tough topics by drawing pictures together, creating charts, building models, singing songs and even making up rhymes.
 7. **Practice what your child learns at school.** Many teachers encourage parents to go over what their young children are learning in a non-pressured way and to practice what they may need extra help with. This doesn't mean drilling them for success, but it may mean going over basic counting skills, multiplication tables or letter recognition, depending on the needs and learning level of your child. And when you do review it should feel as if your child wants to be a part of the practice.
 8. **Set aside time to read together.** Read aloud regularly, even to older kids. If your child is a reluctant reader, reading aloud will expose her to the structure and
-

vocabulary of good literature and get her interested in reading more. “Reading the first two chapters of a book together can help, because these are often the toughest in terms of plot. “Also try alternating: you read one chapter aloud, she reads another to herself. And let kids pick the books they like. Book series are great for reluctant readers. It’s OK to read easy, interesting books instead of harder novels.”

9. **Connect what your child learns to everyday life.** Make learning part of your child’s everyday experience, especially when it comes out of your child’s natural questions. When you cook together, do measuring math. When you drive in the car, count license plates and talk about the states. When you turn on the blender, explore how it works together. When your child studies the weather, talk about why it was so hot at the beach. Have give-and-take conversations, listening to your child’s ideas instead of pouring information into their heads.
 10. **Connect what your child learns to the world.** Find age-appropriate ways to help your older child connect his school learning to world events. Start by asking questions. For example, ask a child if she knows about a recent event, and what’s she heard. You might ask a younger child if he’s heard about anything the news, and find out what he knows. This will help your child become a caring learner.
 11. **Help your child take charge of his learning.** “We want to keep children in charge of their learning and become responsible for it,” “We want them to be responsible for their successes and failures, show them how engaging learning is, and that the motivations for learning should be the child’s intrinsic interests, not an external reward.”
 12. **Make sure you review with your child any work he brings home.** Think about displaying it in a prominent place in your home to show how much you value his education.
-

13. **Schedule occasional phone calls or ask the teacher if you can "talk" by email when you have a question**, concern or something to share.
14. **If your child brings home a daily, weekly folder or holiday report**, include short notes in it for the teacher to read.
15. **Make a point of briefly talking with the teacher when you drop your child off at school or call the teacher.** A quick greeting and comment will continue to let her know you're an active partner in your child's learning.
16. **Ask the teacher how you can support classroom activities at home.** You can even make suggestions based on your particular skills or talents. For example, you could offer to:
- a. Donate materials, Money and Resources.
 - b. Use your technology skills to help publish a class newsletter.
 - c. Organize or participate in setting communication channel that informs families about school activities.
17. **Don't over-schedule your child.** While you may want to supplement school with outside activities, be careful about how much you let or urge your child to do. Kids need downtime as much as they may need to pursue extra-curricular activities. "If a child has homework and organized sports and a music lesson and is part of a youth group in your worship centre, it can quickly become a joyless race from one thing to another. Therefore, monitor your child to see that he is truly enjoying what he is doing. If he isn't, cut something off the schedule.
18. **Keep watching TV to a minimum.** "Watching lots of TV does not give children the chance to develop their own interests and explore on their own, because it controls the agenda," "However, unstructured time with books, toys, crafts and friends allows
-

children to learn how to be in charge of their agenda, and to develop their own interests, skills, solutions and expertise.”

19. **Learn something new yourself.** Learning something new yourself is a great way to model the learning process for your child. Take up a new language, course or craft, or read about an unfamiliar topic. Show your child what you are learning and how you may be struggling. You'll gain a better understanding of what your child is going through and your child may learn study skills by watching you study. You might even establish a joint study time.
20. **Set high academic goals for your children.** Tell them that success is possible, that they will benefit later in life from doing well in school, and that their families and teachers expect them to do well. Help them develop a sense of pride in their identity, both personal and cultural.
21. **Talk to and play with your children.** Have conversations about current events, what's happening in the neighborhood, and what you all did during the day. As you go through your daily routine, explain what you are doing and why. Encourage your children to ask questions that you can answer or help them answer. Make up stories together. Read to them, play games, and do puzzles together.
22. **Ask your children to pay attention to the way people speak on the radio and TV.** Talk about why learning to use good English speech patterns will help them in school and later in life.
23. **Pay attention to what your children like to do, such as a hobby, drawing, or working with numbers.** Help them develop those skills or find out where in the community they can participate in learning enrichment activities. Start early; Head Start and other preschool programs can give your children many advantages.

24. **Take your children to places where they can learn.** Find out about story times at the library and bookstores, and about children's events at museums and community centers. Check out free books and games at the library.
25. Take a parenting course in the community or at school that teaches how to develop children's talents.
26. Find a mentor in your family or community who can help your children develop their talents and serve as a role model for academic achievement.
27. Find out about early talent identification programs so that when your children begin pre-school or school, they will employ their talent in schooling process. Also find out about local community or religious preschools and after-school enrichment programs.
28. Set up a quiet study space for your children and help them with their homework, or find them an after-school program that provides a place for studying without distractions.
29. Make sure you review with your child any work he brings home. Think about displaying it in a prominent place in your home to show how much you value his education.
30. Schedule occasional phone conferences or ask the teacher if you can "talk" by email when you have a question, concern or something to share.
31. You might also consider thinking about how you might be present occasionally. If you have a flexible work schedule or a vacation day, consider helping out at a one-time event such as a field trip or school festival. Your child will look forward to and

remember these special times, and you'll further reinforce the importance of his school experiences.

32. **ABILITY:** Because school still requires substantial memorization and repetition of factual knowledge, encourage your child to write and draw central ideas. Writing something down gives meaning to it and creates a written record that can be referred to later. Making a note or outline can focus your child's attention on a historic event, a lesson or a procedure, often long after he or she was introduced to it the first time. If your child has an assignment and can't seem to get started, have him write down what he can remember about the topic.
33. **Help your child understand what counts in school.** While we want students to perform well on all schoolwork, their efforts must adapt to teacher and school requirements. That means understanding teacher grading systems, prioritizing work and applying different amounts of effort at key times. Children, and sometimes parents, need to ask teachers to clarify important learning goals, assignments and tests.
34. **Know your child's baseline.** Help your child apply his or her strengths to those areas of school that will benefit him or her the most.
35. **Encourage persistence and planning.** Both children and adults have a tendency to begin projects on a strong note, and then lose momentum as other priorities take over. Our failure to persist is often because we initially failed to realize the amount of work involved, failed to develop a plan or became distracted. Parents can help their children develop persistence by encouraging them to develop a plan. Work in stages, so that your child sees frequent progress and a reward (and end) in sight. Set the example of getting your own work done before a due date. Encourage your

child to say “no” to activities or people who distract him from his goals. Monitor your child’s progress and reward him with praise.

36. Knowing your child’s personality, Behavioural profile and intelligence, this will help you as a parent to know how to help your child in his/her academic journey.

RAISING THE CONFIDENCE AND SELF ESTEEM OF THE CHILDREN.

Parents should also help in raising the confidence and self-esteem of their children through,

- **Praising the Child;**

Comment positively when your child performs well or when he behaves well. Show that you are concerned enough to notice it. Do not take good behavior to be granted.

- **Focusing on the Behavior and not the Child;**

If certain behavior needs to be changed, make your child feel that he is still loved and it is only his behavior that is bothering you. It is important that you do not say something like “I do not quite like your attitude”. Rather say, “I do not like when you speak to your elders in that tone.”

- **Discussing Mistakes;**

It helps the child to learn when you discuss what had actually happened, what could have happened and how it could have been prevented.

- **Acknowledging Effort;**

At times results are not that encouraging. But you should encourage the child for his efforts. Do not think an attempt is a failure if it does not work out.

- **Acknowledging that sometimes your Child is also Right**

This helps a lot to instil self-confidence and make him a better communicator. When you allow your child to win an argument at times, he would feel at ease in persuading and putting across his point and convincing others with due logic. Let your child decide something and discover the consequences. Allow him to learn and be accountable for his actions. But you should obviously keep an eye on the wellbeing of the child and explain to him on how things could have been better.

- **Spending Quality Time with your Child;**

You need to show interest in your child's activities and hobbies. As they get accustomed to your interest, they will not feel that you are being intrusive in the later teenage years which are considered to be sensitive. The presence of his dear parents when the child is performing remains etched as a strong support in the memory of your child for years to come.

- **Listen and embrace;**

Be patient to hear out everything that the child wants to share with you. Be a great companion to him. Learn new things together and cuddle him with words of encouragement. Non-verbal soothing communication can ease up the child, make him comfortable and also help him to express himself with ease.

- **Build up a Social Life;**

Children should be encouraged to mix with others even if they are introvert. Make your child feel that home, family, relatives and friends are fun and a safe company.

It is therefore essential that parents take special care about the growing up environment of their kids so that they inculcate these traits with ease and comfort. Childhood is the prime formative years of an individual and if the building blocks are set right at the initial age, there would be least problems in coping up during the later stressful years.

DEALING WITH INDISCIPLINE AND DRUG/SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

It is paramount for the parents to understand that, Discipline is doing the right thing, at the right time, at the right place, with the right person, in the right circumstances and in the right state of mind.

Indiscipline is not only doing the wrong thing, but you can be doing the right thing at the wrong time, at the wrong place, with the wrong person, in the wrong circumstances and in the wrong state of mind.

Bringing up children in high moral and spiritual standards and discipline will go a long way in elevating their lives to excellence in the school and also in their future lives.

It is high time we help our young ones fully own up their lives and learn the consequences of every action they take.

Rather than telling them not be disciplined, explain to them the consequences of being disciplined, so that they can choose for themselves, after they have fully understood the consequences of their ill behaviours.

Let them understand that you are with them only for a short period and later in life they will be alone with their families.

Let them understand the Results of indiscipline and drug abuse, namely;

- Failure in school.
- Failure in life
- Stress and depression
- Lack of direction / despair.
- Aborted dreams.
- Death.

Success of any school is measured by success of the individual pupils, and success of individual pupils is more or less defined by first defining the reason WHY? Then looking for HOW? To do it and by eliminating all negative forces which hinder that good performance highly anticipated.

RESPONSIBILITY is the key to parents who want their children to succeed.

Being RESPONSIBLE as explained earlier can be summarized as follows;

R-RESPECT.

E-EXPECTATIONS.

S-SPIRITUALITY.

P-PARTICIPATION.

O-OWNERSHIP.

N-NURTURE.

S-SEEK LEADERSHIP.

I-INITIATE.

B-BE FAITHFUL AND TRUTHFUL.

L-LISTENING.

E-EXPAND.

RESPECT is important in the schooling process, as parents there is need for respecting the children, Godly principles, Schools where our Children are schooling. If we show respect as Parents, Our children will follow suit.

As parents we should also have **EXPECTATIONS** for our children and their schooling aspirations, we need to be expectant of the academic performance of our children, we should look for ways to assist our children in improvement and direct them in the right habits.

As parents we need to check our **SPIRITUALITY** and our relationship with God and always be willing to do what is right for our children are watching and they will copy us in whatever we do either right or wrong, so we need to choose to do right, so as our children can do right.

PARTICIPATION in the schooling affairs of our children is important, especially in the school and ensuring that there is conducive atmosphere for learning even in our homes. As parents we need to know how we are supposed to participate by discussing this with the teachers and school administration.

OWNERSHIP is important for any task to be accomplished well; it is important for the parents to Own up the process of their children's schooling and takes part in it seriously.

For schooling process to run smoothly and results attained, there is need for **NURTURING** of the process and Parents are supposed to take part in that. Parents have a great role to play. Nurturing of Child's talents is in the basket of the parent and the parent should work closely with other stakeholders.

We all need to **SEEK LEADERSHIP** and be leaders in whatever we do so that we can collectively drive the schooling aspirations to the higher levels. Without leadership, it will be difficult to achieve excellence.

As parents we need to **INITIATE** ways in which we can help our children in the schooling process. We should explore what can help our children, and what can help improve the environment they are in.

BEING TRUTHFUL AND FAITHFUL is paramount if we are going to achieve a lot for our children. If our children are not performing well or they have a potential to improve and perform better than they are now, we need to address the challenges or negativities they might be facing. We should never bury our heads in the sand and pretend all is well when our children are failing below their potential.

We need to **LISTEN** and seek knowledge of how to help our children. Parental seminars, school meetings, Reading books and improving our knowledge on the schooling process are important for us as parents.

EXPANSION is the only way we can appreciate growth, we should encourage and motivate ourselves to grow, beyond what we are now. That way we will be motivating our children to do the same.

PARENTING GOALS.

As parents we need to have goals, in whatever we do in pursuit of helping in the improvement of academic performance. As a parent, I need to:

1. Keep My Eyes Open.

Sometimes we notice that something does not feel right with a child but we get distracted. We are all very busy, it's true. We have great pressures and responsibilities pulling us in too many directions. The child who seems a little 'off', not himself, snappy or more quiet than usual is trying to tell us something. But it is easy to tuck this information away in a back pocket and only realize that something is wrong when a crisis occurs. We then think back and recognize that the signs were there, we were just too preoccupied to pay attention.

Don't allow problems with your child to fester and grow. Open your eyes and observe if a child seems sad, withdrawn, distant, more moody than usual, or angry. Recognize if there seems to be greater confrontation between this child and siblings, if friends stop calling or coming over, or if the child can't seem to find his place in school. Because before you know it, half the year can go by and what could have been a small problem has now become a 'situation' that requires major time and investment and causes terrible aggravation.

2. Develop a Working Relationship with Teachers.

Reach out to your child's teachers before your child reaches 'zero hour.' Many parents feel as if teachers are their opponents and don't realize that we are all here to try and help our children grow in the best way possible. If you think that there may be an issue, it is a good idea to set up a meeting with the teacher and ask how you can work in harmony. Too many parents call teachers to demand and accuse instead of saying that

we would like to solve this problem together. Before going to the principal with a complaint, see if you can first diffuse the situation.

If there are any special concerns going on in your home, do not wait for the teacher to find out through your child's acting up in class or failure to keep up with schoolwork and poor grades.

When a grandparent falls ill, if there is a health issue, financial stress, marital upheaval, problems with siblings, or any other factor that may affect your child's academic or social success, it would be wise to enlist your child's teacher as your confidential ally and gain her/his understanding. You can believe that most teachers would go the extra mile and extend to your child an open heart.

3. Work on Social Skills. Help your child be successful this year by preparing him not just academically, but also socially. School is not simply about getting straight A's, it is also about learning how to get on with others and knowing how to develop friendships. A child who is happy in school is a child who can focus on studying and doing well. He wants to be there and be a part of things. One who believes that school is all about academics and no social life unfortunately makes a big mistake.

How can we better teach our children social skills?

- Set rules and follow through with consequences when needed.
- Set routines for meals and bedtimes that establish stability.
- Develop your child's ability to put himself in the shoes of others and grow to be more sensitive.
- Help your child in learning how to express frustration, disappointment and anger without hurting others or retreating into sullenness.
- Establish basic rules of conduct: no hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, (no hands allowed), and no hurting others through our words.

4. Help Children Become Independent. When children feel as if they are gaining skills and becoming self-sufficient, they grow more confident in their abilities. You will watch their self-esteem take off. Each year, every child should be able to point with pride to a newfound skill or added responsibility that comes with age.

We can help our children grow to be independent and flourish by:

- Teaching our children to pick out their clothing, dress themselves as they grow older, tie their own shoes, pack school snacks, make lunches the night before, set their own alarm clocks instead of waking them up, and having children put away their books and organizing themselves.
- Allow a young child to complete puzzles and feed himself on his own and as he grows, to do his homework and projects by himself. It is much healthier to tell a child that you will check his work when he is done instead of sitting beside him and correcting the answers as he goes along. Book reports and science projects should not be parent's homework.
- Have your child help around the house and gain responsibilities instead of waiting to be served. Some skills children can help with are putting away laundry, setting and clearing the table, helping to serve guests, baking, cooking and keeping their room in order.

5. Communicate with Each Child. Our children should never be afraid to speak with us. No matter how tough the topic, even if they messed up badly, they should not fear that we will hate them or want to close the door on them. Our love must be unconditional. True, there may be consequences or emotions of disappointment, but they must know that we are here for them. After all, we are their parents and if they cannot believe in our love for them, whose love can they believe in?

Work on communicating with your child this year. I am not just speaking about when you must call him in with a problem like failing grades or after you received a call from his teacher. I am talking about daily interactions where you share a smile, a good word,

a laugh, a story, or a meal together. The main thing is that you put the time and energy in so that he knows that he matters in your life.

- Talk to your child every day-even if it's just for a few minutes.
- Put down your iPhone; turn off your laptop when your child (or you) returns home, at mealtimes and story times, and when you pick your child up from school. Look at him and make eye contact while having a conversation.
- Speak to your child in the tone and with the words that you wish he would use with others.
- Express your love every day, no matter how tough the day is.

I know that some days will bring unforeseen difficulties and that some children seem more challenging than others. But at least we will know in our hearts that we have tried our best to help our children navigate the road of life successfully.

"Raising kids is part joy and part guerilla warfare."
Ed Asner.