

The Positive Influence of Being Involved in your Child's Education

It has been shown many times over in research studies that a parent who is involved in their child's education has a positive impact. It's reflected in improved grades and test scores, strong attendance, a higher rate of homework completion, higher graduation rates, improved attitudes and behaviors in the child, as well as the child being more likely to become involved in positive extra-curricular activities. Send out the message early in your child's education that your home is an involved and active supporter of their learning. Probably the most important element of a positive learning environment at home is structure. But what is too little or too much? If we're too lenient or expect too little, your child may become disorganized or unmotivated. If we're too rigid and strict, it can cause undue pressure or cause your child to feel unable to deliver on your expectations.

So what's the best way to meet in the middle and create a positive learning environment for your child at home?

Help your child develop a work area where they can study and focus without being interrupted. Children usually do better when they have a private study area away from interruption. If your child prefers doing their work at the kitchen table, make sure other family members understand the kitchen is off-limits during study time. Make sure your child has plenty of supplies and reference materials available and that the area has plenty of light. Regardless of its location, ensure the area is quiet and that your child can study and work uninterrupted. Agree on a regular time for studying. To help your child make homework a habit, schedule a set time each day for homework. Perhaps breaking study time up into smaller increments would work better for your child than one solid period. Work with your child to find out what works best for them. In addition, be sure your child has a sufficient break between the time they arrive home from school before they sit down to work in order to 'decompress' from their school day. Help your child develop a method of keeping track of homework assignments. This can be a difficult chore for some students. Developing a successful way of keeping track of assignments then scratching them off as completed helps them develop a productive method for accomplishing tasks later in life.

Develop a positive line of communication with your child's teacher. Teachers are usually very willing and excited to work with an involved parent to help the child's overall success in school. Whether it's notes sent back and forth in your child's backpack or an e-mail correspondence, make sure your teacher knows your open for suggestions as how to better assist them in the homework and study process at home.