

Creating an Environment for Educational Success

As students prepare to return to school, there are several things that parents can do to help their children succeed in the classroom and in life. When discussing studying success, learning styles and learning differences need to be taken into consideration. Sixty-Five percent of people are visual learners, while 30% are auditory and 5% are tactile or kinesthetic. Try to identify your child's learning style, as well as, other individual conditions they might have, to help create a study environment that works with their strengths. Consider neurological conditions (ADD or AD/HD, Autism, Asperger's), personality types, primary language, and physical challenges. Pay attention to any assertion of beliefs or attitudes your child might have- "Math is stupid", "Who needs French anyway – that's just for girls", "I'll never be good at that". Talk to your child about these beliefs and try to encourage them to have a balanced attitude towards all subjects.



We must also acknowledge the effect changes in our society have on how children learn and grow into independent adults. The structure of families has changed. Whether we like it or not parents have a bigger need to protect their children. Fewer children walk to school by themselves. Children taking responsibility for their learning and school work will help them gain independence as they grow up.

The biggest influence parents can have on their children's education success is creating an environment of learning and discovery at home. Having educational books, magazines, videos, and software will encourage your children to make learning part of their everyday life. Consider the educational value of toys you buy. Encourage interest in a variety of activities and topics. Get the whole family involved by visiting historic sites and museums and having family game nights.



The best way a parent can help a student at home is by ensuring they have a quiet study area with all the necessary supplies. It is not only important to have the right things but also to avoid the wrong things. Eliminate distractions is key to having a space conducive to learning. Students that help create their study space are more inclined to study in it because of the sense of ownership.

Consider these study environment aids:

- Desk pad
- Comfortable, supportive chair
- Trash can
- Open top file box
- Corkboard
- Rolling drawers
- Calendar, planner
- Clock, timer



Helping your child grow into a independent adult means teaching them how to manage all the things in their life. Leading by example is a great, but working with your child to create organizing systems that work for them, will give them a boost. Here are some key organizing principles that can be taught to kids and that will serve them through to adulthood.

Near and Far- things that you need the most often should be closest to you. Things you need the least, place farther away

Like Things Go Together- Place all toys, books, games etc. that are alike in one storage location

Everything Has a Home- Just as you go home each day, your things go to their home at end of the day, when finished homework or play time

When we get older we take on more responsibility around the house- We do more chores, we help out where we can

Launch Pad-a place to set things to get them moving toward the next location – top of stairs, by your bedroom door to take downstairs. Your book bag is also a launch pad. Reinforcing students that organization is a learning process will help them understand that organization won't come over night. It's something you have to work at, and the more organized you are, the better the results will be.

What will you DO to create a better environment for educational success? Permission to reuse or redistribute these materials is hereby granted provided they are reproduced or redistributed in their entirety with full attribution. (c) 2008 Colette Robicheau

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