

Steps You Can Take to Improve Your Children's Education

Read together

Let your children see you read. Take them on trips to the library and encourage them to get library cards. Let them read to you and talk about the books. What was the book about? Why did a character act that way? What will he or she do next?

Use TV wisely

Academic achievement drops sharply for children who watch more than 10 hours of television a week. Parents can limit the amount of viewing and help children select educational programs.

Establish a daily family routine with scheduled homework time

Studies show that successful students have parents who create and maintain family routines. Make sure your children go to school every day. Establish a regular time for homework, set aside a quiet, well lit place, and encourage children to study. Routines generally include performing chores, eating meals together, and going to bed at an established time.

Talk to your children and teenagers -- and listen to them, too

Talk directly to your children, especially your teenagers, about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the values you want them to have. Set a good example, and listen to what your children have to say. Such personal talks, however uncomfortable they may make you feel, can save their lives.

Find out whether your school has high standards

Your school should have clear, challenging standards for what students should know. For example, what reading, writing, and math skills is your child expected to have by fourth grade? By eighth grade? If your school doesn't have high standards, join with teachers, principals, and other parents to set these standards. You can also find useful information about your child's school by checking your school's report card at <http://education.state.nj.us/rc/>

Keep in touch with the school

Parents cannot afford to wait for schools to tell them how children are doing. Families who stay informed about their children's progress at school have higher-achieving children. To keep informed, parents can visit the school or talk with teachers on the telephone. Parents can also volunteer on school planning and decision-making committees, help create family resource centers, and even help patrol school grounds.

Use community resources

Families can reinforce their children's learning by going to libraries, museums, and cultural fairs together.

"In the end, there is no program or policy that can substitute for a parent -- for a mother or father who will attend those parent/teacher conferences, or help with homework, or turn off the TV, put away the video games, read to their child. I speak to you not just as a President, but as a father, when I say that responsibility for our children's education must begin at home."

President, Barack Obama

The New Jersey State Parent Information and Resource Center

NJPIRC

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When Parents Believe ...
Students Achieve!

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