

## Helping Your Child be Successful at School

October 2009

# Parenting *Rules!*

### The Parent/Teacher Partnership

The parent/teacher partnership has a lasting and dramatic affect on a child's school performance. Parents and teachers have the same goal - to ensure the success of the child.

Parents who are actively involved in their child's education and regularly communicate with their child's teachers have a positive effect on their child's school success. Children with involved parents have less behavior problems, get better grades and have lower drop out rates.



***Together parents and teachers can encourage children to be life-long learners.***

Here's what you can do to build a partnership with your child's teachers:

- **Schedule a parent/teacher conference.** Even if your child isn't experiencing any trouble, it is important for parents to meet their children's teachers.
- **Inform the teacher** of any unusual circumstances at home or learning disabilities that may affect your child's school performance.
- If you feel your child is struggling contact the teacher right away to **discuss an action plan.**
- **Volunteer** to read to your child's class, be a field trip chaperone or help out at an open house.
- Find a way to **communicate regularly** with your child's teacher by phone, email or notes, so you can stay informed of his/her progress.
- **Attend school events** like open house, science fair, or awards night with your child.
- Periodically **send your children's teachers a note** letting them know that you appreciate their efforts.

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### Kids Need Routines

**Children need routines to feel secure and to develop positive life-long habits.** Having a set routine during the school year will help lessen hectic mornings for the whole family.

Here are some tips to help your family develop daily routines:

#### **The night before:**

- ✓ Stick to a regular nightly bedtime routine that gets your kids to bed at a time that will give them enough sleep.
- ✓ Pick out clothes for the next day.
- ✓ Pack backpacks with books, completed homework and anything else he/she needs to bring to school.



#### **In the morning:**

- ✓ Be sure your kids wake up in enough time to get ready without needing to rush.
- ✓ Have your children get dressed and then come down for breakfast.
- ✓ Offer nutritious, easy to eat breakfast foods that can be taken on the run if needed.
- ✓ Do not let your kids watch television or play video games in the morning.
- ✓ Give your kids a 10 minute and then a 5 minute warning before it is time to get out the door.

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### The Importance of Sleep

**CHILDREN NEED A GOOD NIGHT SLEEP!**

**According to the National Sleep Foundation, children ages 5 to 12 years old need at least 10-11 hours of sleep each night.**

A 2001 study, conducted by the University of California, San Francisco, found that sleep is an important time for the brain to make crucial connections and integrate experiences that have taken place that day.

So what does this mean for your child? **He/she needs good quality sleep each night to soak in what they learned in school that day.**

Children who are not getting enough sleep can suffer from mood swings, behavior problems, memory loss and it is harder for them to learn.



Here's how you can make sure your child is getting the proper amount of sleep each night:

- Set a bedtime that will give your child at least 10 hours of sleep before they need to get up for school.
- Stick to a consistent bedtime routine that will help your child to relax and takes place at the same time every night.
- Seriously consider keeping television and computers out of your child's bedroom.
- Teach your child the importance of sleep by setting a good example.

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## Helping Your Child with Homework

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Homework is an important part of your child's school day and can count for a large percent of his/her grade. It's a parent's job to make homework a priority during the school year. **Children need support from their parents to develop good homework habits.**

Here are some tips to help your child:

- Give your child a **nutritious snack** when he/she gets home from school. Children can concentrate better when they aren't hungry.
- **Provide a quiet place**, free from distractions like television, radio or video games.
- Have your child work on homework **soon after getting home** while he/she is still in "school mode".
- If you notice that your child is struggling with one subject every day, **contact his/her teacher**.
- **Help your child be organized** by providing a folder to bring homework to and from school in.
- **Discuss your child's homework** with them every day and help them think it through. Check your child's homework for accuracy and neatness. Have your child correct the mistakes him/herself and recheck it for them.

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### Resources for Parents

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#### National Sleep Foundation

1522 K Street, NW, Suite 500 Washington, DC 20005  
(202) 347-3471      [sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/children-and-sleep](http://sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/children-and-sleep)

#### The Rhode Island Department of Education

255 Westminster Street Providence, RI 02903  
401-222-8952      [www.thriveri.org](http://www.thriveri.org)

#### U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202  
1-800-USA-LEARN      [www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/succeed/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/succeed/index.html)

#### Rhode Island Parent Teacher Association

RIC East Campus, Bldg. 6  
600 Mt. Pleasant Avenue Providence, RI 02908  
[www.rhodeislandpta.org](http://www.rhodeislandpta.org)

#### Rhode Island 2-1-1

2-1-1      [www.211ri.org](http://www.211ri.org)

#### Rhode Island Parent Information Network

175 Main Street Pawtucket, RI 02860  
401-727-4144      [www.ripin.org](http://www.ripin.org)

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[www.preventchildabuse-ri.org](http://www.preventchildabuse-ri.org)

Please share this information with the families in your programs. Thank you!