

## **Parental Involvement Contributes to Children's Academic Success**

With school beginning it is important to remember those caregivers, teachers, peers, extended family, media, heredity, and the environment all contribute to a child's development; however, parents, if present, are the most powerful influence in the lives of their children. Parental involvement not only shapes development during the initial years of life, but also during the adolescent and adult years.

Given this important role, to what extent should parents be involved in their children's development? According to the National PTA, "Parental involvement is the participation of parents in every facet of the education and development of children from birth to adulthood, recognizing that parents are the primary influence in their children's lives." Parents have a tremendous responsibility to be involved with their children both inside and outside the home.

Years and years of research have showed that the more involved parents are in their children's development, the greater chance children have to succeed, particularly in their academic performance. Consistently, researchers have discovered that greater parental involvement in a child's education is associated with:

- Higher student grades, test scores and graduation rates
- Better attendance
- Higher homework completion.
- More positive student attitudes and behavior
- Increased motivation, better self-esteem
- Lower rates of suspension
- Decreased use of drugs and alcohol
- Fewer instances of violent behavior
- Greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education

When parents are involved, children achieve more regardless of their socioeconomic level, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' educational.

Research over the past few years on early brain development has shown, positive parental involvement needs to begin long before children enter into formal schooling arrangements. The early years of a child's life are critically important for healthy brain development, attachment formation, and language acquisition. When parents become actively involved with their children at an early age, they lay a foundation for learning that will benefit children for the rest of their lives.

With guidance and support parents can be more involved in helping your child succeed in school through home learning activities and finding opportunities to find themselves with opportunities to teach, to be models for and to guide their children.

Here are some tips to help you stay involved with your child's education throughout the whole school year.

- Talk with your child everyday about what occurred at school. Share with them an enthusiasm for learning and hard work.
- Join the PTA
- Attend Open House, and Parent Teacher Conferences
- Check assignments everyday to make sure assignments are completed. Work with your child to develop the lifelong trait of responsibility.
- Make sure your child arrives at school rested and ready to learn. Most children need 10 hours of sleep. Children should have a nutritious breakfast every morning.
- Keep in touch with your child's teachers. Look for classroom letters, classroom blogs, and weekly correspondences.
- Volunteer at school. Contact your child's teacher or school in advance to see how you can help.
- Read with your child everyday. Make sure they have a book to read for enjoyment. Also model reading.
- Establish a pattern of excellent attendance at school is a key to success for children. Children should not miss more than 5 days of school a year.
- Tell your children that you are proud of what they have accomplished. School is tough and so it is important to let your child know that you believe in them and support them.