

Help Your Child Succeed in School

by

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Q. If you had to pick one strategy for helping your child to succeed in school, what would that be?

A. Self-esteem building. That holds the key.

A new school year is synonymous with a new beginning. “Get off to a good start” is what every parent says to every child. “Set up good study habits; make good friends; get good grades.” These are all dreams of both parent and child. They sound good, and they are good; but they are only as good as your child feels about him/herself. Feelings of self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence are the foundation for making these kinds of successes happen.

Here’s how you can help...

1. Show your child respect and appreciation. Respect your child as you say, “Please...,” and appreciate your child as you say, “Thank you.” It turns out that the way to teach your child to say “please” and “thank you” is to say “please” and “thank you” to your child.
2. Help your child uncover his own uniqueness. Take as much time as you can to delight in your child’s individuality. Your child is the one and only person like he/she is. No one else has been born into the world like your child. Have fun helping your child discover his/her own personal passion, potential, and place in the world.

3. Change the word “misbehavior” to “mistaken behavior.” What do we know about mistakes? We learn from them. Teach your child as much as possible how not to make the same mistakes again.
4. Help your child to learn, to do, and to be all he/she can. Reserve praise for major accomplishments, but encourage your child by noticing and reflecting back to him/her small occurrences. You can show your awareness by reinforcements like:

“You finished your homework.”

“You ate all your spinach.”

“You put all your toys away.”

Every good try is worthy of recognition as a major step toward further success.

Being the best at something is a respectable goal. However, doing the best you can comes first. Focus on your child’s capability and strength. Notice his/her individuality. Help your child learn better behavior. Encourage him/her to succeed. What you think of your child is what your child will think of him/herself. Believe in your child; think positive; think strong. Self-esteem on the inside manifests itself in school success on the outside. Enjoy your partnership.

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