

Expect the Best from your Child...And Get It!

Emphasize the Three A's:

Attendance: Businesses know how important attendance is. When they call schools before hiring a graduate, they ask first about their attendance...and only later about grades. Show your child that you think attendance is important. You go to work if you have a headache or if the weather is cold—your child should also go to school on those days.

Achievement: We all need goals. Help your child learn to set goals...and achieve them. When he reaches one goal, show that you are pleased—and that you expect him to set his sights even higher the next time.

Attitude: Jesse Jackson often says, “It’s your attitude and not your aptitude that determines your altitude.” On other words, even the brightest student can fail if he doesn’t work hard. Let your children know you expect them to try their best.

And These Three B's:

Be positive: Low self-esteem may be keeping your child from reaching his/her potential. If you suspect this may be a problem, try to focus on the positive. Talk about “things you are working on” rather than “things you don’t do well.”

Be consistent: Tell your child you expect him/her to study a certain amount of time each day. Don’t let your child put off homework until the late evening. Have him/her choose a time for homework...and then stick to it.

Be there for your child: Take time to talk and listen to your child. Plan some special time alone with each child each week. During these times alone, you can talk about your hopes and expectations for your child.

Expect Kids to Develop Good Habits

Talk with your child about other habits you expect him/her to develop. A few possibilities include:

- ❖ Writing down homework assignments
- ❖ Remembering to bring needed materials home from school
- ❖ Remembering to take homework and other materials back to school
- ❖ Going to bed on time
- ❖ Getting up on time and being ready for school on time
- ❖ Making his/her bed and straightening up his/her room in the morning

Here are some ways you can encourage good habit formation:

- ❖ Don't try everything once. Remember the year you made the 15 New Year's Resolutions? By Valentine's Day, you had given up on all of them. Your kids are the same. Choose only a few habits you'd like them to develop.
- ❖ Make sure your kids are involved. After all, you are trying to change their habits. Talk with them about what you're trying to do. Let them know that positive habits can make their lives easier and more pleasant. Ask them to choose one or two things they'd like to work on first.
- ❖ Allow 21 days. Experts have discovered that if you repeat an action every day for 21 days, it is likely to become automatic. So, for the next 21 days, expect your kids to act on their new habits. After that, they'll find they do it without thinking about it.