



The Parent Academy Helping Your Child Succeed in School



Rationale: Parents are their child's first and most important teacher. Decades of research shows that when parents are involved, student achievement increases significantly. The recent census reported that there is a direct relationship between level of education and income levels. Overall, individuals with a high school diploma earn more money than individuals who dropped out of school. Individuals with a college degree have a higher salary than individuals with a high school diploma. Education is important for building stronger families and better communities. Education helps to break the cycle of poverty and improve the quality of life. Education gives people more life options.

Parents can play an important role in helping their children succeed in school and in life. Here is how:

At Home

- Talk with your child about what they are learning in school.
- Make sure your child is completing all homework assignments. Review your child's work with him or her. Set up a special quiet space in your home for your child to complete homework.
- Make reading a priority. The more children read, the better they become at reading. Miami-Dade County Public Schools recommends that children read at least 30 minutes at home every day. Read together. Read to your child. Have your child read to you.
- Try to schedule at least one family mealtime together each day. Talk together.
- Informal learning activities are just as beneficial as formal school activities:
 - Cook together
 - Visit museums, public libraries, bookstores, the zoo
 - Attend cultural events
 - Sing or play music together
 - Enjoy a family games night
- Tell your children you love them every day. Let them know they are important. Even older children need to hear this important message.
- Progress Reports are issued near the fifth week of each quarter. Review the progress report with your child. If the progress report indicates *Borderline* or *Failing*, meet with your child's teacher, and provide tutoring assistance to help your child.
- Report cards are issued at the end of each nine week grading period. Please ask your child to see the report card. Sit down and review it with your child. Praise him or her for earning an "A" or "B." If your child earned a "C," "D," or an "F," talk with your child about possible reasons for earning these grades, seek tutoring assistance, and schedule a conference with your child's teacher to discuss how you can help your child. Additionally, the report card indicates how many days your child was absent from school or class for the nine-week period.
- Make sure that your child is getting eight to nine hours of sleep each night. Sleep is an important time for processing the information that was learned during the day.

At School

- Monitor your child's attendance. Your child will not learn if he or she is not in school. Please visit your school's attendance office and make sure that you are aware of the days that your child is reported as absent from school. This will help you make sure that your child does not skip school.
- Attend open houses, activities, parent conferences and events at your child's school.
- Volunteer at your child's school.
- Join the PTSA (Parent-Teacher-Student Association).

Early Childhood Years

The early childhood years, the period from birth to age 5, are critical to helping build the foundation for learning that extends throughout life. There is so much that parents can do during this time to help their children develop school readiness skills.

Nurturing

- Children need to feel loved and wanted. It is necessary for normal growth and development. Holding and hugging your child frequently is healthy and helps children develop their sense of security.
- Tell your child you love him or her every day.

Developing Language Skills

- Children, even infants, understand more than what parents and other adults could ever imagine. They may not be able to communicate by talking, but that does not mean that they do not understand what we are saying. They do understand.
- Oral language skills help children develop pre-literacy skills. It is important that parents and other caregivers talk with children, even infants, as often as possible, to help children develop their language skills.
 - Keep a book of nursery rhymes near the diaper changing area and read a nursery rhyme at each diaper change
 - Sing *The Alphabet Song* and other rhythmic songs every day
 - Read a book a day with your child
 - Explore with your child
 - Talk with your child frequently

Positive Discipline

- Children develop their sense of right and wrong during these early years. When children do something that is not acceptable, please take the time to explain to children what they did wrong, and talk with them about how you expect them to act.

The Parent Academy offers free classes to help parents help their children. For more information, please call (305) 995 - 2680, or visit the website at www.theparentacademy.net.

