

Get Involved Without Getting Invasive



Planning with your pupil. A student's success can be greatly bolstered by an active and attentive parent.

(NC)—Studies show that when parents are engaged in education, their children perform better in school. But how involved should parents be? Education expert Dr. Nick Whitehead, CEO and founder of Oxford Learning Centres, Inc. offers these tips:

- **Communicate.** Parents need to talk to kids about school every day. Ask specific questions about classes. Rather than asking, "how was school?" ask, "How was math class? What did you learn?"
- **Know when and who.** Parents should know their kids' schedules and teachers' names.
- **Know what's next.** Use the class syllabus to identify upcoming projects and assignments. If one has not been assigned, ask the teacher for a timeline.
- **Follow up.** If there's a quiz on Friday, ask how it went on Monday. If marks are not what they should be, arrange a talk with the teacher and make a plan.
- **Check in.** Parents are encouraged simply to call the teacher to check in and make sure that everything is going smoothly.
- **Help with Homework.** There are a lot of dos and don'ts when it comes to homework help. It boils down to two basic rules: Help, but don't do the work for them. Parents should help create a homework-friendly atmosphere where children can focus and get the work done without getting stressed out or losing motivation.
- **Don't Wait for the Report Card.** Rather than waiting for the first report card or progress report to come home, parents should follow up with issues that come up as they arise.
- **Model organization.** Kids who demonstrate consistent organizational skills at home transfer those skills with them to the classroom. By providing an organized routine at home, parents can help kids become organized in school. Use calendars, planners, and agendas.
- **Set Goals Together.** Part of the communication process involves setting academic goals for the school year. Parents can help kids learn to think about long-term outcomes by discussing personal and academic ambitions, big or small.

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