



WELLNESS

Wellness Monthly

Healthy matters to keep in mind.

August 2009

This Month's Topic:

Head of the Class

Strategies for Nurturing Your Child's Confidence in Learning

What's the biggest key to your child's success in school? Look in the mirror. It's you. When parents are involved, students do better in school, and have more motivation and self-confidence.

How do you nurture your young scholar's confidence? These tips can help you get your child started on the road to success.

Talk with your children. Conversation is key to developing language skills. Listen to their ideas and respond to them. Let them jump in with questions and opinions when you read books together. This type of give-and-take at home is likely to increase their participation and interest in school.

Make learning fun. Take trips to the library, museum, zoo or park. Talk about what you learned on these trips. Choose TV programs that encourage learning, and watch them together. Discuss what you've seen.

Encourage reading. Helping your child become a reader is the single most important thing that you can do to help him or her succeed in school — and in life. Reading helps children in all school subjects. More important, it's the key to lifelong learning.

Set an example. Do paperwork, read or balance your checkbook during study time. Children need to see that "homework" is a part of everyday life.

Show that school is important. How you talk about school signals its value. You'll want to:

- Be positive about homework. Emphasize effort, not just good grades.
- Explain how mastering schoolwork paves the way for success in life.
- Celebrate progress. When your child finishes a big project or tough assignment, reward him or her with a special treat.

Be generous with praise. Acknowledge hard work and determination. It's a great way to motivate.

Help your child develop good study habits. This is where strong coaching skills come in. Step in and offer guidance when it's needed.

- Demonstrate the "divide and conquer" technique: Tackle difficult work when you're fresh; easy work can be done later.
- If your child struggles with an assignment, help him or her think through the questions. But, don't give the answers.
- Be alert to signs of frustration. They signal that it's time for a break.
- Learn when to step back. Children need room to think for themselves. That's how independence and self-reliance develop.

Set high but realistic expectations. When you expect good things from your kids, they're more likely to deliver. However, know your child's abilities. If he or she is a "C" student, don't demand "A's."

You can help your child succeed in school. United Behavioral Health is here to help. Call or log on any time for help with any of life's challenges.

Study Space

Homework time is important and needs to be protected. Here are some ways for you to help make that happen:

- Establish a regular time for schoolwork. Having a routine helps children to finish assignments.
- Set aside a special place. It doesn't have to be fancy — the kitchen table or a corner of the living room works just fine.
- Make sure the space is quiet and well-lit. Turn off the TV, radio and telephone.
- Provide all the necessary materials: paper, pencils, calculator and dictionary.
- Be available to answer questions, check answers — and acknowledge the hard work your child is doing.

Your Child's Learning Style

Everyone learns in different ways. Experts have identified four basic learning styles. Below is a description of each and how you can nurture it.

Visual learner. This type of learner thinks in pictures. He or she enjoys art and drawing, and can read maps, charts and diagrams well. Encourage a visual learner to draw pictures or illustrate homework with colored pens.

Kinetic learner. Can't sit still for long? Loves to touch and feel things? Don't fight the tendency, use it. Allow your child to chew gum or ride a stationary bike when reading. Try hands-on activities such as art projects or nature walks.

Language-oriented learner. This type of student loves words, stories and jokes. Encourage your child to make up word problems for math assignments. Have him or her dictate assignments into a tape recorder, then play it back to record on paper.

Logical learner. This kind of learner loves to explore how things work. Try introducing him or her to strategy games, puzzles and computers. For reading assignments, ask "What if?" questions.

Resources:

Use the search phrase "study habits" to learn more about improving study skills and helping your child succeed in school.

Use the search phrase "learning style" to learn more about your child's personal learning style.

Sources: HealthDay
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Employee Assistance Program (EAP): United Behavioral Health (UBH)

Toll-free number: 1-866-248-4105 (7 days/24 hours)

Access code: 61570

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