FLEMINGTON-RARITAN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Curriculum Department
50 Court Street. Flemington, NJ 08822

Helpful Information for Parents

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Helpful Websites for Parents

- FRSD English/Language Arts Parent Information Page:
  - https://www.frsd.k12.nj.us/Page/10477
- FRSD Summer Reading Webpage with Book, Website, and Podcast Recommendations for Kids:
  - https://sites.google.com/frsd.us/summerreading/resources
- Notable Children's Books for 2018:
  - http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists/ncb

11 Ways Parents Can Help Their Children Learn to Read

By: Timothy Shanahan - Literacy expert Timothy Shanahan shares best practices for teaching reading and writing. Dr. Shanahan is an internationally recognized professor of urban education and reading researcher who has extensive experience with children in inner-city schools and children with special needs. All posts are reprinted with permission from Shanahan on Literacy.

Parents often ask how they can help their children learn to read; and it's no wonder that they're interested in this essential skill. Reading plays an important role in later school success. Here are 11 practical recommendations for helping preschoolers and school-age students learn to read.

1. Teaching reading will only help.

Sometimes, parents are told early teaching is harmful, but it isn't true. You simply can't introduce literacy too early. I started reading to my own children on the days they were each born! The "dangers of early teaching" has been a topic of study for more than 100 years, and no one has ever found any convincing evidence of harm. Moreover, there are hundreds of studies showing the benefits of reading to your children when they are young.

2. Teaching literacy isn't different than teaching other skills.

You don't need a Ph.D. to raise a happy, healthy, smart child. Parents have been doing it for thousands of years. Mothers and fathers successfully teach their kids to eat with a spoon, use a potty, keep their fingers out of their noses, and say "please." These things can be taught pleasantly, or they can be made into a painful chore. Being unpleasant (e.g. yelling, punishing, pressuring) doesn't work, and it can be frustrating for everyone. This notion applies to teaching literacy, too. If you show your 18-month-old a book and she shows no interest, then put it away and come back to it later. If your child tries to write her name and ends up with a backwards "D," no problem. No pressure. No hassle. You should enjoy the journey, and so should your child.

3. Talk to your kids (a lot).

Last year, I spent lots of time with our brand new granddaughter, Emily. I drowned her in language. Although "just a baby," I talked — and sang — to her about everything. I talked about her eyes, nose, ears, mouth, and fingers. I told her all about her family — her mom, dad, and older brother. I talked to her about whatever she did (yawning, sleeping, eating, burping). I talked to her so much that her parents thought I was nuts; she couldn't possibly understand me yet.

But reading is a language activity, and if you want to learn language, you'd better hear it, and eventually, speak it. Too many moms and dads feel a bit dopey talking to a baby or young child, but studies have shown that exposing your child to a variety of words helps in her development of literacy skills.

4. Read to your kids.

I know everyone says this, but it really is a good idea — at least with preschoolers. One of my colleagues refers to this advice as the "chicken soup" of reading education. We prescribe it for everything. (Does it help? It couldn't hurt.) If a parent or caregiver can't read or can't read English, there are alternatives, such as using audiobooks; but for those who can, reading a book or story to a child is a great, easy way to advance literacy skills. Research shows benefits for kids as young as 9-months-old, and it could be effective even earlier than that. Reading to kids exposes them to richer vocabulary than they usually hear from the adults who speak to them, and can have positive impacts on their language, intelligence, and later literacy achievement. What should you read to them? There are so many wonderful children's books. Visit your local library, and you can get an armful of adventure.

5. Have them tell you a "story."

One great way to introduce kids to literacy is to take their dictation. Have them recount an experience or make up a story. We're not talking "Moby Dick" here. A typical first story may be something like, "I like fish. I like my sister. I like grandpa." Write it as it is being told, and then read it aloud. Point at the words when you read them, or point at them when your child is trying to read the story. Over time, with lots of rereading, don't be surprised if your child starts to recognize words such as "I" or "like." (As children learn some of the words, you can write them on cards and keep them in a "word bank" for your child, using them to review.)

6. Teach phonemic awareness.

Young children don't hear the sounds within words. Thus, they hear "dog," but not the "duh"-"aw"- "guh." To become readers, they have to learn to hear these sounds (or phonemes). Play language games with your child. For instance, say a word, perhaps her name, and then change it by one phoneme: Jen-Pen, Jen-Hen, Jen-Men. Or, just break a word apart: chair... ch-ch-ch-air. Follow this link to learn more about language development milestones in children.

7. Teach phonics (letter names and their sounds).

You can't sound out words or write them without knowing the letter sounds. Most kindergartens teach the letters, and parents can teach them, too. I just checked a toy store website and found 282 products based on letter names and another 88 on letter sounds, including ABC books, charts, cards, blocks, magnet letters, floor mats, puzzles, lamp shades, bed sheets, and programs for tablets and computers. You don't need all of that (a pencil and paper are sufficient), but there is lots of support out there for parents to help kids learn these skills. Keep the lessons brief and fun, no more than 5–10 minutes for young'uns. Understanding the different developmental stages of reading and writing skills will help to guide your lessons and expectations.

8. Listen to your child read.

When your child starts bringing books home from school, have her read to you. If it doesn't sound good (mistakes, choppy reading), have her read it again. Or read it to her, and then have her try to read it herself. Studies show that this kind of repeated oral reading makes students better readers, even when it is done at home.

9. Promote writing.

Literacy involves reading and writing. Having books and magazines available for your child is a good idea, but it's also helpful to have pencils, crayons, markers, and paper. Encourage your child to write. One way to do this is to write notes or short letters to her. It won't be long before she is trying to write back to you.

10. Ask questions.

When your child reads, get her to retell the story or information. If it's a story, ask who it was about and what happened. If it's an informational text, have your child explain what it was about and how it worked, or what its parts were. Reading involves not just sounding out words, but thinking about and remembering ideas and events. Improving reading comprehension skills early will prepare her for subsequent success in more difficult texts.

11. Make reading a regular activity in your home.

Make reading a part of your daily life, and kids will learn to love it. When I was nine years old, my mom made me stay in for a half-hour after lunch to read. She took me to the library to get books to kick off this new part of my life. It made me a lifelong reader. Set aside some time when everyone turns off the TV and the web and does nothing but read. Make it fun, too. When my children finished reading a book that had been made into a film, we'd make popcorn and watch the movie together. The point is to make reading a regular enjoyable part of your family routine.

Happy reading!

Sources:

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Karass J., & Braungart-Rieker J. (2005). Effects of shared parent-infant reading on early language acquisition. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 26, 133-148.

Ways a Parent Can Help a Child
LEARN TO READ

1. **Let your child see you reading!**
   Have magazines and books in your home.

2. Look for appropriate word and reading games online to play with your child

3. Ask your child to draw a picture or write about what happens in a story.
   Keep paper, notebooks, pencils, pens, markers and crayons available in your house.

4. When you're reading a magazine or newsletter, ask your child to look on the pages for pictures that start with a certain sound.
   Do you see a picture of a thing that starts with "p"?

5. Set aside a time and place for reading -
   like a comfy chair with a reading light for bedtime stories

6. **Visit your public library regularly.**
   Find and read together the books that were your favorites when you were a kid.

7. **Enjoy reading with your child.**
   Laugh at silly pictures. Make goofy voices. **Have fun!**

8. Ask your child questions about the story as you read together:
   - What is the story about?
   - Why do you think he/she made that choice? Was it a good choice?
   - Why did that happen?
   - What do you think will happen next?
   - What was your favorite part of the story? Why ?

9. Make a game out of finding words that rhyme or that start with the same sound

10. After you finish reading a story, look back at a page and ask your child to find common words.
    "Can you find the word ___?"
    Use words like: the, me, up, and, go, run, can, to, stop

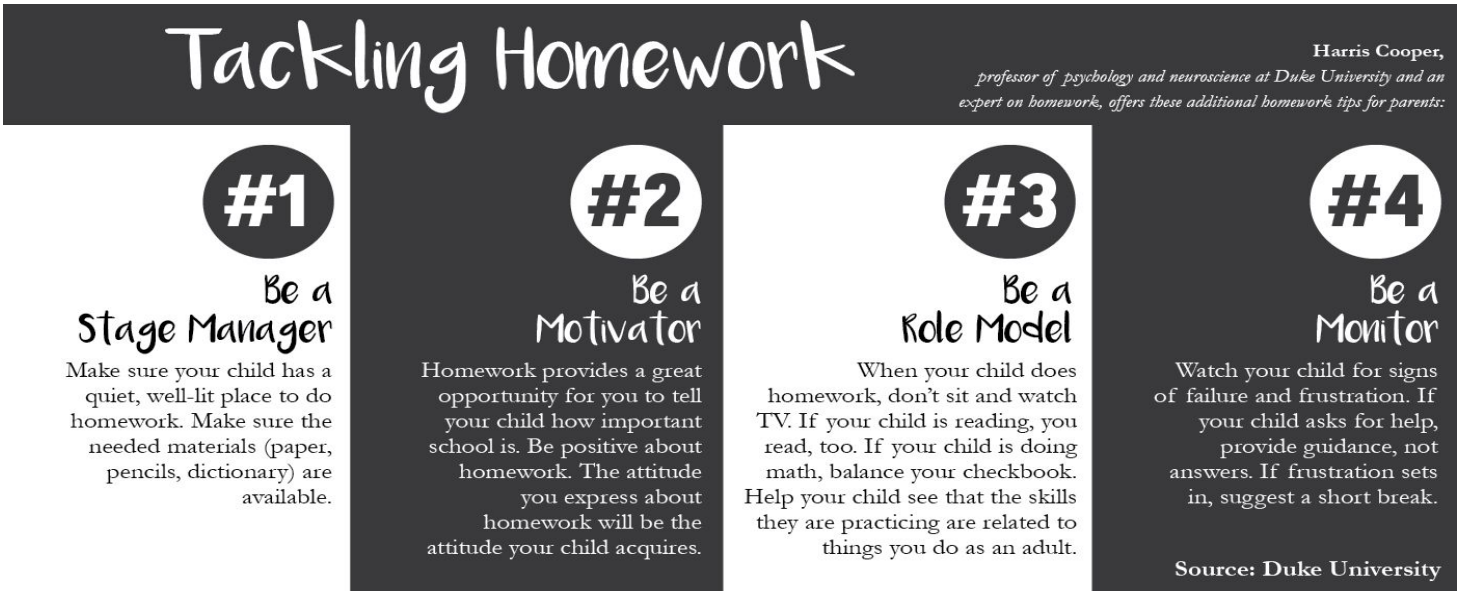
11. Teach your child to recognize his or her own name

Read out loud to your child -
books, poems, nursery rhymes, recipes, billboards, newspaper articles, ads, signs - whatever words you see!

http://www.fortheteachers.org/friday-five-ways-a-parent-can-help-a-child-learn-to-read/

Taming the Homework Monster:

Tips for Parents



✪ Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework. Avoid having your child do homework with the television on or in places with other distractions, such as people coming and going.

✪ Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available. Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.

✪ Help your child with time management. Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.

✪ Be positive about homework. Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.

✪ When your child does homework, you do homework. Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook.

✪ When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.

✪ Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework. Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean he will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.

Help Your Child Fall In Love With Reading

1. Choose books wisely.

- Think of the topics that would cause your child to interrupt a conversation if they overheard someone discussing them. Then help your child find corresponding books. It's a foolproof way to help him/her fall in love with reading.
- No one says your child has to read the classics or the bestsellers.
- No one says your child has to just read fiction or nonfiction. Likewise, no one says he/she has to finish a book if he/she is not enjoying it.
- Opt for books on topics your child is passionate about and the rest will follow. Indulge interests and explore new topics. The nutrition facts on the milk box, newspapers, recipes, maps, and game instructions all make great reading material- if your child is interested.

2. Try books that reflect your child's daily experiences

- Making connections to topics your child reads about is a fun way to keep your child engaged. For example, you can read *You Can't Take a Balloon into the Metropolitan Museum* with your child before or after visiting an art museum. This opens up opportunities for conversations like discussing similarities and differences between the book and the museum visit.
- Knowing your child and your own reading style. This is important because:
    - It offers you an opportunity to observe what interests your child.
    - Be it science, art, interactive books or wordless books, you will figure out her current interest and support her in appropriate ways.
    - You won't impose your preferences on your child; instead, you will share what you like with each other and get a chance to explore those beyond your favorites.
      It allows your child to understand and respect that every individual reads differently and it is okay.

3. Limit Screen-Time

- Focus is a muscle and constant bursts of easy entertainment are the cognitive equivalent of junk food. It's easy and immediately rewarding. As a result, reading seems boring because it offers no quick hits of dopamine.
- To really love reading, students need the ability to stay engaged for more than 280 characters.

4. Make it a part of your daily routine.

- Kids who dislike reading tend to see it as a chore to be trudged through under duress. For those who love it, reading is an essential part of their day. **It is not a task, it as an essential activity**; It is not to be swallowed like a vitamin pill; it is to be savored like a lazy summer lunch. Like anything, the necessary time can only be found each day when it ceases to be optional. Depending on the routine for the day, kids should always set aside at least 20 minutes for reading.
- Many kids seem to find pre-bed to be the best time to read, especially as a means of avoiding using devices and sleeping better. One great present for a young reader is a clip-on book light for reading under the covers. Try to make it an everyday act, not a rarity. Practice makes anything more enjoyable. **Carry a book everywhere and let it enliven dull moments**.

5. Reread your child's favorites

- It's common for children to request the same book again and again. Re-reading familiar stories offers children a chance to absorb information over time and allows them to master the whole story.

6. Encourage storytelling

- Encourage your child to tell you a story from time to time or to retell a story after you've read it several times.
- Don't feel the need to correct how he/ she's telling the story. Let him/her enjoy the experience of storytelling.

7. Have fun while reading

- Try whatever style feels comfortable for you and your child. Some ways families have fun with stories include:
    - Acting out the story while reading by using facial expressions, gestures, body movements, and voices to make the story come to life.

- Making the story relevant to your child's life by adapting the story to include her name, a friend's name, or your pet's name. For example, surprise your child by saying "Olivia, Olivia, what do you see?" when you read Eric Carle's Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?
- Finding props to go along with favorite stories and offering them to your child to use in her play.

8. Change your setting!

- It can be fun to read books in different places in and around your home. Try reading Eric Carle's The Very Lonely Firefly in a dark room with a flashlight. I've read The Lamb and the Butterfly (written by Arnold Sundgaard, illustrated by Eric Carle) to a group of four-year-olds on the grass, and when they saw a butterfly fly by, they associated it with the one in the story! You can even ask your child where she wants to read a particular story.

There are lots of ways to encourage and enjoy reading. Try these ideas and do more of what your child enjoys.

Tips from: National Association for the Education of Young Children
1313 L St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005 | (202)232-8777 | (800)424-2460 | help@naeyc.org

Instill a Love of Math

By Laura Lewis Brown
http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/math/math-tips-for-parents/instill-a-love-of-math/

Parents are bombarded with messages to read with their children, but it's rare to hear about the importance of doing math with them. Here are some helpful tips on why and how to instill a love of math in your children.

Early Math Matters

We may take for granted that our children will inevitably learn how to add, subtract, multiply and divide, but early math lessons establish the base for the rest of their thinking lives. "Mathematics that kids are doing in kindergarten, first, second and third grades lays the foundation for the work they are going to do beyond that," says Linda Gojak, president of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). "They are learning beyond just counting and numbers." That's why it's so important to help children love math while they are still young. Parents can build on those first preschool lessons by counting with their children, asking them to look for patterns and recognize shapes, then moving on to numbers, Gojak says.

The goal should be to make math "real" and meaningful by pointing it out in the world around you. That could include checking and comparing prices at the grocery store, driving down the street counting mailboxes, reading recipes, calculating coupons, or even measuring food or drink at the dinner table. Kevin Mahoney, math curriculum coordinator at Pennacre Country Day School in Wellesley, Mass., says when his children were little, his wife kept a small measuring tape in her pocketbook. While they were waiting for their order at a restaurant, the children would measure different items on the table.

Just as you encourage your early reader to look for familiar letters, ask your child to watch for math, regarding math as highly as you do reading. "Every parent knows that it's a good idea to read to your child every night, but they should also realize the importance of talking about mathematical situations with children every day," says Mahoney.

So What If It's Hard?

What if you hated math as a child? Parents should try to set aside their distaste for math and encourage their children as much as possible. Young children are eager to learn. "It's hard to learn to talk or walk. But they don't care," says Sue VanHattum, a community college math teacher in Richmond, Ca., who blogs about math learning on www.mathmamawrites.blogspot.com. "They just push themselves over their limits. They are going to come at math with that same attitude."

Avoid talking negatively about math, even if you have no need for trigonometry in your daily life. "A lot of people will only joke that they cannot do math or announce publicly, 'I'm not a math person.' When a parent does that in front of a child, it suggests that math's not important," says Char Forsten, education consultant and writer, who urges parents to create that desire to learn by constantly screening the environment for math. "Have you seen any good math lately?" she likes to ask students.

If your child believes that math doesn't really matter, he's not going to be as open to learn. "Attitude has everything to do with learning. You can't make anyone learn. If a child has learned not to love math, if they don't love math, and aren't willing to learn, you have to deal with that first," Forsten says.
If you are stuck on how to foster math enthusiasm, talk to your child's teacher about some ways to support math learning at home. There may be a new game that you have never heard of, which both you and your child will love.

Play Games

With so many facts and figures to memorize and apply to math problems, children learn early that math is something that requires work. That doesn't mean that it can't be fun; keep the pleasure in math by playing games with your children. Many games, even the ones adults play, rely on math. With countless websites, computer games and phone apps, parents have endless options, but don't forget about the nondigital games you loved as a child. The classics that require manipulating cards and game pieces, calculating along the way, may have the same appeal for your kids as they did for you. One game worth considering is Chutes and Ladders. A 2009 study conducted by Carnegie Mellon and the University of Maryland found that preschoolers who played the game improved math skills significantly compared to those in the study who played a different board game or did nonmath tasks.

As you play with your kids, try to tap into your own love for math. When you play Trivial Pursuit, you are using math to determine how many spaces you need to get to the next wedge or predict which category you can answer best. The game doesn't have to be about math, but should involve it. If you have a good game store in your area, stop by and ask the salespeople for help. Some of VanHattum's favorite games really push logic, which is the basis of math, and get children thinking visually. Check out Link, SET, Rush Hour, Blokus and Spot It, to name a few.

"Playing games is a great family activity," VanHattum says. "The more you have a tradition of playing games, the easier it is to bring in other games you like." So while you may not be passionate about your child's latest board game, you can work up to another game you like. Try to make the game personal to your family by playing it in your own special way. "Mathematicians make up their own rules," VanHattum says. "It's really important to be open to making up your own games. Change the rules. 'In our family, we play the game this way.'"

Flexing Math Muscles

Riding a bike, swimming in the deep end, and playing an instrument are just examples of our favorite childhood activities that require practice to master. So does math.

"Math is an intellectual muscle building; it's crucial for fully developing a child's potential," Mahoney says. "Those muscles can atrophy. If school is the only place you do math, then it becomes something you only do at school. Then you don't even think about using it in real life." So brush off those negative feelings about math and instill enthusiasm. Math will play a role in your child's life forever.

“It’s important to remember that those basics are essential for later learning. A lot of the stuff we learn in math we apply in different ways later,” says Gojak, who emphasizes the thinking skills that math provides. “I might not have to worry about what an isosceles triangle is, but it’s still an important part of education.”

As they grow, kids will learn that they are willing to work hard at something they love. It may just be math. Either way, remember that your child does not have to excel at math to enjoy it. “It doesn’t matter if they’re good, it matters whether they like it,” VanHattum says.

Back to School - The Time To Engage Parents and Families

By NCTM President Diane J. Briars (August 2014)

https://www.nctm.org/News-and-Calendar/Messages-from-the-President/Archive/Diane-Briars/Back-to-School_-The-Time-to-Engage-Parents-and-Families/

It's August—back-to-school time. As you plan for the new school year, don't forget to make explicit plans for engaging parents and families. As you well know, parents can be invaluable supports for their children's mathematics learning. While it's helpful to send parents basic information about their children's mathematics class, such as course outlines, assignments, and descriptions of teacher expectations, they typically need much more than that to be prepared to support their children's mathematics learning, as the following examples illustrate:

- The father of a third-grader who says, "Every night, my son and I fight about math! Like last night. I told him you have to start adding from the right; he says 'No, you don't. That's not the way we do it. I can start adding at the left—or anywhere.' He gets the right answers—and explains to me what he's doing. But it's not the way I learned it! Is that okay? I'm very frustrated!"
- The mother of a seventh grader who calls the principal, complaining that her daughter's mathematics teacher is not teaching; she's just asking students questions instead of showing students "the steps."
- The mother of a high school student who complains, "Ms. Smith is not a good teacher. When my son does his homework, there are problems that he struggles to solve. If she were a good teacher, he would be able to work all the problems easily."

Sound familiar? As recent media postings and comments about mathematics instruction and homework illustrate, many parents have beliefs about mathematics learning and instruction that are at odds with current content expectations and the effective teaching practices identified in *Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All*. If we want parents to support—rather than hinder—their children's learning, we need to actively help them to update their knowledge and beliefs. And this needs to be done at the very start of the school year—before they become confused and frustrated!

What mathematics should my child be learning?

First and foremost, parents need to know that being prepared for the 21st-century workforce requires being able to do more than simply compute or carry out procedures. Children need conceptual understanding as well as procedural fluency, and they need to know how, why, and when to apply this knowledge to answer questions and solve problems. They need to be able to reason mathematically and communicate their reasoning effectively to others. In short, students need the habits of mind described in the Standards for Mathematical Practice in the Common Core State Standards and the NCTM Process Standards, as well as in the process standards of other college- and career-readiness standards.

Clearly communicating these overarching outcomes to parents is essential if we want them to understand and accept the teaching practices that promote them. It might also be helpful for parents to know that this description of 21st-century competencies is coming from business and industry leaders and the broader research community, as well as from mathematics educators. They should also know that similar expectations exist for English/language arts and science as well as mathematics. The National Research Council's *Education for Life and Work: Guide for Practitioners* is a useful resource regarding 21st-century competencies and instruction to develop them. The Hunt Institute and the National PTA have produced a series of videos for parents that describe these increased expectations.

And, of course, parents want to know the specific mathematics that their children will be learning. This involves more than providing a list of content standards or objectives, such as that students in grade 2 are expected to become able to add and subtract two three-digit numbers within 1,000. Parents need to know how children are expected to solve these problems, especially when the methods may be different from the ones they learned as students. For adding and subtracting, for example, they need to understand that students may use strategies based on place value or properties of operation, explaining their strategies, or using drawings to support their explanations. It is also helpful to explain to parents how these approaches benefit children and to set the approaches in the context of what their children will be learning over the next several years. For multi-digit addition and subtraction, children eventually will learn standard paper-and-pencil procedures; however, first using a variety of strategies helps children understand and more easily learn the standard procedures. These same recommendations apply to all grades. For example, in grade 6, students will use unit rates or equivalent ratios to solve proportion problems instead of cross-multiplication; in high school, students may solve quadratic function problems presented in real-world contexts using tables and graphs, before solving quadratic equations. My experience has been that parents are very receptive to these "new" approaches when they clearly understand what is expected and how these approaches help their children learn mathematics.

What will my child's mathematics class look like?

Second, parents need to know that developing the mathematical knowledge described above requires instruction that actively engages their children in *doing* mathematics—solving unfamiliar problems alone and collaboratively, analyzing alternate solutions, and generalizing those solutions to methods and procedures that apply to classes of similar problems—rather than listening to the teacher show and tell them which procedures to apply and how to carry them out. Because of their own school experiences, many parents hold beliefs about teaching and learning that *Principles to Actions* describes as "unproductive." Helping parents understand the shifts in students' and teachers' roles and actions in effective mathematics classrooms is a critical priority for your beginning-of-the-year parent engagement efforts.

How can I help my child?

Most parents want to help their children learn mathematics. However, traditional ways of helping, such as showing children the steps to get answers, are at odds with our efforts to engage students in solving high-level tasks and developing conceptual understanding, thinking, and reasoning. Parents need specific suggestions about productive ways to help their children and how to implement them.

A key shift is for parents to ask questions to help their children solve unfamiliar problems rather than to show them how to solve them. Explicitly tell parents that when their children are struggling with a problem, their role is to help *them solve it* by asking questions such as the following:

- What are you being asked to find out?
- What does the problem tell you? Can you describe it in your own words? Have you seen a problem like this before?
- Is there any part of the problem that you already know how to do?
- Is there anything you don't understand? Where can you find the answers to your questions?
- Will it help to make a list, a chart, a table, a drawing, a diagram? Can you act out the problem?
- What do you estimate your answer will be? Why?
- Is your strategy working? Why or why not?
- Is there another way to check your answer?
- How do you know if your answer is right or wrong? (From A *Parent's Handbook, Grade K–5*, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, p. 2; similar questions appear in the Grades 6–8 and Grades 9–12 Parent Handbooks.)

Parents can support their children's learning in other ways:

- *Practicing basic facts.* Children are expected to develop immediate fact recall as well as understand the meaning for operations. Immediate recall requires practice, in addition to understanding—and time for practice in the school day is limited. Parents can help in a variety of ways, especially since orally presenting facts promotes immediate recall more effectively than worksheets. Perfect times to practice are while driving, walking, waiting, and so on. Just be sure that parents understand that this practice should build on understanding of operations, not occur in isolation.
- *Playing games.* Games are a great way for parents to give their children practice with mathematics concepts and skills and develop strategic thinking, while also promoting positive parent-child relationships.
- *Posing contextual problems.* Mathematics problems are part of everyday life. Parents help children see that math is all around them when they pose problems that arise in everyday situations.

A variety of useful resources support these activities:

- Family Resources, NCTM
- *Figure This! Math Challenges for Families* , NCTM
- Helping Your Child Learn Mathematics, U.S. Department of Education
- *Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core Standards-Mathematics*, Council of the Great City Schools

Technology Parent Resources

Connect your Chromebook to Wi-Fi

To connect to the Internet, use a compatible Wi-Fi network.

Step 1: Turn on Wi-Fi

1. Turn on your Chromebook.
2. Click your account photo.
3. Click No network .
4. Note: If you see "Connected to" and your Wi-Fi network name, your Chromebook is already connected to Wi-Fi.
5. Turn on Wi-Fi.
6. Your Chromebook will automatically look for available networks and show them to you in a list.

Step 2: Pick a network and connect

Connect to an open network

Click the Wi-Fi network  .

Remember, your information might be visible to other people on this network.

Connect to a secure network

1. Click the secure Wi-Fi network  .
2. Type the network password.
3. Click Connect.

Why We Need More (and Better!) Research on Kids and Tech

Technology is changing and evolving at a rapid pace, and research simply isn't keeping up.

By Michael Robb 9/10/2018

News about gaming disorders, depression linked to social media use, and the right amount of screen time can leave parents with more questions than answers when it comes to navigating what's best in today's 24/7 digital world. Every week it feels like the media blares out a new troubling statistic or study when it comes to the unintended consequences of our digital tools.

According to the latest Common Sense research, the proportion of teens who use social media multiple times a day has doubled over the past six years: In 2012, 34 percent of teens used social media more than once a day; today, 70 percent do. At the same time, most teens -- seventy-three percent -- think social media is designed to make them spend more time on their devices and distract them and their friends. The days when we could talk about a singular "effect" of social media are long gone; its role is complex, nuanced, and varied. And, as any parent knows, social media is just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to thinking about digital well-being. From waking up to phone notifications to Googling directions to soccer games, what we do with tech tools increasingly feels like a necessary part of daily life.

As the director of research at Common Sense, I spend a lot of time reviewing data and studying trends when it comes to kids and tech, including a mix of studies that demonstrate positive, negative, or no effects of media and technology on kids. What we do know, and what many parents have experienced firsthand, is that there has been rapid growth in the last few years when it comes to access to technology and the amount of time kids and families spend in front of screens.

- Ninety-five percent of families with children age 0 to 8 now have a smartphone.
- Teens report spending nine hours a day with media, including more than four hours a day on their mobile devices.
- Parents themselves spend over nine hours a day on screens at work and at home.

What we don't know is what effects this "always on" digital culture are having on our health, relationships, and communities -- especially when it comes to kids. The truth is, technology is changing and evolving at a

rapid pace, and research simply isn't keeping up. And with research we can come up with informed solutions and strategies to ensure kids' and families' digital well-being.

That's why we're excited about the Children and Media Research Advancement Act (CAMRA), a bipartisan and bicameral bill recently introduced by Senators Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Ben Sasse (R-Neb.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii), Susan Collins (R-Maine), and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) as well as Representatives John Delaney (D-Md.) and Ted Budd (R-N.C.). The bill would direct the National Institutes of Health to conduct and support research on media and tech's impact on the health and well-being of kids and teens. As the largest public funder of biomedical research in the world, the National Institutes of Health has the unparalleled ability to support long-term and meaningful research.

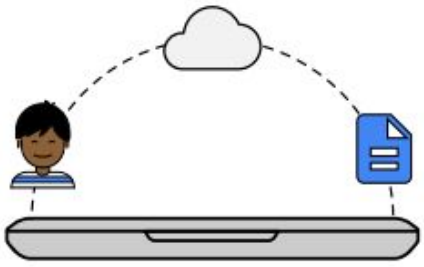
Data on the impact of media and tech on kids can help identify evidence-based harms and opportunities to inform needed changes. Initial research has confirmed what many families have seen in their own lives: Digital connectivity is beneficial for learning, creating, and connecting; at the same time, excessive and problematic use of digital devices can leave kids feeling addicted, unhappy, and distracted. But more research is needed, on everything from brain development to the influence of tech on relationships and vulnerable communities. We need far better data, using a range of methodologies, with populations that accurately represent the population of the United States.

Find out more about our ongoing research here, and if you want an alert when this bill comes up for a vote and you can make your voice heard with your representative, let us know. Together, we can make sure we have all the facts we need to help raise happy and healthy kids and teens in today's digital world.

Chromebooks in the Classroom

What you've always wanted to know about Chromebooks in your child's classroom

Your child is using a Chromebook at school, and you have some questions. A Chromebook may be different than the computer you have at home, so we want to help you understand what a Chromebook is and how it's used at school.

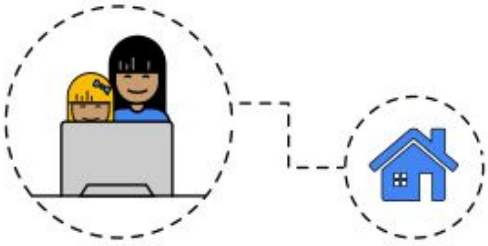


So...what is a Chromebook?

It's a laptop that runs on the Google Chrome operating system. The Chrome operating system is designed to work on the cloud, so that means everything—your files, your apps, even your desktop—lives online (not on your laptop) and is the same wherever you sign in. That means never misplacing your files or losing your work in progress (it's all right on the cloud). No wifi? Chromebooks also store files locally and work offline.

Why did our school choose Chromebooks?

Chromebooks are, by far, the #1 devices in schools because they're easy to use, versatile, and secure—we know trust is earned by protecting privacy and providing worry-free security. It helps that Chromebooks come as laptops and tablets with big screens and small screens, and entry models are affordable. They are built to be shareable. This means you and your child can use the same Chromebook and each have your own profile and files. In fact, in many schools, students share Chromebooks with each other.



Students can use their EDU accounts to continue **learning at home**

What does your child actually do on a Chromebook?

That varies from school to school, but the answer may be, "just about everything." Popular tools like Gmail and Google Docs make classroom collaboration easy, and there are apps to learn skills like video-making, podcasting, and coding. You may also have heard your child talk about Google Classroom. It's a tool some teachers use to help organize student classwork and assign homework and projects.

Here are some amazing things you can do on a Chromebook

Video editing
Tell stories with videos you produce yourself

Coding
Learn to code no matter what grade you're in

Drawing
Create art on your laptop

Want to know more? Here are some conversation starters with your child.

Do you have your own Chromebook at school, or do you share?

What is your favorite thing to do on a Chromebook?

What rules does your school have about using Chromebooks?

When do you use your Chromebook in school?

How has a Chromebook changed your school day?

What's the most amazing thing you can do or create with a Chromebook?

If you want to know more about Chromebooks, check out **google.com/chromebook/for-families**

District Technology Website -
www.learningfrsd.wixsite.com/frsdltol