

The importance of parent involvement

Parent involvement is crucial for a child's overall academic, social, emotional, and behavioral development. Parent involvement is also an important part of every Title I program. Here are a few reasons why.

Greater academic success

Parents who are actively involved in their child's education tend to have children who perform better in school. When parents show interest in their child's education by helping with homework, attending school meetings, and communicating with teachers, it reinforces the importance of education.

Increased motivation

When parents are engaged in their child's learning, it boosts the child's motivation and engagement in school. Children feel supported and valued, leading to a more positive attitude towards education and a greater willingness to fully participate in classroom activities.

Better decision-making skills

Parent-child discussions help children develop critical-thinking and decision-making skills. Helping children learn how to analyze situations, consider consequences, and make informed choices will help put them on the path to success in school and in life.

Improved social skills

Parental involvement helps children learn important social skills, such as cooperation, empathy, and respect for others. When parents participate in their child's social activities, it provides opportunities for their child to develop healthy relationships with peers and adults.

Improved behavior and discipline

Parents who have rules, set boundaries, and provide guidance help their child develop self-discipline and good judgment.

Better communication

Having regular conversations with their parents helps children improve their communication skills. They learn to express themselves, share their thoughts and concerns, and listen to others effectively—all essential life skills.

Stronger relationships

Involvement in a child's life strengthens the parent-child relationship. It creates an open line of communication and fosters trust and understanding between a parent and child.

Higher self-esteem

Children whose parents are involved in their lives tend to have higher self-esteem and more self-confidence. The support and encouragement children receive from their parents contribute to a child's belief in their abilities and a positive self-image.

What Is Title I?



Information for Elementary Parents

Facts and information on Title I programs and how they benefit students and families

For more tips to help your child succeed in school, watch this short video.



VIDEO

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What Is Title I?

Title I is the oldest and largest federally-funded education program in the U.S. Schools and students across the country benefit greatly from Title I programs. Here's what you need to know about Title I.

- ▶ The purpose of Title I is to provide all children with a fair, equal, high-quality education. Title I programs are especially beneficial for students who are struggling.
- ▶ Title I provides financial assistance to schools and students who need it the most—schools with high percentages of disadvantaged students and students who are considered “at risk.”
- ▶ Title I schools encourage parent involvement. They understand that while in-school programs can help students a great deal, nothing is more crucial to a child's success than the support of a parent.

Facts and stats

Here are some Title I facts and figures.

More than 50% of public schools receive Title I funding.

Most Title I funds are used for students in grades K–6.

There are 50,000+ Title I schools nationwide.

Title I provides \$15+ billion per year to help schools.

Types of programs

Title I provides funds for both schoolwide programs and targeted assistance programs.

Schoolwide programs

Title I schools with at least 40% of students from low-income households can use Title I funds to operate a schoolwide program. Schoolwide programs benefit and improve the instruction for all of the students in the school.

Targeted assistance programs

Title I schools with less than 40% low-income students can offer a targeted assistance program for students who are failing or most at-risk of failing. Targeted assistance programs often include tutoring, after-school programs, and programs that increase parent involvement.

How schools use Title I funds

Here are some common ways Title I funds are used to support the academic achievement of all students and improve a school's educational programs.

Additional faculty and staff

Schools can hire additional teachers and/or aides to provide instruction for individuals or small groups.

Tutoring and intervention

Title I funds may be used to implement tutoring programs that provide struggling students with extra support.

Professional development

Schools can use Title I funds to provide teachers and staff with additional training to enhance and improve their instructional strategies.

Extended learning opportunities

Funds can be used for after-school programs, summer school, or extended school-day programs.

Supplemental materials

Schools often use Title I funds to purchase educational materials, textbooks, and other resources to meet their students' unique needs and improve the quality of instruction.

Parent involvement programs

Title I funds are often used to encourage parent involvement in their child's education, aiming to strengthen the home-school connection.

10 ways to make reading a priority

Reading to and with your child every day is the best way to help them develop reading skills. Here are ten easy ways to incorporate reading into your child's day.

1. Have family reading time.

Have a set time when everyone in your family sits down together and reads. Try doing this once or twice a week for 20–30 minutes.

2. Use waiting times wisely.

Keep a selection of books in your car or tote bag. When you're waiting at the doctor's office or in a drive-thru line, pull out a book to give to your child instead of a phone or tablet.

3. Mix it up.

Make reading fun by reading books together or independently in different places—at the park, under a tree, in a fort made of blankets, at the pool, or on a blanket in the backyard.

4. Do activities that require reading.

Cook or bake with your child and have them read the recipe steps to you—or invite them to help you put something together that involves reading the instructions.

5. Get into a chapter book.

Choose a chapter book and read one chapter each day together. If you have an older child, try taking turns reading the chapters.

6. Go to the library often.

Make weekly trips to the library. If your child has a particular interest, help them find books on that topic. If you'd like help finding books your child will enjoy, ask the librarian for suggestions.

7. Make reading a part of daily life.

Look for opportunities to work reading into your everyday life. Share a funny poem at dinner or read a book to your child while they're taking a bath.

8. Give books as gifts.

Give books for birthdays and holidays, and encourage others to do the same. This is a good way to start a family library—and a great way to show that books and reading are important.

9. Look for teachable moments.

If your child is curious about something or expresses interest in a topic or subject, search online for information and read it together.

10. Be a good role model.

Let your child see you reading newspapers, books, and magazines, and talk about the interesting things you've learned.

"To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark."

—Victor Hugo

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Encourage Reading at Home



Information for
Elementary Parents

Information on the
importance of literacy
and how parents can
nurture a love of reading

For more on the importance of reading, watch this short video.



VIDEO

Encourage Reading at Home

Your encouragement and support are extremely important in helping your child develop literacy skills. In this pamphlet, you will learn why reading is important and how you can prioritize reading in your home.

Learning to read well and developing a love of reading will help your child succeed in elementary school and beyond.

Here are just a few of the many ways reading can benefit your child.

Reading...

- ▶ helps students improve their vocabulary and knowledge.
- ▶ fosters imagination and creativity.
- ▶ opens doors to new worlds and teaches children about different cultures.
- ▶ can provide an escape or an adventure.
- ▶ helps students learn more about themselves.
- ▶ is relaxing, calming, and helps reduce stress.

Facts and stats

Here are a few facts and figures on the importance of reading.

Reading improves student concentration.

Reading helps students develop language skills.

Reading helps students do better in all subjects.

Reading fosters curiosity about the world we live in.

- ▶ Children who are read to at least three times a week are two times more likely to:
 - ▶ recognize letters and sight words.
 - ▶ score in the top 25% of reading scores.
 - ▶ recognize words based on their context.*(Source: American Library Association)*
- ▶ A greater number of books in the home correlates significantly with higher reading scores for children.
- ▶ 65% of American fourth graders do not read at grade level.
- ▶ Children's books contain 50% more rare words than primetime TV.

Make the most of reading at home

Reading at home together will help your child build vocabulary and critical reading skills. Here's how you can help.

Help your child read to learn

After reading a book with your child, ask them to tell you what the book was about. Remembering and restating important details of a story will help improve your child's reading comprehension.

Mix it up (but not too much)

Make reading fun by picking out new books at the library and your favorite bookstore, but don't forget about your old books. While new books can be fun, rereading a favorite book helps children work on pronouncing words properly and reading in a smoother tone.

Help decode unknown words

Help your child decode unfamiliar words by sounding them out, and by using clues from other parts of the sentence or story. Also, help your child look up new words in a print or online dictionary.

Develop comprehension skills

Asking your child questions while you're reading (and when you're finished) will help your child develop important reading comprehension skills.

- ▶ *What do you think will happen next?*
- ▶ *What would you do?*
- ▶ *How do you think the character feels in this picture?*
- ▶ *What did you like about this book?*

Support good attendance

Children need to understand that unless they're ill, they are to be in school. Here are some tips to help ensure that your child has the best attendance possible.

Talk about the importance of good attendance

With your words and actions, show your child that regular attendance and doing well in school are important. Show interest in what your child is learning at school, ask to see their work, and let them know that you are there to help them any way you can.

Encourage involvement

Encourage your child to be involved in school activities and to interact with their classmates. A child who is excited to go to school and be with friends is much less likely to be chronically absent.

By the same token, look for ways that you can get involved in your child's school. This shows your child that school is important and that you are invested in their education.

Encourage healthy habits

Avoiding illness is crucial for good attendance. Stay on top of well-child check-ups and make sure your child maintains a healthy lifestyle with a balanced diet, regular exercise, and adequate sleep.

Develop routines

Help your child get everything they need for school ready the night before. Set out clothes, shoes, socks, coat, and backpack.

Also, make sure that your child goes to bed early enough to get a good night's sleep—and is up in time to have a good breakfast and not be rushed.

Be informed

Know bus pick-up times, parent drop-off times, and school bell times. Determine what time your child needs to be out the door to get to school on time.

Communicate with the school

When your child is absent, communicate with your child's teacher so they can provide make-up work if needed. If you have a situation that leads to chronic absenteeism, work with everyone involved to keep your child on track academically until the issue is resolved.

Get support

If you have difficulty getting your child to and from school, or if your child doesn't seem to want to go to school for any reason, talk to their teacher, school counselor, and/or an administrator. Work together to resolve whatever issue is having a negative impact on your child's attendance.

Make Attendance a Priority



Information for Elementary Parents

Information and tips to help parents support and improve their child's school attendance

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For more on the value of attendance, watch this video.



VIDEO

Make Attendance a Priority

While being in school every day puts students of all ages on the road to success, regular attendance is especially important in elementary school.

Elementary school children are absorbing new knowledge and developing new skills every day. Missing just a few days of school here and there may put a student behind, but with effort, they can usually catch up. However, being chronically absent can be a big problem for a young learner—now and down the road.

As a parent, it is important for you to make your child's attendance a top priority.

This pamphlet will explain why regular attendance is so important in elementary school. It will also provide tips and advice on how you can make sure your child is in school every day.

Facts and figures

The numbers speak for themselves—attendance is the #1 school success factor.

There is a direct relationship between chronic absenteeism and literacy.

Research has shown that only 17% of students who are chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade are able to read proficiently by 3rd grade.

Being in school enables students to get the help they need.

Early elementary students with good attendance receive 25% more reading instruction than chronically absent students.

Chronic absenteeism is an indicator.

By 6th grade, chronic absenteeism is the leading indicator a student will drop out of high school.

Early attendance habits affect later attendance—and school success.

Absenteeism in kindergarten and 1st grade are associated with negative outcomes in those grades—and in later grades as well.

Parents make a difference!

When parents communicate to their young children that attendance is important, their absenteeism rate is about 7%. When parents don't communicate this to their children, their absenteeism rate nearly doubles.

Why it matters

School attendance impacts your child in many important ways. Here are just a few.

Absences add up

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing two days or more per month. It may not seem like a lot, but those absences add up. *The more days your child misses, the more their learning and their grades are likely to suffer.*

Academic skill development

Frequent absences in elementary school have been shown to negatively impact a student's academic performance and test scores. Studies also show that poor attendance significantly affects a student's reading and math skills.

Social growth

Elementary students are learning social and emotional skills that will help them throughout their lives. At school, they learn to interact with others, make friends, and build relationships with adults outside of their family. They also learn how to follow new rules and routines.

More effective learning

When children are in class, they learn material along with their classmates. When they're not, they have to learn it on their own or with your help. This is time-consuming, stressful for everyone, and a much less effective way for your child to learn.

Parent involvement tips

Here are some tips and ideas for being a more involved parent.

Spend time together

Regularly set aside time to spend with your child. Engage in activities you both enjoy, and use this time to connect and bond.

Communicate and listen

Maintain open communication with your child and encourage them to express themselves. Listen to their thoughts, concerns, and feelings without judgment.

Be present

Be physically and mentally present when interacting with your child. Put away your phone and give them your full attention.

Prioritize health

Stay on top of check-ups and encourage good hygiene. Also make sure your child maintains a healthy lifestyle with a balanced diet, regular exercise, and adequate sleep.

Encourage after-school activities

Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities that interest them, such as sports, art, music, or dance.

Set boundaries and rules

Establish clear, age-appropriate rules and boundaries, and consistently enforce them. Explain the reasons behind the rules.

Embrace learning opportunities

Take advantage of everyday opportunities to teach your child something new. Take walks and discuss the things you see. When it storms, talk about how lightning forms—or go online and learn about it together.

Promote independence

When your child has a question or problem, try to help them figure out how to take care of it on their own. Being able to get their questions answered and their problems resolved helps students gain confidence and become more independent.

Support emotional development

Help your child identify and manage their emotions. Teach them healthy ways to express themselves and help them learn how to calmly and effectively handle difficult situations.

Read together

Fostering a love of reading is one of the most important ways that you can be involved in your child's education. Make reading together a part of your daily routine.

Be an Involved Parent



Information for
Elementary Parents

Tips for parents on being engaged and involved in their child's education

For additional parenting tips,
watch this short video.



VIDEO

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Be an Involved Parent

Studies show that children whose parents are engaged in their education have higher grades, better behavior, and improved social skills. Being engaged and involved also shows your child that their education is important to you.

As a parent, you are the most important and influential person in your child's life, and they need you to be interested and involved in their education!

To help your child succeed in school...

- ▶ work with your child's school.
- ▶ be informed.
- ▶ stay engaged and show genuine interest.
- ▶ make your child's education a top priority.

Being an involved parent doesn't require doing extraordinary things. It's the little things you do every day that are the most important.

Work with your school

Being an involved parent means working with your school to ensure your child reaches their potential.

Communicate with your school

Know the best way to contact your child's teachers and principal—email, phone, or text. If you ever have a question or concern, don't hesitate to contact them.

Prioritize attendance

Regular attendance is crucial for success in elementary school. Make sure your child is in school every day.

Get to know your child's teachers

Talk to them about any questions or concerns you have and volunteer to help in the classroom if you have time.

Know your school's support personnel

Many schools have tutors, aides, counselors, and social workers to assist students and parents who need help. Be familiar with the support personnel in your school in case you or your child are ever in need of their services.

Participate in parent-teacher groups

PTAs and PTOs help bring parents, teachers, and school administrators together. Your participation in a parent-teacher group shows your child that education is important to you. It also shows that you want to help make your child's school the best it can be.

Be informed

Know what is going on at your child's school—and in their life.

- ▶ Know how your child is doing in school. Look over returned papers and review every progress report. If you have a question, contact your child's teacher.
- ▶ Read school newsletters and emails, and regularly visit your school's website.
- ▶ Talk to your child about what's happening at school, and show consistent interest in their academic progress.
- ▶ Many schools have student progress reporting systems that parents can access via a username and password. Know how to use your school's system so that you can keep up on your child's progress.
- ▶ Attend open houses, parent programs, and parent-teacher conferences.
- ▶ Spend time every day discussing what went on in school. Ask questions that require more than one word answers. Instead of, "How was school?" say, "Tell me about your day."
- ▶ Pay attention to your child's moods, sleeping patterns, and eating habits. These can be good indicators of how things are going at school and with friends.
- ▶ Get to know your child's friends and their parents. Have your child invite friends over.

Monitor homework

While students must learn to keep track of their own assignments and be responsible for completing their own homework, it's important that parents monitor their child's homework to make sure it's being completed—and completed well.

- ▶ Your child may occasionally ask for assistance with homework. Be available to help if your child gets stuck or wants someone to help them review for a test. But don't do the work yourself, and don't give more help than is requested or needed.
- ▶ If your child has a tendency to rush through homework in order to get it done quickly, insist that you look over all completed homework before it's turned in.
- ▶ Your child may be learning math concepts differently than you learned them. Look over your child's math homework and have them show you how they do math.
- ▶ We all get stuck sometimes. If your child ever feels discouraged, stressed out, or overwhelmed, offer encouraging words and make sure your child knows that you believe in them. Also make sure your child knows that you're there to help them any way you can.
- ▶ Praise your child for work well done. Be specific. For example, instead of *"I like what you wrote,"* say, *"I really like your description of the house and the yard."*

Homework tips

- ▶ Have your own task or project to work on while your child is doing homework. If you're doing the dishes or reading nearby, you won't be interfering, but will be available to help if needed.
- ▶ If your child is absent for more than a day or two, contact the teacher to see if there's some work they can do at home.
- ▶ Each night, have your child put their completed homework and everything that's needed for the next day in their backpack.
- ▶ Homework can sometimes be challenging. Stay calm and help your child work through difficult assignments.
- ▶ Make it a rule that all homework must be completed each evening before your child is allowed to watch TV, play video games, use their phone or tablet, or go online.
- ▶ If you have concerns about your child's homework or academic progress, or if you are looking for ways to help your child succeed in school, talk to your child's teacher.

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Promote Homework Success



Information for
Elementary Parents

Tips for parents on
helping their child get the
most out of homework

Promote Homework Success

Establishing the importance and routine of doing homework helps elementary students develop habits that will serve them well for years to come. Make sure your child understands the importance of completing homework accurately and on time.

How you approach the subject of homework says a lot about the value you place on education. Make sure your child knows that you consider homework to be very important.

Teachers assign homework for many reasons, including the following:

- ▶ Homework gives students the chance to practice the skills they've learned.
- ▶ Having homework helps students develop good study habits and organization skills.
- ▶ Homework keeps parents informed on what their child is learning.

Homework success tips

Here are a few ways you can help your child get the most out of the time they spend doing homework.

Provide a quiet study area

- ▶ Prepare a quiet, well-lit, comfortable place for your child to do homework. This area should have a sturdy chair and a surface for writing. Equip the area with paper, pencils, pens, markers, a calculator, crayons, and a ruler.
- ▶ When your child is working on homework, try to limit the distractions. Turn off the television, music, and video games. Make homework time a quiet time in your household.

Make homework part of the routine

- ▶ Some students want to get their homework done right after school. Others like to take a break and do their homework later. The important thing is that you and your child create a schedule that makes homework a part of the daily routine.
- ▶ Some of the best times to do homework are right after school, before dinner, or right after dinner.
- ▶ Ask your child's teacher how much time they should be spending on homework each night. As a general rule, plan on 10 minutes per grade (2nd grade–20 minutes, 3rd grade–30 minutes, and so on). If your child seems to spend more or less time on homework than seems appropriate, talk to your child's teacher.

Develop organization skills

Take the time to help your child develop good organization skills.

- ▶ Help your child learn how to organize and prioritize homework assignments. Have them explain what needs to be done and then help them make a plan.
- ▶ Encourage your child to regularly use a student planner. Check it periodically to make sure they are using it correctly.
- ▶ Provide your child with a folder for each subject. Remind them to put handouts, assignments, and returned tests in the appropriate folders.
- ▶ Have your child clean out their backpack at least once a week. Keep the papers you want to save or display and throw the rest away.
- ▶ Large assignments can seem overwhelming and students sometimes need help figuring out where to begin. Show your child how to break large assignments and projects down into smaller, more manageable parts. Encourage your child to start on large assignments and projects early so that they have plenty of time to complete them.

*Homework teaches responsibility.
For more, watch this short video.*



VIDEO

Make the most of parent-teacher conferences

Parent-teacher conferences offer parents an excellent opportunity to both give and receive information. Before you go to a parent-teacher conference, make a list of the information you want to share, along with any questions or concerns you have.

Also, ask your child if there is anything they want you to discuss with their teacher.

Here are some questions you might ask:

- ▶ How well does my child participate in class?
- ▶ Does my child use class time wisely?
- ▶ Does my child pay attention in class?
- ▶ Is my child organized?
- ▶ Does my child have everything they need for school?
- ▶ Are there any behavioral issues?
- ▶ What are my child's strengths? Which skills should we work on at home?
- ▶ Does my child get along well with others?
- ▶ Is my child working up to their potential? What can we do at home to help my child succeed?
- ▶ What is the best way to contact you if I have a question or concern?

For more conference tips,
watch this short video.



Support good attendance

Regular attendance in elementary school is critical for your child's success.

Develop routines

Each evening, help your child get everything ready for the following day. Also, make sure that your child goes to bed early enough to get a good night's sleep—and is up in time to have a good breakfast and not be rushed.

Be informed

Know bus pick-up times, parent drop-off times, and school bell times. Determine when your child needs to leave to get to school on time.

Encourage healthy habits

Avoiding illness is crucial for good attendance. Stay on top of well-child check-ups and make sure your child maintains a healthy lifestyle with a balanced diet, regular exercise, and adequate sleep.

Get support

If you have difficulty with transportation, or if your child is refusing to go to school for any reason, work with your school to resolve any issue that is negatively impacting your child's attendance.

Work with Your School



Information for Elementary Parents

Tips for parents on how to work with their child's school to support academic success

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Work with Your School

As a parent, you are the most important and influential person in your child's life and they need you to be interested and involved in their education! One way you can do this is to always be willing to work with your child's school. *Education is a team effort.*

What does it mean to work with your child's school? Here are some of the examples you will read about in this pamphlet:

- ▶ Work as a team with your child's teacher and the school staff.
- ▶ Be informed about and involved in what is happening at your child's school.
- ▶ Participate in parent-teacher conferences.
- ▶ Do your best to make sure that your child is in school every day.

Doing each of these things increases your child's chances of academic success.

Work as a team

Working together with your child's school will help ensure that your child reaches their potential. Here's what you can do.

Communicate with your school

Know the best way to contact your child's teacher(s) and principal—email, phone, or text. If you ever have a question or concern, don't hesitate to contact them.

Stay informed

Attend all parent programs, meetings, and parent-teacher conferences. Also, regularly check your school's website for news and updates.

Know your school's support personnel

Many schools have tutors, aides, counselors, and social workers to assist students and parents who need help. Be familiar with the support personnel in your school in case you or your child are ever in need of their services.

Work to resolve conflicts

If you ever disagree with a teacher or principal, try to resolve your disagreement calmly. Also, watch what you say in front of your child.

Participate in parent-teacher groups

PTAs and PTOs help bring parents, teachers, and school administrators together. Your participation in a parent-teacher group shows your child that education is important to you. It also shows that you are committed to making your child's school the best it can be.

Be informed and involved

Studies show that parental involvement significantly improves a student's school performance.

Be informed

- ▶ Know how your child is doing in school. Look over returned papers and review every progress report. If you have a question, contact your child's teacher.
- ▶ Read school newsletters and emails, and regularly visit your school's website.
- ▶ Talk to your child about what's happening at school and show consistent interest in their academic progress.
- ▶ Many schools have student progress reporting systems that parents can access via a username and password. Know how to use your school's system so that you can keep up on your child's progress.

Be involved

- ▶ Attend open houses, parent programs, and parent-teacher conferences.
- ▶ If you have the time, consider volunteering at your child's school.
- ▶ Call in absences promptly, and if you know that your child will be absent, share this information with your child's teacher.
- ▶ Be sure to let your child's teacher or principal know about anything that might affect your child's attitude or performance.