



Tips for Parents

To help their children succeed in school

Before they are school age

Read to your child 20 minutes a day.

If you prefer to read in a language other than English, that's ok. Just read.

Help your child learn their numbers and letters before they go to school.

Have your child count objects or count objects with your child whenever possible. Focus on saying one number for each item touched. Ask questions like "How many would I have if I had one more/one less?"

Help your child learn how to spell their name if possible.

Give your child coloring books and opportunities to draw.

Take your child to the public library.

Encourage your child to play outside.

Elementary School

Read to your child 20 minutes a day until your child can read; then read with your child 20 minutes a day. If you prefer to read in a language other than English, that's ok. Just read.

Make sure your child knows the alphabet in capital and lower case letters, can count to 20 and can add to five by the end of kindergarten. Have your child count objects or count objects with your child whenever possible. Focus on saying one number for each item touched. Ask questions like "How many would I have if I had one more/one less?"

Make sure students know combinations (addition and subtraction facts) to ten by the end of first grade and the combinations to twenty by the end of second grade.

Make sure your child knows the multiplication table and how to do that backwards with division by the end of the third grade.

Make sure you say positive things about math, even if you struggle with it.

Talk to your child about math in the real world. Examples: Estimating totals at the store, measurements used in cooking, etc. Talk to your child about why math matters for future careers based on their interests.

When school is out, take your child to museums, national parks, concerts, and other areas where your child will learn something new. There are often scholarships available if you can't afford it yourself.



As your child becomes more of an independent reader, encourage your child to read anything (s)he prefers. It's ok for a child to read comic books, nonfiction books, fiction books, newspapers, or anything else that is written. If your child doesn't like reading, encourage your child to write. Your child can write their own books, poems, travel brochures, or essays. If your child prefers to make videos, encourage your child to write scripts for the video before filming.

Join the public library.

Encourage your child to play outside.

Middle School

The sweet spot in mathematics is one year advanced. Keep your eye on getting your child prepared for algebra in the 8th grade. If your child is more advanced than that, it's good, but algebra 1 in the 8th grade is a great goal to have. This usually entails advanced math in the 5th grade. If your child is not ready for advanced math in the 5th grade, then ask the teacher to work that the child can do at home to supplement math in school to work on taking advanced math in 6th grade. Getting solid with fractions is often key. Remember not to speak negatively about math, even if you struggle with it.

Talk to your child about why math matters for future careers based on their interests.

When you go to the grocery store or the mall, encourage your child to estimate how much you will spend as you select items to purchase.

Make sure that your child can do their multiplication and division tables in their mind and does not depend on a calculator for basic arithmetic.

Encourage your child to read every day. This can be any kind of reading material. See comments under elementary school for further detail.

Ask your child about the required class reading. Encourage your child to keep up with reading and writing assignments.

Encourage your child to learn a musical instrument.

Encourage your child to cook with you.

Encourage your child to start learning another language if they do not already know one. If they speak another language, encourage your child to read and write in it, not just speak it.

If you work on cars in your garage or you work in other trades, encourage your child to learn along with you.

Encourage your child to participate in robotics, technology student association, and technical courses such as introduction to business and marketing and principles of advanced manufacturing.



High School

Keep your eye on calculus in the senior year. Try to make sure that your child has a course sequence that will give your child the option to take calculus. If your child ends up in precalculus or statistics instead, that's ok. Keeping your eye on calculus will help you backwards-map a course sequence that will give your child many options. Remember to never speak negatively about math, even if you struggle with it.

Remember that in high school, it is not acceptable to fail a course. In the earlier grades, if a child fails a course, the child can still move on. In high school, the student will need to repeat the course in order to get credit and failing a course can put the student at risk of not graduating. Do everything possible so that the child will not fail a course.

If your child has the option to take an honors course, encourage them to do so. It is better to have a B in an honors course than an A in a CP (college prep) course.

Encourage your child to take a balance of honors courses including career and technical education courses that bring relevance to mathematical content.

Make sure your child gets up and goes to school on time. If the child is driving, that is still true.

Make sure your child keeps excellent attendance. The goal should be to miss less than 5 days, including excused and unexcused absences, in a school year. If your child has a fever or is vomiting, however, your child should stay home.

Encourage your child to take notes in their classes. Good notes will require the student not just to write down what (s)he is learning in class, but will also require the child to go back and revisit their notes to add additional information, thoughts, or questions. Cornell Notes are good examples to use.

Although your child will spend time working on their computer, encourage your child to do things that don't require screen time. When school is not in session, continue to allow your child to learn new things at museums, national parks, concerts, touring industrial facilities when possible, etc.

Start taking your child to visit college campuses in their freshman year.

When you go shopping, give your child a budget and encourage your child to do the shopping within the budget for you.

Include your child when you pay the bills so that (s)he sees how to do that.

Encourage your child to cook with you.

Open a bank account with your child and encourage your child to contribute to it. Support learning they are receiving in any of the personal finance, economics, banking, management, and accounting courses they will be taking in high school.

Encourage your child to continue learning other languages to the point of being able to read, write, speak and listen to that language.

Encourage your child to continue in music and the arts.

Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular clubs and/or sports.



Your child will probably be reading every day for class, but ensure that there is reading material in your house that your child will read for pleasure. Otherwise, encourage your child to journal.

Ask your child about the required class reading. Encourage your child to keep up with reading and writing assignments.

Encourage your child to find outlets for stress, including counseling, physical activity, journaling, music, and spending unstructured time with friends.