

WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD ACHIEVE HIGH STANDARDS FOR HIS/HER WORK

Every child wants to succeed! But not all children know what they need to do to be successful. As a parent, you can help your child know how to be successful. Here are some suggestions:

Checking out your child's work: In reviewing your child's school papers or homework, ask yourself questions like:

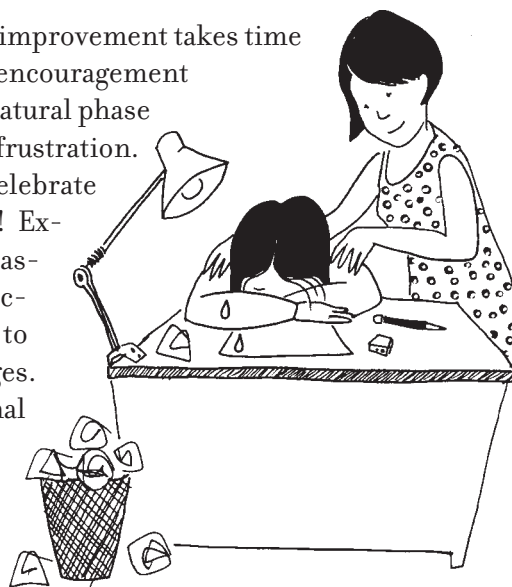
- Has he answered the question that was asked?
- Does she need to provide a more complete response?
- Do the ideas make sense? Are they presented in a logical order?
- Did she provide an explanation of how she solved the problem?
- Did he explain why he knows something to be true?
- Is there information she doesn't know which is making the task harder?
- Is he holding on to some inaccurate information that is interfering with his understanding?

Questions that can help your child begin to internalize high standards for his/her own work: Some of these questions are also good for you to ask your child as a way of helping with homework. There is lots of evidence that students who know the standards for good work themselves are best able to produce good work. Asking questions like the following can help a child begin to learn these standards. Then, when your children are working on other tasks, they may ask themselves the same kind of questions.



- Explain how you figured that problem out.
- How do you know that is correct?
- Why do you think that? Write your thinking down.
- Can both of these things be true?
- Can you find a better way to convince the reader of your answer?
- Can you make a drawing that shows what you mean?
- Have you labeled your drawing?
- Did you describe the units correctly? (inches, milliliters, meters, teaspoons)
- How is this similar to what you did in class?
- What part is hard for you? How could we make that part easier?
- If a child has an incorrect solution, suggest two or three other solutions and ask them to compare them. Does one look more correct than the others?

Ways to encourage your child: Recognize that improvement takes time and happens most easily in an environment of encouragement and support. Frustration is a predictable and natural phase in learning. Help your child work through her frustration. Focus on one area of improvement at a time. Celebrate your child's progress even when it seems small! Explain that every person has things they can do easily and things that they have to work harder to accomplish. Talk openly about what you perceive to be your child's strengths as well as her challenges. Talk to your child's teacher if you need additional strengths and challenges to add to your list. Share with your child what you perceive as your own strengths and challenges and discuss how you work on improving yourself.



Comparing your child's performance to grade level expectations: Talk to your child's teacher about how his performance compares to other children in the class, in the grade level, the state, the nation. Report cards usually show your child's performance compared to others at the grade level. Sometimes parents' expectations for children's academic performance are unrealistically high; other times parents don't realize that their child lags behind. Keep in mind that children develop at different rates; often time will take care of certain problems. Your child's teacher is likely to recognize when this is the case. Ask for a copy of district, state, or national standards for your child's grade level, or find out where to get a copy. Standardized tests have many shortcomings, but can provide information about your child's performance in areas of basic abilities, usually letting you know if there is either high level achievement, or a serious problem. Use this information, together with your child's report card, in conversations with your child's teacher. Use your own informal assessments of your child's capabilities to advocate for and assist your child's development in those areas of greatest need.

