

How To Be Your Child's Learning Advocate

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<https://www.edstretch.com> (nonprofit parent web portal)

<http://www.memexspan.com> (consulting website)

What You Can Do Now To Save Later Headaches

Keep your child enrolled in high school and on the right curriculum path that includes state guidelines. If college is not your aim, focus on obtaining fundamental work skills, so they can be self-supporting.

Focus on a college and/or trade school preparatory coursework in junior high school, especially in English, math, and science.

Follow your child's grade school math, reading, and language skills carefully. They will become the basis for more advanced learning in junior and senior high school, and college.

Grades at all school levels are often inflated, and this camouflage can fool you into false complacency. Future catastrophic career blocks may occur with a lack of performance and achievement in high school and college.

Watch for lost learning experiences that can impede high school, college and career success. Language and math courses are sequential and progressive. Skills not mastered in the 3rd through 7th grades result in missing links in the student's progressive learning chain.

Differentiated Learning is the new trend. Ask if your child has been placed in an ability level class and which differentiated level he/she is in. Some ability groupings are positive ways of effective classroom instruction, as students are at the same learning pace. Once in middle school or junior high, students may be placed in English and math classes according to their demonstrated ability.

Preparing for a Higher Education or Job Placement

Those who decide to work at semi-skilled labor in industry need the mental abilities to follow sequences of procedures. These jobs require that a person be able to read manuals, do mathematical calculations and remember details crucial to job success. Students should learn visual sequencing through support computer programs designed for this purpose.

Competency in language, reading, math, and science is essential for entering college curriculums or obtaining skilled jobs to become self-supporting.

Mastering these subject areas is crucial for those who desire gaining admittance to out-of-state or private schools. Many college fields require several hours of foreign language, science, and math. Often, they require a "B" average for admittance into a major field concentration. Therefore, these foundations must be mastered in earlier grades.

Many college-bound students arrive on campus functioning at junior high school levels in basics such as English and math. This creates a problem as college instruction is faster paced than high school and demands more independent work. Classes start at high functioning levels, leaving no time to "catch up".

As a result, when freshman students are required to take basic math or English courses that they should have mastered in high school, typically, more than 60% can receive a "C" average or lower. For example, remedial math courses in 4-year colleges have increased by 75%.

Remedial college classes are the most highly endowed by the federal government. Parents are then forced to pay extra years of college tuition, which can run \$18,000 - \$60,000. per year to learn the basic courses that should have been mastered in earlier grades at a lower cost, if any.

If You Don't Prepare Early: There Will be Strain on Both Students and Parents

The consequences of being poorly prepared and getting off to a poor start on the job or in college profoundly affect students and parents alike. Let's consider:

A poorly prepared student may be forced to drop out of high school or college. Plans and goals are reoriented to accept a lesser job or career working for a lower wage.

It is difficult to live on a low wage, which precipitates not only personal hardships but creates social dilemmas.

A struggling student may take a minimum college course load and require extra semesters of work to graduate, achieving only a modest grade point average.

If admittance is not obtained in a desired field, alternative fields must be considered. Often the easily accessible majors or career schools have saturated field entry in which job competition is fierce.

Some students take minimal course loads in order to ease study pressure, and many need five to six years to graduate. This extended luxury costs \$18,000 to \$60,000 per extra year in tuition costs alone.

Increasing numbers of young people in their 20s are living at home or under the parent umbrella. More parents than ever are subsidizing their young adult offspring, still hoping for miracles. Unfortunately, they request "study skills", search for costly tutoring programs, and the dilemma lies within personal information processing deficiencies. Tensions at home direct that the student reside in their own apartment, which is additional family cost.

Your Personal Involvement Checklist

Education will be a priority in our home. I will research online resources. Our nonprofit family portal website <http://www.edstretch.com> offers many low-cost, affordable directions for assistance.

I will observe my child's speaking, reading, handwriting, and spelling abilities, beginning at age six. If there is any difficulty, I will have him tested by a qualified professional.

I will carefully follow nationally standardized tests given by my school district, and will look at the percentiles and understand where my child fits into the total picture.

I will communicate with my child's teacher if I have questions.

I will meet with the guidance counselor to see which academic path my child in. I will review my child's cumulative folder for negative notations.

I will investigate whether my child qualifies to take higher levels of math, science, and English.

If I have any concerns about his educational progress with the basics, I will seek professional cognitive skills testing either by the school or by private professionals.

I am aware that in many cases grades can be inflated, and that my child may not be an A or B student as described by his teacher. Those who receive failing grades receive such for incomplete or missing assignments, not for how well they are completed.

I will make sure homework is not only monitored, but completed and turned in on time with the schools' dashboard of assignments.

I will monitor and limit TV viewing, the Internet, computer video games, and focus on applying quality reading materials.

I will visit my child's school at least twice a year, especially on Parent's Night plus other activities.

By observing and following these procedures, you will save yourself from having life-long financial support of your child and double the expenses spent along the way. These suggestions will make your life less hectic and stressful for all the members of your family.