

WVCSD EdTalk: January 4, 2023

Dr. David Leach, Superintendent of Schools

The importance of parents in their child's education cannot be overstated. As the primary influences in a child's life, parents play a critical role in shaping their attitudes, values, and beliefs about learning. By providing love, support, and encouragement, parents can help their children succeed academically. It is also effective for parents to stay connected with their child's teachers. As a father and an educator, I understand the importance of actively supporting my children's academic success.

Here, I have outlined eight areas for consideration, to guide our own choices and foster ongoing discussion on this important topic.

1. **Encourage your child to ask questions and be curious:** "Curiosity is a natural and powerful driving force for young children's learning."
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
2. **Set aside dedicated time for learning:** "Designate a specific time and place for homework to be completed each day."
- National Parent Teacher Association
3. **Create a positive learning environment:** "A child's home environment can have a powerful effect on his or her learning and development. Factors such as the quality of the physical environment, the level of parental involvement, and the availability of learning materials can all influence a child's academic success."
- National Center for Education Statistics (2020)
4. **Support your child's learning:** "Show an interest in your child's learning by asking about school and supporting their academic efforts."
- National Parent Teacher Association
5. **Communicate with your child's teachers:** "Regular communication between home and school is essential for promoting and supporting student learning."
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
6. **Encourage reading:** "Reading for pleasure has been linked to higher levels of vocabulary, critical thinking skills, and comprehension."
- International Reading Association
7. **Encourage physical activity:** "Physical activity is an important component of a healthy lifestyle for children and adolescents. It has numerous physical and mental health benefits, including improved cardiovascular fitness, stronger bones and muscles, and enhanced mental well-being. Physical activity also helps children and adolescents

develop social skills, self-esteem, and teamwork skills. Regular physical activity can also help to prevent chronic conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease."

- American Academy of Pediatrics, *Physical Activity and Children*

8. **Encourage a growth mindset:** "A growth mindset is the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through effort and perseverance."

- Carol Dweck, education researcher and Lewis and Virginia Eaton Professor of Psychology at Stanford University

While we know these approaches are effective, we also know that, in many ways, the absence of parental involvement and support in a child's life can severely limit their potential. It is on us, parents, to do all we can to set our children up for long-term success in school and in life, by supporting their education.

Thank you to the Warwick community for always offering your interest and investment in our schools and our students, and for showing that valuing education and learning are integral parts of what makes this community great.