

## Children do better when parents are involved

Written by Timothy Houston  
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Here in Minnesota and around the country, school is back in session.

Although parents send their children off to school everyday and expect them to do well, their involvement can add an important extra ingredient that will increase their children's success. It has been proven that parent participation is the ingredient that makes the difference. Parents' active participation with their child's education at home and in school brings great rewards and can have a significant impact on their children's lives. Everyday in our community, children are left to decide the value of education in their lives. If we are going to have success, this cannot continue. We as parents, grandparents, and people of influence, must be involved.

There is a huge upside to parental involvement. Parents help to set the value of education to the child, and the greater the involvement, the greater the value. According to research, the children of involved parents are absent less frequently, behave better, do better academically from preschool through high school, and go farther in school. When a child knows that the parent is interested in his or her education through direct action and active involvement, that child becomes more active and interested in his or her education as well. Telling a child what to do will only lead to forgetting, involving the child leads to understanding.

Parents don't need money or a degree to be involved in a child's education. Research also shows that a home environment that encourages learning is even more important than parents' income, education level, or cultural background. Every parent can make a difference regardless of financial level or educational background. By actively participating in their child's education at home and in school, parents send some critical messages to their children; they're demonstrating their interest in activities and reinforcing the idea that school is important. For this to be most effective, the parent must be engaged in the child's education at home and at school.

At home, parents should read to their children. Reading aloud is the most important activity that parents can do to increase their child's chance of reading success. Also, discuss the books and stories one reads to a child. In addition, parents should help their children organize their time and limit television viewing on school nights. Engaged parents should also talk to their children regularly about what's going on in school and check homework nightly.

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At school parents should meet regularly with a teacher or other school staff member to determine where, when and how help is needed and volunteer time as well.

Children do better when parents are involved. This is more than simply making sure they do their homework. Reading to one's child, limiting the amount of television and video games and talking regularly about school is vitally important.

Parents can change the course of their children's lives and futures by becoming involved. Make it a habit to read to children or have them read on a daily basis. This minor change will have a huge impact. One doesn't need money to be great in a child's life. An involved parent is a great parent.

*Timothy Houston is an author, minister and motivational speaker who is committed to guiding positive life changes in families and communities. For copies of his book, questions, comments or more information, go to [www.tlhouston.com](http://www.tlhouston.com).*