

Parent Tool Kit

What parents can do to help their child succeed in school



A Message from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education

We are pleased to provide this Tool Kit for Parents and hope that it will be shared widely with all those who guide and teach our children. It is important to support the learning process at home.

There is evidence every day that the student who gets support and help at home is more successful at school.

In developing this Tool Kit, there was considerable contact with families and community members who shared the techniques they have been using to work with children and youth. These good ideas are included here and will help parents to engage in the learning of their own children.

It is our hope that you will find useful tips and suggestions in this Kit and that these ideas will lead to what you will find useful for your family.

The partnership of parents and teachers is a powerful one. When it works positively, students feel good about school. This outcome is so important to our young people.

The Council of Ontario Directors of Education congratulates all parents for working with Ontario schools to improve the success of students at every level.

Foreword

This Parent Tool Kit has been developed for parents. It can be shared widely with family members and caregivers. It is intended to support the work parents do as the first and most important teachers of their children.

The Parent Tool Kit provides ideas for families to use as they support learning at school and at home. Students whose learning is supported at home are more successful in school and stay in school longer. This Parent Tool Kit is meant to add to the many things families already do to support learning at home and may include ways families are already using. Information to support and complement this Tool Kit is available for schools and school councils so that they may offer opportunities for parents to further develop skills in helping at home.

While the Parent Tool Kit includes activities that family members may want to engage in with their children, it is not a complete list of good practices to support learning at home. We hope you will add those activities that you already use to any here that are new to you. Please use any ideas in this book to support your children in their education. When students know learning is valued by their family, learning is a high priority for students.

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Why should you be engaged in your child's learning?

Your child benefits!

- Students get better grades and test scores.
- Students have greater self-esteem and greater motivation.
- Attendance at school is better.
- The number of suspensions is less.
- Students stay in school longer and have higher graduation rates.
- The number of cases of alcoholism and drug addiction are reduced.

You benefit!

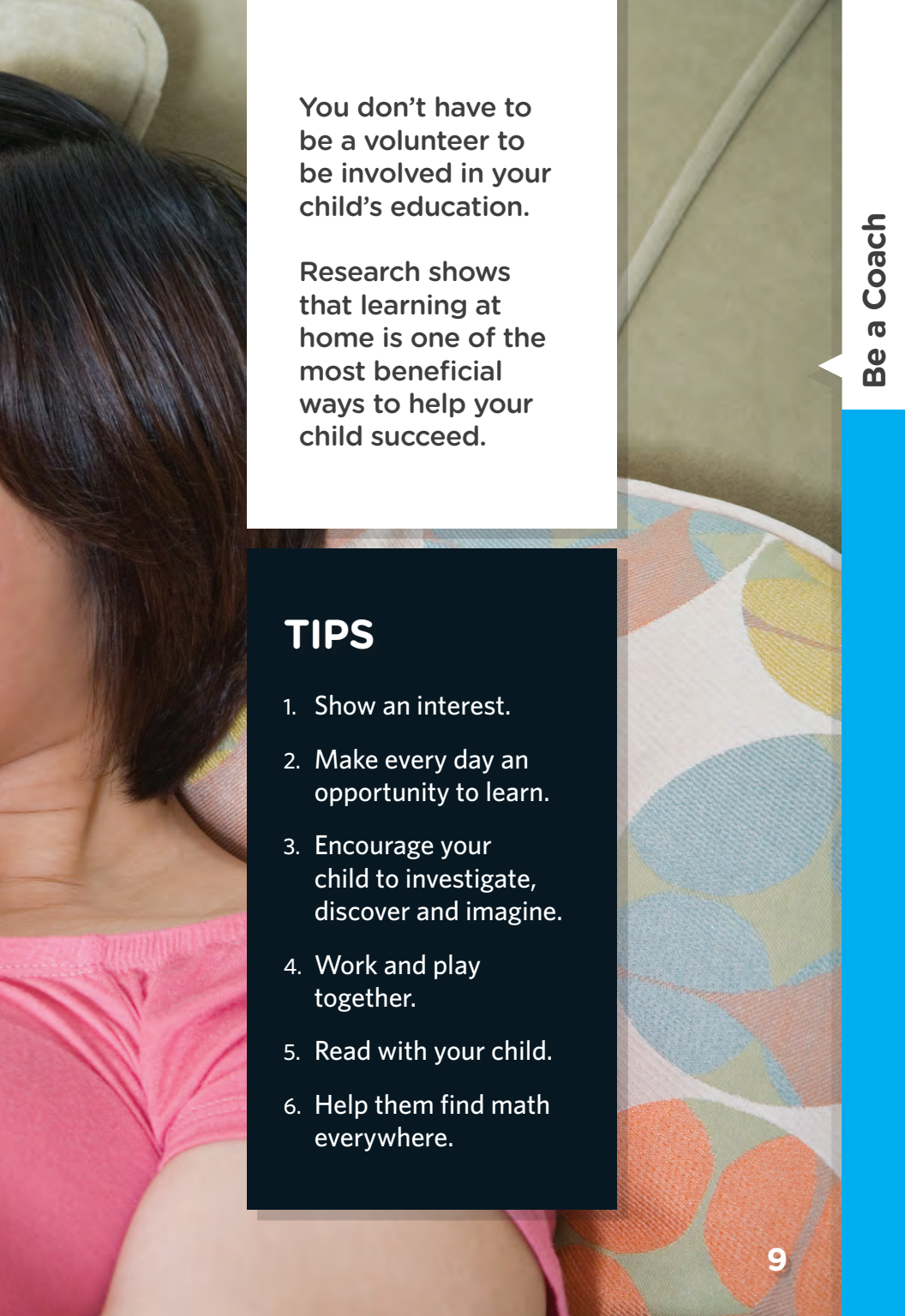
- You can learn how to help your child with homework.
- Your knowledge of school systems and procedures make it easier for you to access needed supportive programs.
- You can access resources about parenting strategies.
- You will find it easier to create a healthy home environment.

“ Parents play a vital role in the development and education of their children and in the success of schools. They are the most important influence in a child's life outside of school. Long after direct learning from parents in a child's early years gives way to formal education, parents continue to play a key role in student success through the attitudes they help to shape and the direct supports they provide.

Ontario Ministry of Education's website.



“ We would love to help out at the school but we both work and don’t have time. We feel guilty about not being involved.



You don't have to be a volunteer to be involved in your child's education.

Research shows that learning at home is one of the most beneficial ways to help your child succeed.

TIPS

1. Show an interest.
2. Make every day an opportunity to learn.
3. Encourage your child to investigate, discover and imagine.
4. Work and play together.
5. Read with your child.
6. Help them find math everywhere.



Read and Write at Work and Play

Everyone benefits with good reading skills. Reading includes more than books. Newspapers, magazines, package directions, street signs and websites all offer a chance for children to practise their reading skills.

When your children are young read with them. Grab their interest and spark their imagination by letting them tell you what is coming next.

Telling stories about your life and your family is a good way to make reading fun and start the writing process. If English is not your first language, reading is still important. Read in your own language. Maintain your culture.

“ Let them tell you what is coming next.”

Write for pleasure and fun

As your children get older suggest that they create and write their own stories or write a new ending for a book they like. Teens can use blogs and create their own online book club.

Encourage them to write letters or emails to their friends and family. Tell stories with pictures. Use a camera to document a trip. Use the pictures and write the script for a movie or slide show.

Use the newspaper and TV commercials to make reading and writing meaningful. Talk about the messages they see. Use the newspaper to make puzzles and story teasers. Cut up the comic strips — remake or create a new story. Cut out a story and ask them to re-create the headline.

Use pictures to write.

Public Libraries offer reading times and book clubs for all ages.



Math Matters

Math can be found in everyday activities. Use them to make math meaningful.

Cook together to make sense of fractions.

How many labels do you need to collect to send away for the prize?

Show them how to budget their money. Comparison shop at the grocery store. Which brand or which size container is the best buy? Is the name brand clothing or electronic worth the extra money?

Use sports games to teach math concepts.

Find out how to keep score at the hockey game. How do they calculate batting averages? How far do you run in a soccer game? How many calories do you burn running 5K?

“

Use a hands-on approach to learning.

Learning at home gives your child more opportunities to practise what they learned in school

Use a hands-on approach to learning.

Hobbies, games, arts and crafts use math too.

Model building and making your own clothes are fun and can teach your child about measurement.

Building a bird house reinforces concepts like proportion. Making puzzles develops critical thinking skills.

Teens need motivation to maintain an interest in math

Saving for college? Taking out a loan? How much does it cost to maintain a car?

Know the interest rates on your credit card? How many hours do you have to work at an after school job to buy new clothes?



Powerful Presentations

There are many times when your child will be asked to present to the class, to parents and to others.

You can help your child practise oral speaking skills. Start with reading out loud. Children of all ages can role-play and read with expression and meaning. Children can practise the art of story telling.

Challenge your child to think quickly and be creative using impromptu speeches. Taking a long trip? Keep a list of topics to draw from a hat.

Reciting poems, giving speeches, and making presentations for independent studies all require your child to speak in front of an audience.

If you have a video camera, film them giving their speech or get them to practise in front of a mirror.

If you have a computer with a microphone, they can record their presentation and listen to the recording.

Presentation software often includes the voice-recording feature. Let them create a recorded slide presentation.



**“
Children can
practise the
art of story
telling.”**



Take a Virtual Trip Together

Virtual tours and field trips offer parents access to sights and cities that may not be otherwise possible for families to enjoy. With a little planning you and your family can travel to space and around the world. Trips can be designed for children of all ages.

Ask your child's teacher if there is a unit of study that you might use as the focus of your trip. You will need a computer and Internet access. If you don't have access at home, visit your local public libraries for free Internet services.

Here are a few adventures you might like to use.

If your child is studying the Underground Railroad, follow the route:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/railroad/>

Visit Ottawa the capital of Canada:

<http://www.ottawa.ca/visitors/>

Research Canadian History:

<http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca>

Study the latest art shows:

<http://www.ago.net>

Visit a Science Centre Online:

<http://www.ontariosciencecentre.ca>

<http://www.sciencenorth.ca/>

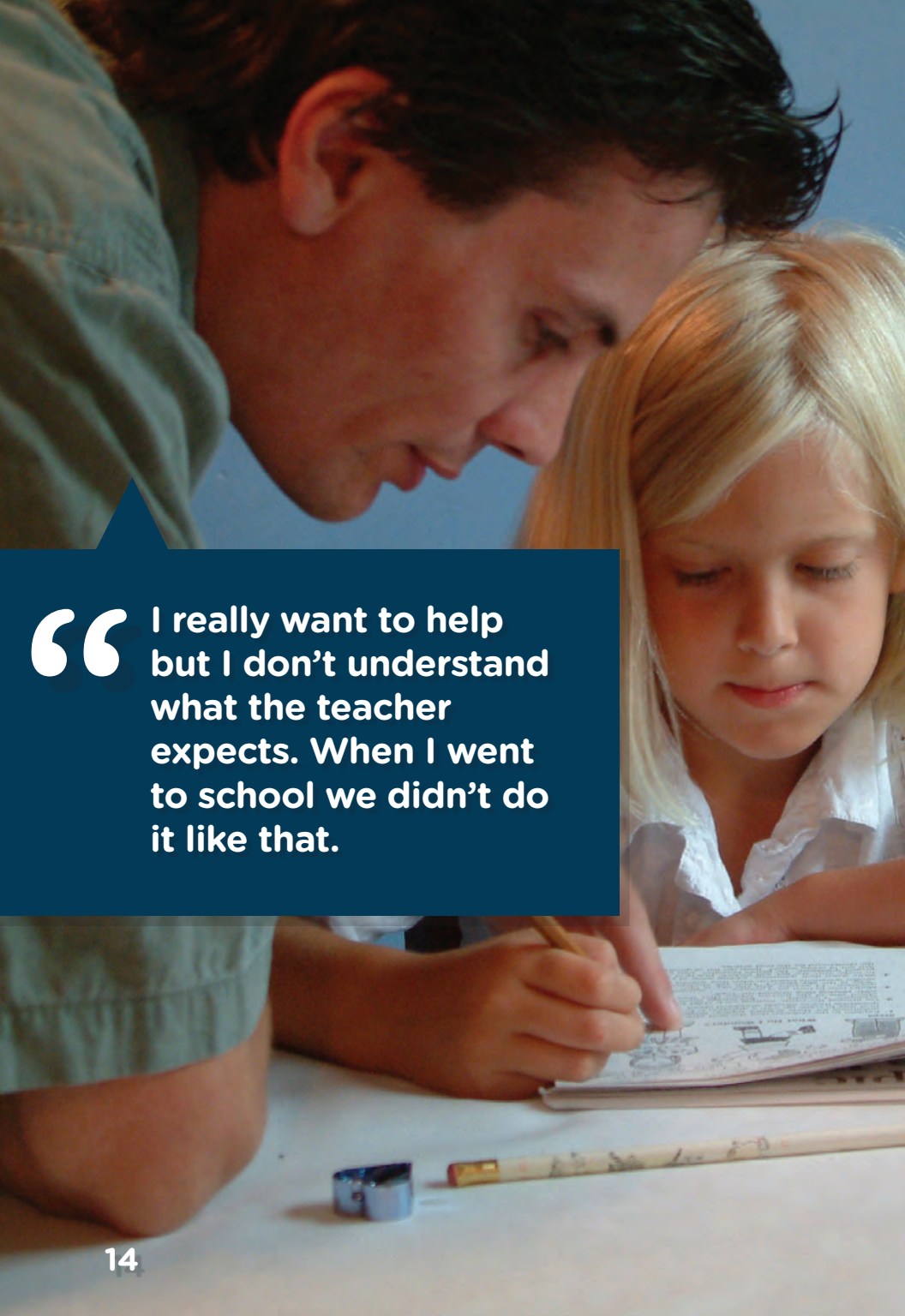
If you have never been in space, visit this interactive experience:

<http://www.spacewander.com>

Sample virtual field trips:

<http://www.theteachersguide.com/virtualtours.html>



A close-up photograph of a man with dark hair and a young girl with blonde hair. They are both looking down at a book or paper on a table. The man is on the left, leaning over the girl on the right. The girl is holding a pencil and pointing at something in the book. The background is a plain, light blue wall. A dark blue speech bubble is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

“ I really want to help but I don’t understand what the teacher expects. When I went to school we didn’t do it like that.

You don't need to know how to do the homework to help.

Talk to your child's teacher.

When teachers and parents are on the same page students do better in school.

TIPS

1. Praise successes.
2. Don't dwell on mistakes.
3. Give them the confidence to seek help from their teacher.
4. Help them track their progress.
5. Use a problem solving model to work on assignments and projects.



Whose Homework Is It?

Parents often say:

“One of the hardest things I have found when helping my child is that I don’t understand the homework myself.”

Frequently, parents are under the impression that they should be able to do the homework. They believe that they should be reading the textbook and trying to teach their child how to solve a problem or complete the homework. Although understandable and well intentioned, using this approach can create confusion and frustration for both parents and children.

What many people do not know is that one of the key things parents can do to help their children succeed is to help them take responsibility for their own learning. All students, elementary and secondary, can benefit from learning how to become a self-directed learner.

How can parents help their child become a self-directed learner?

Parents can help their child become a self-directed learner by encouraging their child to use a problem solving approach to homework. Here is an example that describes how a parent can use the problem solving approach.

Problem solving scenario:

Parent: *What are you supposed to do?*

Student: *I’m supposed to make a presentation about how a material I can find at home is manufactured.*

Parent: *OK. Let’s both think of some... Which ones might you choose?*

Student: *Glass and brick...*

Parent: *And paint and dry wall, wire, pipe... Can you think of any more?*

Student: *metal*

Parent: *Great list we’ve got... now which one do you think you want to use?*

Student: *Brick!*

Parent: *Well, why don't you check out a few websites about how brick is made and see if you can make a good presentation about it?*

Student: *I can't find much out about brick. Do you think I should change?*

Parent: *Well, why don't you check out how another couple on the list we made and decide which one you'd like to present?*

While this may look like a simple conversation, if you look at it closely you may see the parent used some purposeful questions. These questions form a model or approach to solving problems and can be summarized in these 4 steps.

1. Define the problem and describe the desired result.
2. Brainstorm ideas, and decide which idea to use.
3. Make a plan.
4. Try it out.

Teachers use this same approach in the classroom. If you do the same thing, your child will become accustomed to using the model in all of his/her schoolwork.

More problem-solving type questions and statements that you can use

- Let's talk about your schoolwork.
- What were you asked to do?
- Can you show me how you got your answer?
- Have you seen how someone else did it?
- Try looking at your problem again.
- If you can't find a solution, let's ask for help from your teacher. When will you be able to ask for more help?



Collecting Student Work — Make a Student Portfolio

Keeping track of student work is a good way to help your child build confidence. Portfolios are collections of student work that show student progress and achievements in one or more subject areas.

Students have a chance to review and reflect on their work. Portfolios help students see their growth and proficiency over time. Students are able to build a sense of responsibility for their learning. Parents have the opportunity to watch their child progress.

What work should we collect?

Examples of writing, science and math projects, reading responses, artwork and student favourites are suitable choices.

How often should we collect samples?

You can collect samples throughout the year or at the end of a unit of study.

Where do I store them?

Storage containers can be as simple as large sized envelopes in a box, file folder or file boxes. Create special labels for writing examples, reading exercises, special projects. If you



have a camera, take pictures of models or science projects, events and sporting activities. Having a special place to keep student work emphasizes the importance of good efforts.

Tech Tip

Create a free Google web site and store digital examples online.

“
Portfolios
help students
see their
growth over
time.



Science Fair Fun

Investigate and problem solve in real life situations.

What is a science fair project?

Science fair projects create wonderful opportunities for students to explore, use their imagination, test and validate their ideas. Students are able to connect learning in the classroom to learning at home and in the community. They learn how to organize, manage their time and practise their oral speaking skills.

What is the parent role?

The parent role is to be a coach and mentor. You will need to find a balance between helping and not helping. Your child's teacher will set the criteria for the project. This is a good time to have an informal discussion about what is being taught.

What can a parent do to help?

1. Work together to brainstorm ideas.
2. Help make a shopping list and help search for supplies.
3. Ask the teacher for suggestions.
4. Help plan a workflow and timeline to meet deadlines.
5. Listen to their oral presentations.
6. Help transport the finished project to school.

What judges look for

Along with satisfying the criteria set by the teachers, judges look for the student's enthusiasm, curiosity and engagement in the project.

Remind your child to smile and thank the judges at the end of the interview. A neat appearance makes a good impression and helps your child be confident.



“ We are not sure
how best to talk to
the teachers. We
worry that they
won't understand
our child.

You will worry less, if you are informed and understand how the school works.

Start talking to the teacher early in the year.

You can help your children learn how to face challenges by setting the example.

TIPS

1. Communicating on behalf of your child helps teachers get a bigger picture of your child's strengths and weaknesses.
2. Build a good working relationship with the school and your child's teachers.
3. Teachers like to know they have your support.



Talking to Teachers

Don't wait until the middle of a term to talk to your child's teacher. You have a key role in helping the teacher know when your child is struggling. Have your child demonstrate what she or he has learned. Encourage your child to ask for help. They need to know what questions to ask and how to ask them.

It will depend on the age of your child who actually asks the questions. Statements like the following help guide the teacher on how to reinforce learning.

"I tried to show my parent how to do it and I forgot what you said."

Listen to your child's concerns but seek clarification without criticizing. Build a strong working relationship with your child's teachers. Students do better in school when parents and teachers are on the same page.

Parents are able to discuss their child's progress at a parent-teacher conference. A list of your questions

will help make the conversation productive. Arrange another meeting or follow up phone call, if you need more time.

Talk to your child before the conference. Ask them what they would like you to ask the teacher or tell the teacher about them.

There are many student needs that extend beyond the regular classroom. Students with exceptionalities, health and behaviour problems can find additional help by seeking the assistance of other service providers.

School Boards have Special Education Advisory Committees made up of representatives of organizations who help families with students with special needs. Your school can provide the names and organizations that will be able to help you.



Make Every Impression a Good One

How your child interacts with other students and adults has an impact on their learning. Children who are respectful and considerate make good team members. Group work becomes easier when children know how to get along with each other. Taking turns and praising others are learned habits.

“
Children with good self-esteem learn better.

Good manners come with practice.

When greeting friends or new acquaintances show your child what to do. Say please and thank you at the right time. Open doors for others. Let others go first and give up a seat on the bus to someone older or with a disability.

Use the dinner table at home or at a restaurant to teach patience, self-control and appreciation for others' work and help.

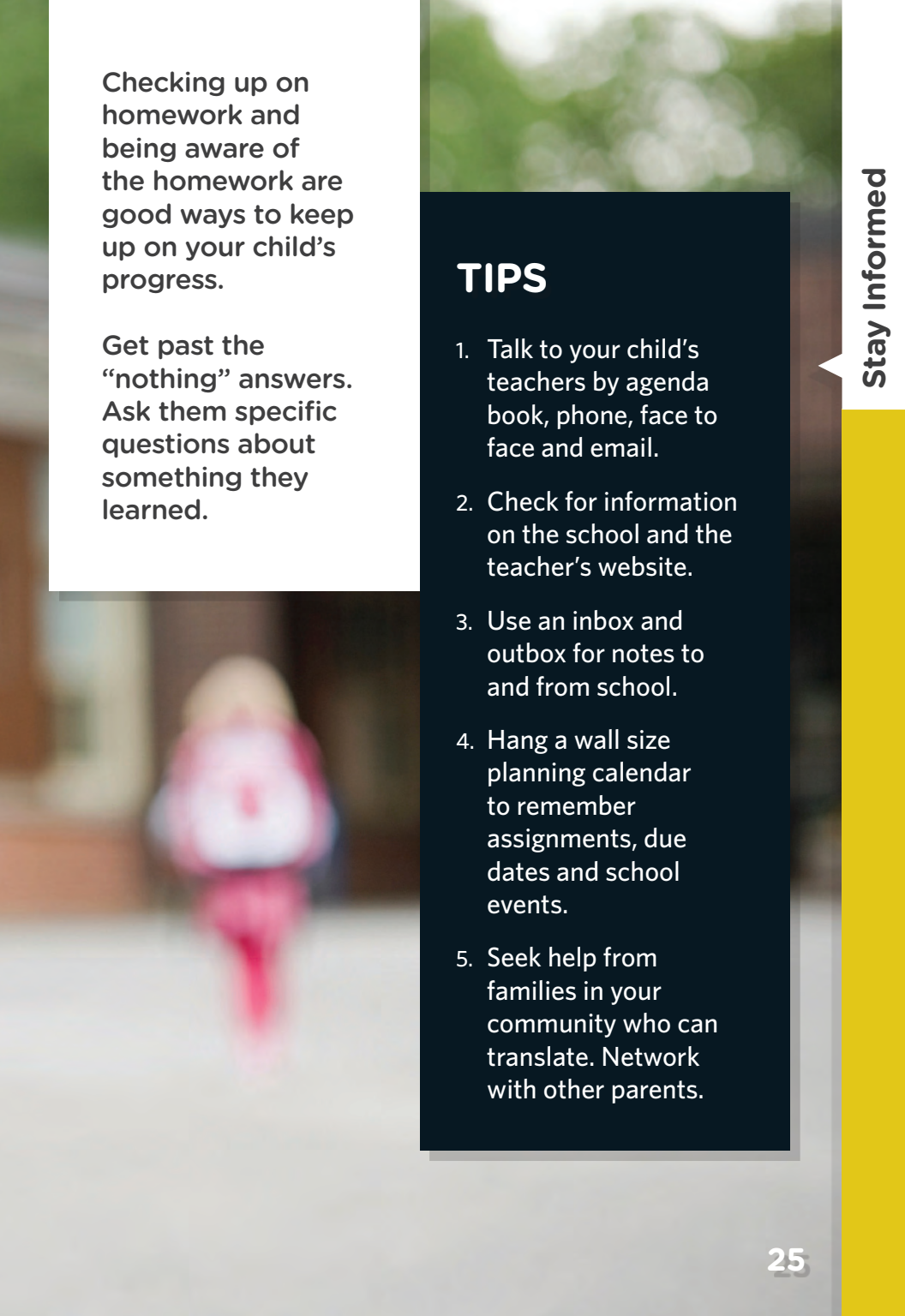
Teach them about respecting other people's personal space and property. Reward them with praise when they stand quietly in a store, refrain from touching merchandise and avoid bumping into others.

Secondary school students find it just as hard to act appropriately. They may be challenged by peer pressure and may rebel against authority and adult standards. A consistent non-confrontational approach will help your adolescent grow into a responsible adult.

Other people's admiration of their behaviour helps children feel good about themselves. Children with good self-esteem learn better.



“ We find it hard
to know what is
going on at school.



Checking up on homework and being aware of the homework are good ways to keep up on your child's progress.

Get past the “nothing” answers. Ask them specific questions about something they learned.

TIPS

1. Talk to your child's teachers by agenda book, phone, face to face and email.
2. Check for information on the school and the teacher's website.
3. Use an inbox and outbox for notes to and from school.
4. Hang a wall size planning calendar to remember assignments, due dates and school events.
5. Seek help from families in your community who can translate. Network with other parents.



Reinforce Classroom Learning at Home

When your child is studying Canadian Explorers watch a movie about Canadian Explorers. If there is a TV show about Canadian Explorers, watch it together.

Ask your child to pick out key dates in their unit of studies and challenge them to find a match on the “Day in History” feature of the History Channel. **“Jacques Cartier enters the St. Lawrence on June 9, 1543”**

Do a web search on “Canadian Explorers” to find good examples.

Put the search terms in **“quotes”** for more accurate and fewer results.

Connect with the teacher for a heads up on the units of study and suggested enrichment activities that you can do at home.

What Parents Can Do To Stay Informed

School and classroom events

Try setting up an “in and out” basket for your child’s agenda book, newsletters, notes home and lunch orders. There may be some days when your paths do not cross. For older students try a shared Google calendar. A few minutes of organizing every day will keep you up to date and help your child be responsible for managing his/her time.

If your child’s teacher has a website, check regularly for information. If it is a blog, subscribe to it. Using Twitter? Encourage your teacher to tweet out homework assignments to your Twitter account or text to your mobile. Sign up for the School and the School Board e-newsletter.



Beyond the school

Before you start looking for additional resources beyond the school talk to your child's teachers, school librarian and principal first. They will be able to direct you to materials best suited to your child.

Visit your public library

The librarian is there to help you and your child find information. Some participating public and school libraries offer "askON" an online resources bank and chat support by a librarian. Great for "due next day" projects.

Visit the Ontario Ministry of Education website

The Ontario Ministry of Education website provides links to many services: homework help hotlines, tutoring online, Special Education supports, Student Success and distance learning.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>

The "**abc 123 Reach Every Student**" section of the Ontario Ministry of Education website has extensive links and information to help you help your child succeed.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/>

Parents can find numerous activities for practice in reading, writing and math, many translated into several different languages. A series of video podcasts for parents of elementary students is posted on the website. Subjects like Sorting, Matching and Making Patterns, Getting Organized, Art Experiences and Reading at Bedtime are featured.

A comprehensive link list directs you to websites which support many of the activities in this Tool Kit. Please see the Resources section on page 38 for more details.



“ Our children are involved in extracurricular activities and there isn't a spare minute.





Taking a few minutes to organize your family will save time and reduce stress.

Students who arrive at school calm and ready to learn will do better in school.

Let them know learning is important.



TIPS

1. Post pictures of your child getting ready for school on the fridge to help them set up a routine.
2. Use travel time to talk about school.
3. Schedule a time for schoolwork.
4. Create a school space at home.
5. Bike, hike and keep fit together.



Organize Your Lifestyle.

Eat Well and Stay Active.

Extracurricular activities are great for keeping children healthy and well balanced. Families and friends enjoy times together and build a strong sense of community while cheering for their child's team. There is a large time commitment to organized sports. Consider hiking, biking or swimming together as ways to stay fit and save time for the family.

With busy lives it helps to set up routines for getting ready for school, eating meals, doing chores and homework. Teaching your child to be responsible for simple tasks can encourage independent thinking

and self-confidence. Establishing consistent rules and expectations for your family at home and at school also reduces stress and helps the classroom teacher maintain a good learning environment.

Pack lunches and backpacks the night before to reduce the time to get ready.



Get everyone involved in preparing snacks and planning meals. Fresh fruit and vegetables sliced and ready to go make it easy for even small children to pack their lunch box. High fibre cereals like quick-cooking oatmeal take longer to digest than sugar cereals keeping your child's energy high for an active brain.

“ Help them develop their own inner clock.



Take pictures of your child getting ready for school and post them on the fridge as a reminder of the steps needed to get ready on time. Help them develop their own inner clock. Use a large day planner on the Fridge. Mark down school happenings, homework assignments and tests. Share a calendar on the family computer or online.

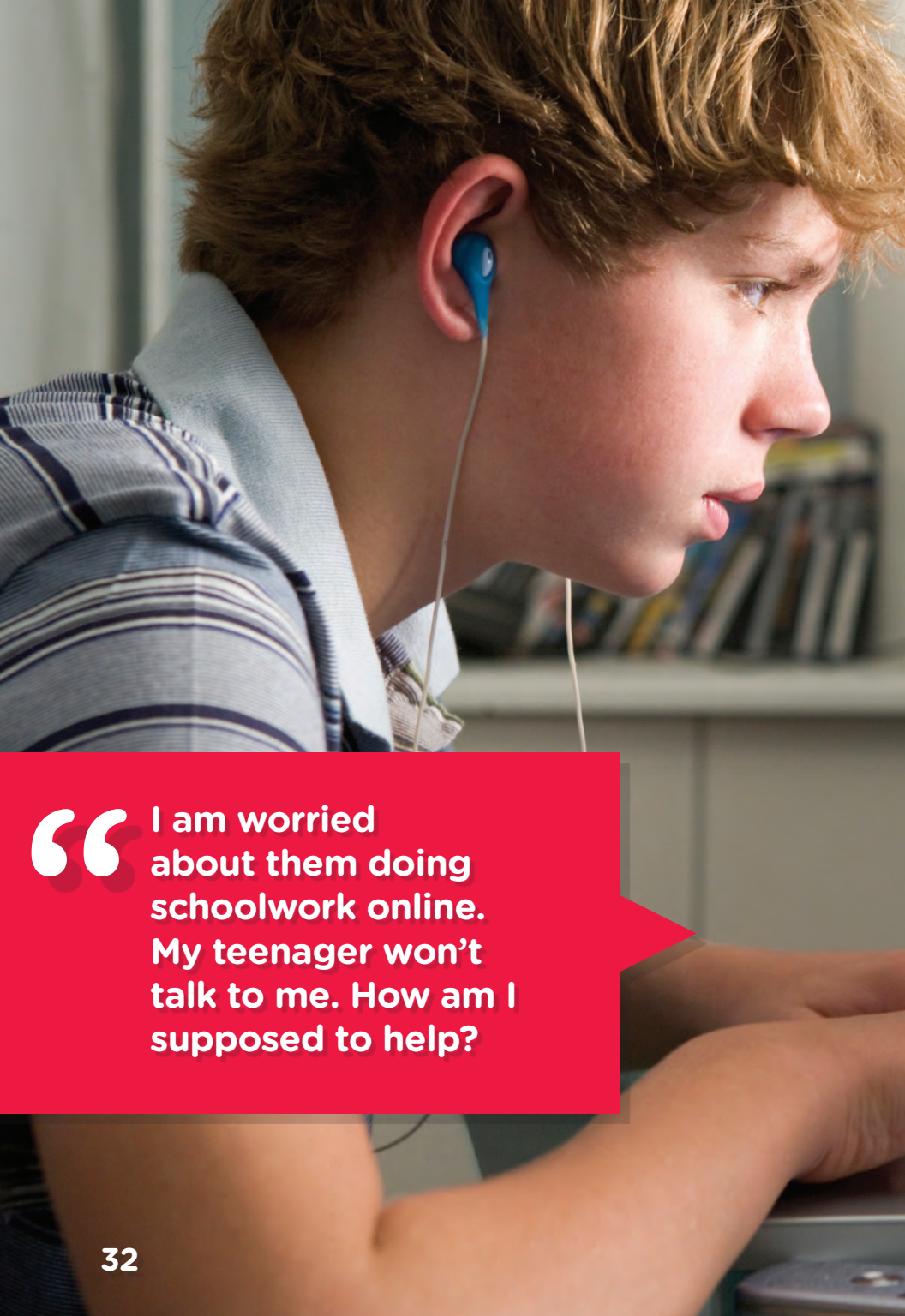
Create a school space at home

A special box with school supplies and a quiet time at the kitchen table or a desk set up just for studying supports the idea that school is

important. Help prevent homework overload, break assignments and studying into manageable pieces. Studying for tests will be less stressful if your child does something every day. If there is no homework, then make it quiet reading time. Some downtime is good.



“ Every day talk about something you learned that was exciting. Make learning fun!



“ I am worried about them doing schoolwork online. My teenager won’t talk to me. How am I supposed to help?

Be assertive, but not intrusive.

Let your child start the conversations about school.

Ask your child to be your technology teacher.

TIPS

1. Use open-ended questions.
2. Take an interest in what they are learning online.
3. Help give them confidence to overcome barriers.
4. Support them if they make mistakes. Wrong answers lead to right answers.

Questions

Beating the One-Word Answers

Secondary school can be one of the most challenging times for students. The need for independence, the influence of peers and the media add to the pressure of more complex subject material and graduation expectations.

“Ask open-ended questions.

Teenagers still need structure, routine and supervision. A good way to reduce the one-word answer to “what did you do today” is to let your child start the conversation. Asking them “how was your day?” may require them to revisit things that did not go well. Giving them the space to reflect on their day will allow them to regroup. Your teen will grow to trust you as a mentor and guide in their lives. Ask open-ended

questions “what is it like studying chemistry?”, “What one good question did you ask today” or “Tell me one good thing that you learned today”. Be receptive to any and all conversations.

Most teenagers say that they don’t want their parents to be involved thinking that their peers will criticize your presence. There are many opportunities to still support your child and monitor his/her progress. Remember to use the school’s website to check on activities and events. Communicate early and often with your child’s teachers by phone or email, if you can’t make the curriculum night. If you don’t have time to volunteer, try to attend workshops or guest speaker events. You will connect with other parents and you will find out you are not alone.



Raising Responsible Digital Citizens

A global society has changed how students find and use information. Collaborating online and sharing information effectively is a skill that needs to be nurtured. Seek out information from teachers about Internet safety and cyberbullying. Learn the rules of the digital highway together.

Develop rules and expectations together about working on the Internet. A friend in an online social network must be a friend in real life. Keep the family computer in a room near you. Turn off mobile devices before going to sleep.

Balance a child's need for independence with parents' need for reassurance. Be a contact in

their social network but respect your teens' personal lives without becoming a part of them.

Ask them to show you how to download music and video on their mp3 player. Make sure they understand the implications of copyright. Create a slide show together and post it online. Watch online video together.

Create a Family blog. Read the newspaper together online and post and respond to comments together. Review the terms of use and proper etiquette when you write online. Be sure they understand the need for respect, tolerance and an appreciation for other's ideas.

Enjoy the opportunities to grow and appreciate the resources available on the Internet.

“

Develop rules and expectations together about working on the Internet.



Using the Internet for Research

How can you be sure that the information you have found online is credible or relevant? Websites are not like books. There is no code to use to verify the accuracy of the information. Students often use Wikipedia (encyclopedia created by its users) as their information source without confirming if the information is correct.

Have your child use the “How, Who, What, Where, When and Why” questions to test the accuracy of the information posted on a website.

- How did you get to the website? Did you use a search engine or personal recommendation?
- Who wrote the information? Can you identify the author?
- What are your findings? Is the information relevant?
- Where is the owner of the website located?
- When was the website created?
- Why are you researching this topic?



**“
Websites
are not
like books.”**



Sharing Information on the Internet — Protect Their Privacy

Research shows a large number of students have visible profiles that identify personal information such as their e-mail address, phone number, home address or Instant Messaging contact. When students register for online gaming sites, social networking or sites that offer incentives and prizes they reveal who they are, where they live and their birth date.

What most people do not know is that companies are using this information to develop a close relationship with a child for the purpose of influencing consumer behavior.

Make sure that they know!

Photos posted online only need a simple right click to save an image to be stored on anyone's computer. Pictures can be posted on the Internet without your permission. Shared photos on mobile phones can be traced. Ask them to think of a future boss and their grandparents when they are tempted to post highlights of a party.

Protect their privacy. Register together for a program, website or online purchase. Read the terms of agreement to determine how they will use your private information. Review their comments and photos before they post them online.

Seek help from teachers for more ideas about privacy and student use of the information.

Help on the Net



Ontario Ministry of Education

<http://gov.edu.on.ca>

You can find information about:

- What your child should learn each year
- The location of parent and family literacy centres
- Tips to help your child develop math, reading and writing skills
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123>
- Homework help hotlines
<http://homeworkhelp.ilc.org>
- Tutoring online at the Independent Learning Centre
<http://www.ilc.org>
- Special Education Support
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/speced.html>
- Secondary Student Success program
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/studentsuccess/index.html>

TVOParents

<http://www.tvo.org/cfm/tvoorg/tvoparents>

TVO parents is an online resource for parents of preschool and school aged children and features a live weekly interactive parenting event.

OERB Ontario Education Resource Bank

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/elearning/bank.html>

Ontario Education Resource Bank is an online library of activities and resource materials for students of all grades. Students can participate in online exercises and activities that they can do at home to reinforce learning. Parents can assist their children using the Ontario Education Resource Bank by using their student's account. Please ask your school for the login information, if your child has not already brought it home.

Discovery Education Science Fair Central

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/sciencefaircentral/Parent-Resources.html>

Discovery Education has a large number of educational resources. A section of their website concentrates on Science Fair Tips and Tricks such as "presentation do's and don'ts; student checklist; shopping list and how to deliver an oral presentation". Parents and students can find advice from "how help their child come up with an idea for the project" to "setting a timeline".

Creating E-Portfolios

<http://middleschoolblog.blogspot.com/2009/09/eportfolio-talk-with-grade-9-learners.html>

Especially good for secondary school students. This short video outlines the use of an e-portfolio and how to create one.



Digital Story Telling

<http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/index.html>

This website explains the use of digital storytelling and how a variety of images, text, video and more can be used to create digital stories. You will find examples, definitions and explanatory videos.

Helpful tools for creating digital stories:

Windows Movie Maker, Photostory and iMovie (Mac users) can be used to create video.

Voice Thread <http://voicethread.com> for storage and hosting of slides, images and videos with the capability of leaving a text, voice or video comment. Aviary <http://aviary.com> is a free suite of online creation tools.

Public Speaking

http://publicspeakingkills.org/public_speaking_for_kids.php

Tips on public speaking for kids. This site gives suggestions for how to practise their skills for speaking in public and overcome the fear of public speaking.

Internet Safety

<http://www.media-awareness.ca>

In this website you will find resources and support for everyone interested in media literacy and digital literacy for young people. "Be Web Aware" covers subjects such as homework online, internet safety, social networking (Facebook), instant messaging and cell phone usage.



Eat Well and Stay Active

<https://www.eatrightontario.ca>

The EatRight Ontario website is set up to help you improve your health and quality of life through healthy eating. This service provides easy-to-use nutrition information to help you make healthier food choices. You can contact a dietician directly by email or toll free phone call.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/healthyschools/links.html>

Healthy schools offers tips and tools for parents to help keep your child healthy and active.

Online Learning

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/elearning/courses.html>

School Boards across Ontario offer a variety of online learning courses for secondary students. Students can find course offerings for the school year. The delivery of online learning includes a wide range of activities such as chat, threaded discussion, blogs, whiteboards, quizzes, and student tracking. Consult with your school board for access to online learning courses and requirements.

Kids Help Phone

<http://kidshelpphone.ca>

Kids Help Phone is Canada's leading youth counselling service. Available anytime of the day or night by phone and by web, it is the go-to resource for kids in Canada from years five to 20 when they need help or trustworthy information. Designed for both teens and younger children the activities cover a wide range of topics. Moderated discussion forums let students publish their thoughts on the web.

The resources listed in this document are not specifically endorsed by the Council of Ontario Directors of Education. The resources are merely intended to make parents aware of their existence.

Parents and parent groups assisted in the development of these materials. Shaping these materials through consultation with parents helped with both content and format. School Boards contributed ideas for parent engagement in use in their jurisdiction. We thank them for their assistance.

Avon Maitland District School Board
 Bluewater District School Board
 Conseil des École Publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario
 Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud
 Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Centre-Est de l'Ontario
 Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Nouvel-Ontario
 Conseil scolaire de district des écoles catholiques du Sud-Ouest
 Conseil scolaire de district du Centre Sud-Ouest
 District School Board of Niagara
 Halton Catholic District School Board
 Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
 Lakehead District School Board
 Lambton-Kent District School Board
 Near North District School Board
 Niagara Catholic District School Board
 Peel District School Board
 Rainbow District School Board
 Upper Canada District School Board
 Toronto District School Board
 Toronto Catholic District School Board
 York Region District School Board

We also wish to thank those parents and staff beyond Ontario who shared their experiences and expertise in parent engagement with us during the development of these materials.

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Parent Engagement is Important to Student Success.

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