

Are You Ready to Help Your Child Be a Successful, Self-Directed Learner?

The checklist below provides activities that promote a positive home learning environment. Parents can use this checklist to reflect on what has been occurring at home. All ratings of “never” or “sometimes” merit some attention by parents. Parents can write down their commitments to improve the learning environment.

Possible Ways to Encourage and Reinforce Home learning	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
I ask about my child’s interests.				
I talk about the importance of learning and investigation.				
I take time to find out about my child’s strengths and learning needs.				
I model investigation and learning.				
I model my own thinking in the presence of my child.				
I provide praise for my child for effort and accomplishment.				
I actively listen to my child when he/she wants to tell me about something of interest.				
I encourage my child to participate in family decision making and problem solving.				
I encourage my child to relate family values to things he/she learns in school and sees in the media.				
I ask open-ended questions to facilitate my child’s thinking.				
I encourage my child to display projects and products that he/she created.				
I encourage my child to present (e.g., speeches, recitals, demonstrations) for me and other members of the family.				
I provide opportunities for my child to visit and explore new places (e.g., museums, towns and cities, outdoors).				

Possible Ways to Encourage and Reinforce Home learning	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
I ask my child's opinion and remain open-minded and non-judgmental when my child declares a different opinion.				
I encourage and model debate and discussion when there are differences of opinion.				
I encourage my child to respect differences of beliefs and values.				
I encourage my child to self-assess and set reasonable goals.				
I make a wide variety of print material available to my child and encourage him/her to select topics or books to read.				
I encourage the use of ethical and responsible use of technology.				
I encourage my child to recognize his/her own learning style.				
I establish boundaries that permit my child to have an age-appropriate level of freedom and independence.				
I spend time with my child to explore and learn together.				
I spend time with my child to create new products or performances.				
I encourage my child to persevere when his/her goals are not yet achieved and when a question can't be answered right away.				
I encourage my child to reflect about his/her use of time and to learn how to create and follow plans.				
I plan my home learning environment to meet my child's learning needs (e.g., lighting, ventilation, furniture, supplies, limited distractions).				

Possible Ways to Encourage and Reinforce Home learning	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
I encourage my child to investigate things that are interesting and/or challenging for him/her.				
I strive to increase my child's vocabulary.				
I encourage my child to recognize effort and celebrate accomplishment.				
I have conversations and discussions with my child.				
I expose my child to classic literature.				
I provide opportunities for my child to appreciate art and music.				
I provide opportunities for my child to participate in physical activity.				
I help my child get involved in volunteering in the community or assisting with community activities or problem solving.				
I help my child locate mentors (e.g., religious clergy members, business owners, government officials, professionals in different careers) to observe or have additional learning opportunities.				
I create rules and procedures for academic learning at home and explain and apply rewards and consequences.				