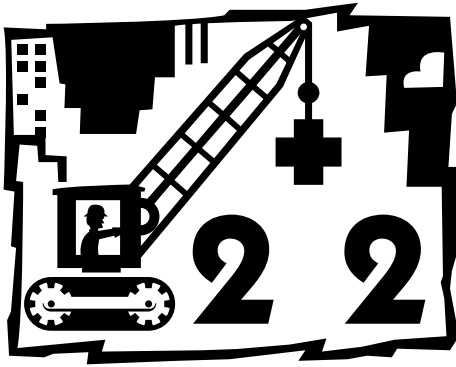




Bulletin

Parents Learning About Children's Education

The Massachusetts Statewide Parent Information & Resource Center (PIRC)



How to Help with Homework

Helping with homework is one of the most important ways parents can help their children succeed in school. Here are some tips on how to make homework time go more smoothly.

- ✓ Help your child get into the habit of doing homework by agreeing on a daily homework time.
- ✓ Help your child understand that homework is important by setting up a study area that is in a quiet place without distractions.
- ✓ When your child has a long-term project to complete, help him or her create a schedule of deadlines for each step of the project. Check in with your child to see if he or she is meeting these deadlines so there won't be a rush to complete the project the night before it is due.

- ✓ School is a child's work and homework is part of learning—not only the subject matter, but also about responsibility. Talk to your child about the importance of homework and back that up by checking to be sure the homework is completed every day.

Praise is great motivation!

Praise your child for completing homework.

- ✓ Create a homework survival kit that includes the supplies (pen, pencil, paper, tape, scissors, dictionary, etc.) that your child needs. Keep this kit in the study area so your child doesn't have to search for supplies every day. You might put it in a shoe box or another container that your child can have fun decorating.
- ✓ When your child is studying for a test, offer to use the book or other materials the teacher has provided to quiz him or her.
- ✓ If you don't know how to help with a specific assignment, ask the teacher for additional materials or information. You might also ask the school if there is a local tutoring program your child can participate in.

With this issue of the Bulletin, Parents' PLACE says a fond farewell to Carolyn Romano.



Carolyn is one of the original creators of Parents' PLACE, and since 1999 has played a key role in developing our services. Carolyn's love of children and her commitment to social justice helped shape the vision and scope of the program. She was a wonderful asset to our team and will be greatly missed. We are looking forward to opportunities to continue working with Carolyn, and wish her all the best in her future endeavors!

- ✓ Parents and teachers alike often use incentives to motivate their children to complete school work. For example, you could:
 - Allow your child to invite a friend home for an overnight.
 - Give your child an hour of your time to play his or her favorite game.
 - Dismiss your child from chores for a day.

Parents, if you would like more information on how to be involved in your child's school or about your options under the *No Child Left Behind Act* for school choice or supplemental educational services, please call us. Our toll-free statewide number is 877-471-0980; for Spanish, Ext. 171, for Portuguese, Et. 144. We look forward to hearing from you!

Adapted and reprinted with permission from Forward in the Fifth, the newsletter of the Kentucky Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC), www.fif.org.

Things to Know as Parents

As a parent, here are some things you should know about and expect from your child's school...and yourself:

1. Your involvement matters—a lot. Research shows that students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores, enroll in higher-level programs, be promoted and earn credits, attend school regularly, have better social skills, and graduate and go on to college.

2. You can be involved in many ways. You can be involved as a teacher—establishing a learning environment at home for the whole family. You can be a *supporter* of education—volunteering at school and taking part in school activities that promote education. You can be an *advocate* for your own child and for all children—pressing state and local leaders for better programs and higher achievement. And you can be a *decision-maker*—taking part in decisions about programs and staffing.

3. Children need you. American students are not doing as well in school as they should be. Less than one-third of American students are proficient in reading, writing, math, science, and other important subjects.

4. Schools need you. Public opinion polls show that parents, elected officials, and educators alike agree that the lack of parent involvement is the key challenge facing schools. Teachers and principals are desperate for parents like you to be more involved. Helping your child at home, volunteering in classrooms, attending parent-teacher meetings, serving on school committees—all help is needed.

5. You should be told clearly what the learning standards* are in each grade. Parents and students alike need to know at the start of the school year what is being taught in English language arts, math, science, social studies, and other subjects in each grade. And they need to be told how that learning will be tested.

6. You should be told about the school's behavior standards. Students need to feel safe in order to learn. Parents should know what the school's

safety and discipline standards are, how problems are handled, and what the school is doing to promote an environment of respect and responsibility.

(Six more items will follow in a future *Bulletin*.)

* In Massachusetts, the learning standards are called "Curriculum Frameworks." They can be downloaded for free from www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html. Print copies are available from the State Book Store for \$6.00, plus \$3.50 shipping. To order call (617) 727-2834 or, from Western Massachusetts, (314) 784-1376. For more information on the "Curriculum Frameworks," call Parents' PLACE at (617) 236-7210, or toll free (877) 471-0980.

This article is excerpted from "As a Parent, 12 Things You Should Know," originally published by Parent Leadership Associates, an organization that believes, like Parents' PLACE, that knowledgeable, engaged parents improve student achievement. For more information on PLA, go to www.plassociates.org or call (859) 233-9849 or (703) 528-7100.



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CHILDREN'S EDUCATION


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