

ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents involvement in your child's education is absolutely essential to his or her eventual success. Surprisingly enough, the results of every study done in the last two decades about what affects a child's success in school concludes that only one factor overwhelmingly affects it, every time : parental involvement. Not the size of the school, the number of science labs, the size of library or how many great teachers there are? All factors, yes. But none as significant as the effect parents can have. Here, we have tried to divide the role of parents in 2 headings:

* What parents should do? * What parents should not do?

Ensure good Family Environment

Children who get favourable atmosphere at home for studies perform better than students who are brought up under uncongenial family atmosphere. To study one needs to concentrate and to concentrate one needs peace of mind. Peace does not necessarily come from staying in a big house situated far away from noise pollution but it comes from the relationship and understanding among people staying in the house, particularly parents.

Regular Monitoring

To assess a child's progress in studies and to know its areas of strengths and weaknesses, parents need to monitor the child's work regularly. Monitoring does not in any way imply that you or the tutor complete the homework for the child.

Appreciate and Encourage

Encouragement not only adds to the child's capability to perform well but also boosts his confidence. Appreciation and encouragement for the work done is liked by most of us. But parents fail to do so when they find their children falling short of the required percentage of marks which is necessary to face the competition. Some parents even feel that too much encouragement will make the child complacent.

Follow a Patient Approach

We want to understand our child, its progress, its growth, its intelligence level, but how? One word that explains and helps you in understanding your child is patience, i.e., interact with the child regularly but with patience. Mostly we fail to exercise patience while dealing with the child.

Encourage Reading

Reading is necessary to make study interesting. It is a common feature that when it comes to story books, children generally get engrossed in them for hours but reading textbooks make them fidgety. What is the reason? Firstly, the textbooks are generally read under pressure from parents, teachers or fear of exams. Contrarily, the child reads comics or stories without any fear, worry or pressure. Rather it derives pleasure from such readings. Secondly, it is because for long they have been used to cramming, often without understanding the meaning. The value of understanding a lesson, finding relationship between concepts are not stressed. They are in a hurry to cram so that they are able to spurt it out at the exam since this gets them marks.

What parents should not do?

Creating Wrong Impression

Often, from the very beginning, a wrong impression about studies is created in the child's mind. The child is pressurized to prepare for tough competition for admission. He or she is nagged for taking studies seriously by being regular in attendance, completing homework, and getting good scores. There is nothing wrong if this message is conveyed in an intelligent way that does not create fear about studies in the child's mind but in most of the cases the approach goes wrong. "IF you don't study, you'll fail and your whole life will be spoiled. What will you do? Who will

give you a job?" When we talk about education, school or study, we become very serious and generally talk in an angry mood.

Gradually, the fear about school and study is instilled in the young minds. While this fear might encourage few students to work harder, it discourage a majority of students who require patient, motivating and encouraging environment to do well in studies.

Criticism by Parents

It goes without saying that mostly parents adopt a negative approach towards their school-going children. They often criticise them and rarely appreciate even when the children deserve appreciation. This not only results in discouragement but also develops disliking for studies and the school. " You don't pay attention to your study. You are always watching 'TV'., remain out of house and roam with your friends throughout the day." This kind of nagging and criticism gives an impression that you do not hold your child in good esteem. Slowly and slowly the child feels that parents always think against him and do not love him.

The problem is we as parents fail to judge the level at which our child operates on. Most of times we ignore child's capacity to learn, we fail to appreciate his efforts and resort to frequent criticism.

Unhealthy Comparison

Comparing your child with other children and telling it that so and is better, is a sure way of sowing the seeds of disliking, disregard and rebellious feelings in a child's mind. The child gets sick of listening to your praise for other children. It causes displeasure and dissatisfaction, particularly if the child is criticized in the presence of a guest, relative or a friend. This affects the child's interest in study. Comparison never helps. On the contrary, it may make the child adamant or jealous. The child may tend to think too much about how to beat the competitor, forgetting about its own performance. Beyond a limit, it can even create mental problems.

Lack of Appreciation

A child is to be accepted as he or she is and not as what it ought to be. In this sense, when parents fail to appreciate and encourage the child, it results in a setback to the child's spirit to study.

Failure to satisfy Curiosity

It kills a child's interest in studies, if parents fail to answer its innumerable questions. A child is full of endless energy. He wants to know more and more. His thirst to know more increases as he grows. One should never throttle the child's curiosity nor discourage him to talk. It is sometimes really difficult for parents to attend to the child's questions particularly when they are tired after a whole day's work. One should have a sympathetic attitude to a child's inquisitiveness even in such situations.

Other things which parents should take care of:

- Be on the lookout for common signs of stress such as trouble sleeping, emotional mood changes, loss of appetite, skin ailments and stomach upsets.
- Be patient, controlled and calm in the run-up to exams. Anxiety is catching.
- **Adopt a realistic attitude towards your children's** abilities. Don't expect too much, but be positive and emphasise academic success rather than failures.
- Make sure there is a place available at home where the student can work alone.
- Make it clear that your son or daughter is valued for reasons entirely unconnected with academic progress.
- Praise commitment as well as success and try to put the exams in perspective : they are not the be-all and end-all. Show interest in their achievements outside school work.
- Avoid offering rewards such as money, clothes or cars. Young people may feel they are being manipulated, and it might stop them developing an interest in the subject for its own sake.