

Connecting Learning at Home and at School

74 ways for families to become partners in learning

74 Ways for Families to become Partners in Learning

The following seven headings provide a list of useful points for families to follow that encourages families to become partners in their child's education. This list of suggestions should be made available to families.

Communicating

- 1. Share your child's strengths, talents, and interests with teachers.
- 2. Share expectations and set goals for your child with his or her teacher.
- 3. Make appointments as needed to discuss your child's progress or concerns.
- 4. Attend family-teacher conferences with specific questions you want to ask.
- 5. Decide with your child's teacher the best way to stay in touch (phone, e-mail, notes, etc.).
- Give positive feedback and show appreciation for teachers and the principal.
 Approach interactions with school administration and staff with a positive attit
- Approach interactions with school administration and staff with a positive attitude and an open mind.
- 8. Listen to others' viewpoints when having a discussion.
- 9. Understand and reinforce school rules and expectations at home.
- 10. Participate in informal opportunities to talk with and get to know school administrators, teachers, and other staff.
- 11. Address concerns or questions honestly, openly, and early.
- 12. Attend parent / family meetings regularly.
- 13. Read classroom and/or school newsletters with your child.
- 14. Visit your school's webpage.
- 15. Know the names of your child's teacher(s) and school principal.
- 16. Read and know your school's handbook.
- 17. Request that information be available in all languages spoken by school families.
- 18. Share your family's practices related to culture, values, and parenting with your child's school.
- 19. Communicate your perceptions of how families are treated and, when necessary, work with school staff to improve perceptions and school climate.
- 20. Notify teachers of any significant changes that have taken place in your child's life (such as death of a pet, family move, loss of income, family member's illness or divorce).

Your child's learning

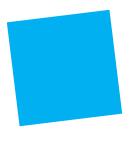
- 21. Discuss your child's school day and homework daily.
- 22. Know your child's academic strengths and weaknesses.
- 23. Provide a quiet, well-lit place with basic school supplies for studying/homework.
- 24. Help your child break down big homework projects into smaller, more manageable steps.
- 25. Develop a consistent daily routine and time for studying and doing homework.
- 26. Provide encouragement and praise for your child's efforts.
- 27. Share your interests, hobbies, and talents with your child.
- 28. Provide your child with books, magazines, newspapers, and other materials and encourage regular reading.
- 29. View selected TV programs together and then discuss them.
- 30. Make family trips to the library, zoo, museum, or park a fun learning experience.
- 31. Talk with your child's teacher about creating home learning games and activities.
- 32. Assist with homework, but avoid doing it for your child.
- 33. Help set goals and develop a personalised learning plan for your child.
- 34. Participate in activities that help you understand school technology.
- 35. Help plan and attend family nights on improving study habits, doing homework, etc.













Parenting

- 36. Meet your child's friends and get to know their family.
- 37. Take advantage of family programs and resources offered at the school.
- 38. Work with others to establish a family resource centre at the school.
- 39. Help create a school toy/book lending library and visit it regularly.
- 40. Assist in developing family support groups or programs.
- 41. Seek out classes or information on child development, learning styles, discipline, etc.
- 42. Start a family book club to discuss current publications.
- 43. Help create and/or contribute to a school newsletter on parenting.
- 44. Ask teachers or school counsellors about how to talk with your child about tough topics.

Partnering with the school

- 45. Learn about school policies and practices that affect children.
- 46. Voice your support or concerns on any issue that will affect your family.
- 47. Serve on school sub-committees that examine such things as uniform, homework, student engagement or bullying policies.
- 48. Encourage and support children to serve in student leadership positions.
- 49. Help your school create a student's rights and responsibilities guide for families.
- 50. Attend Parents & Friends meetings or school council meetings and speak about issues of concern.
- 51. Learn candidates' positions and participate in school council elections.
- 52. Work with teachers and school administrators to develop a family-school partnership policy.

Volunteering

- 53. Respond to school surveys regarding your interests, talents, and skills.
- 54. Let school staff know your availability to volunteer (days, times and how often).
- 55. Assist your child's teacher in the classroom or on excursions when you are able.
- 56. Work with school staff and teachers to develop volunteer activities you can do from home.
- 57. Assist school staff and teachers in creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for families.
- 58. Collaborate to develop creative ways to use volunteers at school.
- 59. Work with others to develop volunteer job descriptions and evaluations.
- 60. Assist school staff in recruiting family and community members as volunteers.
- 61. Attend training and orientation on how to be an effective volunteer.
- 62. Learn and uphold school discipline, confidentiality, and other policies as a volunteer.
- 63. Set a time to talk regularly with school staff and teachers with whom you are working.
- 64. Participate in organising and planning ways to recognise and appreciate volunteers.
 65. Help develop and distribute a volunteer directory to families, school staff, and teachers.
- 66. Volunteer your consulting services in your areas of expertise to school staff or teachers.

Collaborating with the community

- 67. Find out about and use information on community resources and organisations.
- 68. Help your school develop a directory of specialist and community services.
- 69. Help coordinate and participate in events that support community groups.
- 70. Ask employers and local businesses to make donations and support school programs.
- 71. Recruit community members (seniors, business people) to volunteer at school.
- 72. Help organise and/or participate in a community 'cleanup' or 'beautification' project.
- 73. Encourage and facilitate your child's participation in community service.
- 74. Be a role model; be active in community service yourself or with your child.