

## Mental Fitness News and Tips

March 2017

### How to Get the Most Out of Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences can seem exciting or maybe a little stressful. Follow these tips for a successful conference:

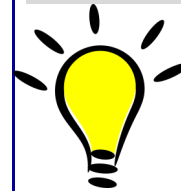
- **Prepare:** Talk with your youth. What do they like and dislike about school? Is there anything they want you to discuss with the teacher? Think about the most important topics to cover and write them down before you get there.
- **Be positive:** Start the meeting with a compliment, such as “Sarah loves your reading corner. It’s so cozy!” As you listen to the teacher’s views and share your own, stay focused on being a team as well as collaborating to *help your student*.
- **Make plans:** While you and the teacher discuss ways to support your youth, write down things you can do at home. Agree on how and when you will stay in touch about their progress.
- **Celebrate:** When you get home, tell your youth how well the meeting went. Show pride in his or her accomplishments! It is important for them to see parents and teachers working together.

### Research Shows the Importance of Involvement

Getting involved with your youth’s education does not just feel rewarding. It *is* rewarding. Hundreds of studies link parent involvement at home and school to student success. That means when you take small steps, such as reading with your child, helping with homework, or attending school events, you can get big results. Parent involvement raises your youth’s chances of earning higher grades, getting along with others, being involved in activities, finishing homework, graduating from high school on time and more! To get the most out of your involvement:

- When parents get involved early on, kids benefit more. Parent involvement should continue right through middle and high school. The more involvement, the better. Your involvement shows your youth you believe school is very important.
- Getting involved can be as simple as asking “What did you learn at school today?” Ask about the school’s needs and match them to your time and talents.
- All primary caretakers can make valuable contributions.

### Work with the teacher to resolve school problems



All kids struggle with school some-times. How do you know when it is time to contact the teacher?

- Get in touch if your student:
- Will not do their homework, even though you have tried your best to motivate them.
  - Finds schoolwork too hard or too easy.
  - Needs school supplies you cannot provide.
  - Does not understand home-work instructions, even with your help.
  - Missed school and needs make-up work or extra help.
  - Has homework that seems unmanageable.

When you talk with the teacher, take a team approach. After all, you share the same goal: your child’s success! Explain your point of view and keep an open mind when they respond. Agree on solutions together.

Adapted from The Parent Institute®  
[www.parent-institute.com](http://www.parent-institute.com)

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