

ABUNDANT LIVING FAMILY STYLE

October 2009

School Success (Part Two)

For children to succeed throughout their years of formal education, they need all the help they can get! This doesn't mean parents should do for the child, what the child ought to do for himself. However, it does mean getting involved in their child's schooling. Here are some of the best ways parents can help children throughout their months in the classroom:

Handle with prayer! Participate in your local *Moms in Touch* group if at all possible. These groups pray for children, teachers, administrators, school board members, etc. If your school doesn't have a chapter, start one yourself.

Pray with your child each day before she heads off to school. Ask for God's blessing and protection on her! Ask her if she has any special concerns for that day and pray accordingly. Throughout the day, pray for your child as she comes to mind. The Lord is always our best Helper!

At bedtime pray with and for your child. Encourage him to start his own habit of personal devotions. Buy him a small notebook for recording prayer requests and answers. Remind him often that God is always eager to hear his concerns and help him.

Encourage good friendships! Peers are *so* influential in the life of a child. When children are young, be pro-active in helping them form good friendships. Look for other families with similar Christian values. Invite them to your home. Observe how the children interact. If a relationship

seems healthy, and reinforces the same standards you teach in your own home, nurture that friendship. Even if it means sacrifice of time and finances, investing in the friendships of your children, will bring a good result!

Put priority on church! When children regularly attend Sunday School, worship services, mid-week Bible clubs, youth group, etc. the stage is set for building friendships with other Christian young people. This may require sacrifice on the part of the parents, especially if your church is located far from your home. But the extra financial and time investment will pay off when your child becomes a teenager and has a healthy circle of peers. You will notice that school performance is good when children are enjoying wholesome peer relationships.



Look and listen! Children don't always talk about things that are bothering them at school. Try to pay close attention to the child's demeanor, especially when he first arrives home from school. Be alert for non-verbal cues about the child's day. Ask questions... not in a harsh tone of voice, but in a matter-of-fact, interested manner.

If a child begins to withdraw from family interaction and acts sullen and apathetic, bravely initiate a serious conversation. Find out what is going on. Do some investigation. Talk to his teachers or youth leaders. Don't just assume that the child will "snap out of it."

Show interest in the things the child is excited about. You may not be able to attend every ball game or concert (in fact, it's probably better if you don't), but do ask the child to tell you about his events and show genuine enthusiasm about them.

Make your home available as a healthy "hang-out" for your child and his friends. When your child has friends over, converse with them. Bring the gang a snack and chat about school. During such times a parent can pick up valuable insights about school life.

Provide a stable foundation! No matter how good the school, children *will* be exposed to sinful behavior and incorrect teaching at times throughout their years of formal education. However a child who has a personal foundation of truth and righteousness is less likely to be shaken. Parents help provide this by teaching Scriptural truth. Establish a family habit of Bible memorization. But don't just memorize

the words... also talk to your children about how principles apply to daily living. Speak enthusiastically about how God's guidelines help us enjoy life to the fullest!

Be alert to ways Satan tries to seduce your children. Check out the curriculum used by your child's school. Join committees that choose teaching materials. Saturate your home with Godly influences and get rid of ungodly ones. Literature, music, toys, TV, DVD's and computers can be used to reinforce righteousness or to undermine it. Set high standards. Children from homes with strong values are less likely to be swayed by pressures they may face at school.

Jesus said, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." (Matthew 7:24-27) **Be encouraged! The years your children spend in the classroom can be great years, if throughout those years they are learning to live like Jesus. Parents who keep this goal in mind, will rejoice when their children graduate cum laude... i.e. with the praise of their Heavenly Father! That's what real school success is all about!**

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