

Healthy Habits for a Happy School Year

Let's take a look at what can ensure a great and successful school year.

Academics:

- First, get to know your child's teachers. Try to attend open house and conferences when possible to learn first hand about your child's day and also to meet the teachers.
- Become aware of the team planning time and make sure if you have any issues that you contact a member of your child's team or one of the counselors to set up a team meeting.
- Communicate any concerns quickly.
- Remind your child to use his/her assignment notebook every day for every class. All teachers have daily assignments displayed. It is the student's responsibility to copy each day's assignmentS in his/her notebook. Parents, please check to make sure your child is using this valuable organizational tool.
- Utilize the teacher websites and email.

Study Habit:

- Studying is done best in a quiet environment without distractions.
- Please provide your child with good writing space, ample light and a quiet work environment.
- Parents should check homework assignments. If it doesn't look good, make them do it again. Students need to take pride in their work.
- Do not rely on studyhalls to complete homework or to study.

Rest and Nutrition:

- A good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast ensure that your child will not be distracted from school work because he/she is sleepy or hungry.
- Middle schoolers need more sleep and healthy food because they are growing so quickly.
- Pop consumed at bedtime may also reduce sleep time. Make it a rule - nothing with caffeine after 4 or 5 pm.
- Limit TV exposure by keeping the TV out of the bedroom. Children get less sleep if they watch TV before bedtime.
- Believe it or not, it is reported that middle schoolers need between 10 and 11 hours of sleep a night.

Prepare in Advance:

- Help your child get organized for the school day the night before by packing bookbags and lunches, laying out clothes, and preparing supplies for the next school day. This avoids the stress of last minute preparations, and gives you an opportunity for a less hurried goodbye in the morning.
- Make a chart of your child's home responsibilities and post it in a prominent place. Teach responsibility and accountability at home.
- Keep a master calendar so you can see at a glance everyone's activities. Include school events, major projects due at school, sports and activities, and doctor appointments. Schedule time for each of your children to spend time with you.
- Children can be too busy or not busy enough. Over-scheduling leads to fatigue and stress. Please make sure that children are not overscheduled with activities. Balance is the key.

Quality Time:

- Spend time with your child. We all seem to be so busy these days, but the investment of your time is the best thing you can give your child.
- Try to have a family dinner at least 4 times a week. Talk about the day's activities and any upcoming projects.
- Ask about his/her day.
- Get to know your child's friends.
- Ask about their concerns and share with them their joys.
- Be involved in your child's life. As they grow older and are faced with more choices, they need you more now than ever before.
- Ask questions. Take time to find out what is going on in your child's life.
- Always know where your child is and have a curfew.
- Set aside individual time with each child. Think about how good you feel when someone sets time aside just for you. Go out for a walk down the street, in the park or along the beach. This small investment of your time will reap huge future benefits.

Guidance Counselors can help with:

- Answering questions regarding your child's schedule.
- Discussing concerns about your child's grades or organizational skills.
- Coordinating communication between the parents and teachers.
- Setting up a meeting with the parents and the teachers.
- Conflict Resolution between students.
- Referring parents to community programs and resources.