

Fresh School Tips for Parents

Parents, the school doors are soon to open, and you will have a myriad of tasks to accomplish to get your children ready for school. That is expected. However, I must take the time to give you a few tips to help make your parenting role more effective and productive and to help your children do well in school

TIP ONE: Remember you are the parent. You are the supervisor and go-between with the school. Get to know everything you need to know about your child's school, including what is expected of you and the child during the school year.

TIP TWO: When your child comes home from school, do not ask if he or she has homework. Most children will lie, and you will be training them not to be totally honest. First, they must understand that at the end of every school day there is always homework. If there are no homework assignments by the teacher, they would have to spend at least one hour reviewing what was done in class that day or preparing for the next day's schoolwork. Parents, make sure you look at the child's schoolwork regularly, even the senior students. Of course, the frequency of parental checks will depend on the age and maturity of the child. The younger the child, the more frequent the checks.

TIP THREE: Give them a good breakfast. Growing children must have a good breakfast. The fuel is needed for physical and mental energy needs throughout the day. A good breakfast would include a good source of protein and some wholegrain food/cereal, etc. Here was one of my childhood breakfast treats I enjoyed. It was cottage cheese salad. My mother would mix cottage cheese with diced apples and raisins, and sprinkle with wheatgerm. It was delicious and very nutritious. I loved eating that with peanut and guava jam sandwiches. Be reminded parents that much of the mental sluggishness and lethargy your child experiences while in school is usually a direct result of poor breakfast or having no breakfast at all. In addition to having a good breakfast, ensure they take good multivitamins.

TIP FOUR: Ensure that the child, at least the older children, prepares his or her own school uniform, especially ironing, etc. There is no need for parents with pre-teens and teens to struggle day and night to wash and iron clothing for their children to go to school. Preparing one's own school uniforms is a part of the process of learning and developing self-discipline. It is an integral part in developing self-discipline, self-government, and self-reliance.

TIP FIVE: Make sure your child makes up his or her own bed every morning when they first get up. In a previous article I wrote titled "Please, Make Up Your Bed," I stated the following: "Some parents might think it is not important or do not have it on the list of morning priorities. The rush for school or work is a convenient excuse. Here are more poor excuses: There is a helper in the home who makes us the beds, school is more important, he/she wakes up too late before going to school. One teen said: "Why should I make up my bed when I am going to use the bed first thing when I get home from school?" These are all diversion tactics."

I shared these four reasons why making up the bed first thing in the morning is so important:

"1. It's a tool for developing self-discipline. Personal discipline or total self-government is one of the most important tools a parent is to instill in their offspring. It is the foundation needed to face the world.

2. It teaches about the importance of setting priorities. Ignoring the simple or seemingly unimportant things in life prepares the child to ignore proper care of one's environment, orderliness, and a sense of beauty.

3. It teaches about community involvement and team play. Living as though one is a part of a community—home, neighborhood or country—is an integral ingredient of personal growth and camaraderie.

5. It helps one to understand that starting with the simple tasks in the morning sets the tone for the rest of the day. As inferred in the other three points, when one ignores this simple task, it impacts one's ability to handle the bigger tasks for the rest of the day.”

Parents, if you want smart children, start requiring them to make up their beds every morning before going to school.

TIP SIX: Do not go to sleep at night before your school-age children go to sleep. That is a big mistake parents make. Many parents are not aware that their young children are up all night with their phones, iPad, etc, talking with friends, until the wee hours of the morning. They cannot stay awake in class. Remember, self-discipline is a goal in parenting. Set the time for your children to go to bed. The primary school children should be in bed by seven or eight o'clock at night. The teens perhaps at 8 or 9 p.m. Note that they need between nine and twelve hours of sleep each night to be healthy and wise. This generation of young children and teens are the most sleep-deprived since the beginning of humankind. This is because parents are lazy and give open reign for their children to use devices. This must stop.

Dear parents, remember that you play a pivotal role in helping to make your children successful in school. Take these tips seriously.

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