

Are Your Children Ready for School Today?

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How can I encourage students to come to school ready for the school day? This is a question commonly asked by teachers as I visit various schools. It seems that many times students come to school without having eaten a proper breakfast (when one is available to them); with a partially nutritious lunch, (after all we make our own lunches); their homework isn't done (we were too busy shopping); or their textbooks left at home on the table (mom didn't pack them). This doesn't include leaving the trumpet or trombone at home on band day. Oh, by the way, it also seems that the respect for self and others is also left behind somewhere. Did I also mention that there were no pencils and glue for doing work at school?



What is a teacher to do? I would like to propose the idea that a teacher can only do his/her job when parents do their job, too. When parents and teachers are involved in the children's education, there is a team effort toward successful education of the children involved.

In an Ann Landers column, a teacher wrote: *"I am a grade-school teacher, and I think parents have forgotten their job when it comes to preparing their children for school. It is the job of the parents to make sure their child comes to school clean, fed, dressed and on time. It is the job of the parents to make sure their child comes to school prepared with books, paper, pencils and other supplies. It is the job of the parents to make sure the child completes all homework assignments. It is the job of the parents to teach their child respect, courtesy, responsibility and good manners.*

What does the teacher do? It is the teacher's job to prepare your child academically and provide a good foundation for future educational growth. It is the teacher's job to provide challenging and interesting assignments and projects. It is very hard for me to do my job when children show up late, without supplies or homework and with a poor attitude. I do not get paid enough to be a mother to all these children. Parents, please, do your job so I can do mine." Signed-Teacher in the Midwest.

So how can we get students ready for the school day experience? Ronald Morrish, author of *Secrets of Discipline*, suggests twelve ways for parents and teachers to deal with defiance, getting the children to do the jobs assigned them, decreasing your stress through prevention, teaching courtesy and obedience, and preparing children for independence:

- Never give a choice when it comes to limits.
- If you bargain for compliance now, you'll beg for it later.
- When children are well-trained, it's habit-forming.
- Rules worth having are worth enforcing.
- Behaviour that needs to be learned, needs to be taught.

- Today's practice is tomorrow's performance.
- Independence isn't doing your own thing; it's doing what's right on your own.
- Keep responsible decisions in responsible hands.
- Discipline comes best from the heart not the hand.
- Beware of self-indulgence disguised as self-esteem.
- Prevention is the best solution.
- There is no great discipline without great commitment.

Let's have a complete team of parents doing their jobs and teachers doing theirs. Each member of this team can complement each other in achieving educational success for their children. As we strive to present opportunities for our children to succeed, remember, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13, KJV)

References:

- Morrish, Ronald, *Secrets of Discipline*. Fonthill, Ontario: Woodstream Publishing Inc. 1997
- Ann Landers, *Red Deer Advocate*, December 29, 2001.