



## Tips for Involved Parents from Gwinnett County Public Schools

*Be There* is a national movement that inspires parents to become more involved in their children's education. Teachable moments are everywhere. Be your child's favorite teacher. Connect in meaningful ways and your simple actions will reap immense rewards at home, play, and school!

### Ways to support your child when he struggles academically

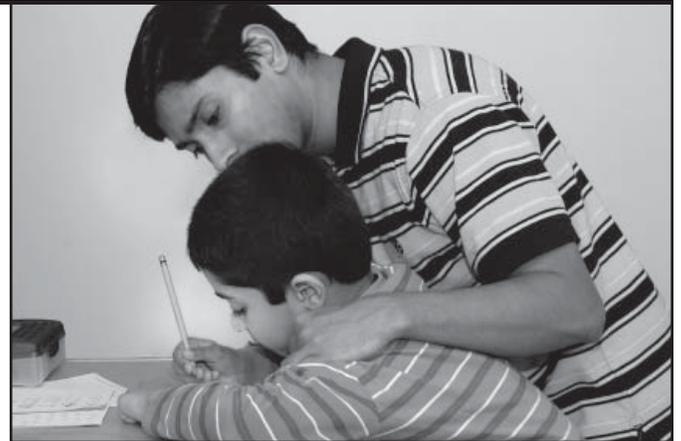
Every child will struggle with some subject or assignment at some time during his or her school career. Sometimes, those academic struggles may be skill-based— spelling, reading, writing, or math— and require a constant focus for your student to keep up with his classwork. Here are some tips for ways you can support your child as he or she works through an academic rough patch.

**Model how to struggle with a task, persevere, and then succeed.** Talk through your own thought processes and your problem-solving process so your child can learn how to handle difficult things.

**Focus and reinforce your child's efforts,** rather than just zeroing in on the final product, a grade, or test. Celebrate improvement.

**Focus on your child's strengths while working on his or her weaknesses.** Do all you can to focus your child's curiosity in an area in which he or she will experience success.

**Be positive, diligent, and supportive** as your child struggles with learning new things and tackling new challenges.



### If your child struggles with reading...

- **Put the morning newspaper on the breakfast table each morning,** opened to section that holds the most interest for your student.
- **Expose children to reading material that will capture their interests,** including high-interest magazines, crosswords and other puzzles, newspapers, etc. Your public library has all of these available for checkout.
- **Keep high-interest books and reading materials on hand everywhere you go—** in the car, on the bus, when waiting for an appointment, etc. Books on tape also can be good in the car or at home. These also are available at your public library.
- **Be a good role model for your children.** Turn off the TV and let them see you reading.

**Build reading and writing into daily activities** such as making and reading lists of things to buy, things to do, items to pack, directions to follow, etc.

*Continued*

*Tips from Susan White, executive director for Special Education and Psychological Services*

## Ways to support your child when he struggles academically *(Continued)*



**Post current vocabulary on note cards and place them in strategic places at home.** Keep a set handy for reviewing in the car, at doctor's appointments, etc.

**Make sure your child is involved in some non-academic activity or project at which he or she can excel.** Success in some area will help promote self-esteem, which can suffer if your child struggles in other areas.

**If grades start to slip, don't eliminate the activity, just reduce it.** For example, instead of making your child quit baseball, reduce the number of innings he can play or cut back on the time at practice to allow for more study time and time to get the homework done.

**Prior to taking a test at school, have your child develop her own test,** based on the questions she thinks that the teacher might ask. This self-made test can serve as practice and review before she takes the test at school.

**Eat meals together and show a genuine interest in your child's school day and school work.** "Tell me about your day." "What was the best part?" "What are you learning about in science? Math?" Conversations at home about your child's studies can help students remember the subject matter.

**Put notes of encouragement in your child's bookbag and lunch/snack bag.** "Good luck on your science test today! I know you'll do great." "I appreciate how hard you're working in spelling. Keep it up!"

**Keep up with your child's activities and plans,** using notes, e-mail, and text messaging. Communication with your child and staying connected is critical to supporting his academic success.

**Use a small white board in your child's bedroom** for notes, reminders, vocabulary words, planning long-term projects, or to use in brainstorming ideas before starting a writing assignment.

**Limit the electronics, especially during homework time.** Remove the TV from your child's bedroom. Allow computer usage in the common areas of the house where you are in sight of the screen as you move through the room. Not only will this keep your child focused on the task at hand, but you also ensure a safer online experience.

**Teach your child how to use a planner and reinforce its use.** It may take awhile for this to become a habit, so keep reminding.

**Establish a homework or review time each evening,** even if your child doesn't have homework.



*Together, we will be there for our students—  
Gwinnett County Public Schools and YOU!*

***Make the ordinary extraordinary!***

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If you believe your child's academic difficulties are more than just not "getting it" on one particular lesson and may indicate a more serious learning problem, contact your child's teacher for a conference.