

Demonstrating Respect for Education

by Diane Trautman

Are you an avid reader? Do you enjoy the challenge of a crossword puzzle or a game of strategy? Have you enrolled in a class for the pure pleasure of learning or to expand your career opportunities?

It has been documented that children perform better in school when their parents are involved in their education. Beyond asking our kids questions about their studies, reviewing their homework, and communicating with their teachers, we can enhance their education, by showing them that we believe in education as a lifelong process.

Have you ever discussed your school days with your children? Sharing our own experiences can remind our children that we've faced many of the same challenges, surviving the tough classes with difficult teachers and enjoying the encouragement of inspired teachers who sparked our imaginations and contributed to our self-awareness.

Do you take your children on educational trips? While on those excursions or even during the course of daily conversation, do you engage in detailed discussions about what you have seen or heard or read? Spending a significant amount of time with our kids is important, but if it's not quality time in which we create meaningful connections and lasting memories, we cheat ourselves and them.

With what regard do you hold the school and your children's teachers and how do you discuss them with your children? It's not unreasonable to get frustrated about confusing homework instructions or to find one's self in disagreement with the teacher over homework levels, etc. But do we teach our children how to resolve those conflicts while maintaining overall respect? Or do we become dismissive or hostile toward the teacher or the institution and imbed that disrespect in our children?

We can help our children in a very primary way by demonstrating a high regard for learning and for the educators who work with them everyday. When they believe in education and understand its role in their lives, they will be active participants in the process.