



PARENT ENGAGEMENT: Five things you can be doing right now to help your child do their best at school

It is now accepted that a parent's attitudes to education and the expectations they hold for their children, can have a profound impact on how well their children do at school.

Study after study over 40 years has shown that parents who are supportively engaged in their child's education can have a positive influence on both their academic outcomes and their wellbeing.

In a nutshell, this research shows that when schools and families work together, the effect on children can be overwhelmingly positive. Students generally do better, they stay in school longer, they are more engaged in their homework, they behave better and have better social skills.

But "parental engagement" is different to what many people may assume it means.

Being involved in your school's P&F group, or volunteering in the tuckshop and classroom are wonderful ways to support your child's school, but parent engagement is about something much richer and deeper.

It's about parents taking an active interest in their child's learning and getting involved in that learning process. It's also about building productive and strong relationships with your child's school.

So, what can you be doing in a practical way to be an "engaged" parent? The good news is you are probably already doing some of them, and if not, they are easy to adopt.

Here are five suggestions, backed by the research:

- 1. Read together.** When your child is young, reading to them boosts their literacy skills but it remains important in the primary school years as well, as it fosters an enjoyment of reading and builds their confidence. But don't stop there! If your teenage child observes the adults in their life reading for pleasure, it encourages a life-long love of books and learning.
- 2. Have lots of conversations with your child!** Talk with them about what they are learning, what they are interested in and what's going on in the world around them. Sharing family stories and reminiscing about family members and family times is also beneficial.
- 3. Have high (but realistic) expectations and aspirations for your child.** Believing in your child and their abilities will help form a child's beliefs about what they can achieve at school and beyond.
- 4. Creating a positive and productive environment for your child to complete their homework.** Create an appropriate space for them to work, keep interactions and conversations about homework positive and ensure any rules about homework match the school's expectations.
- 5. Immerse your child in a cognitively stimulating environment.** This means exposing your child to lots of interesting activities and experiences: visit museums, art galleries, surround them with books and other interesting material at home and expose them to cultural and community activities.

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

The Queensland Independent Schools Parents Network website is jam-packed with lots of useful links and research on parent engagement, including practical tips for how you can connect school learning with life at home.

Search: [Research and articles](#)

Search: [Support your child's learning](#)

Visit www.parentsnetwork.qld.edu.au or sign up to the QIS Parents Network newsletter for regular updates from us at www.parentsnetwork.qld.edu.au/get-involved