

# Learn to Love Learning



**L**earning can be fun—or better yet—enjoyable! When children enjoy learning, the obvious benefit [reward] is better grades. However, they gain so much more—skills they can use later, better behavior, and the desire to want to learn more.

So how can you help your children enjoy learning no matter what their age?

## Start Early

The key is to start early and to continually challenge your children. Children learn more as they question the world around them. Children usually learn more in their first five years of age, than in their next 12 years in school.

This early time provides a great opportunity to teach the value of learning and the joy of discovering new things through many daily activities, such as reading, playing, picking out their own clothes, simple chores like feeding a pet, and even making mistakes.

Young children quickly pick up new skills. They are fascinated with toys that must be assembled. Initially, we may need to help them to put it together. But when they do it on their own, they are so excited!

As their confidence and desire to learn increases, you are helping to lay a good foundation for their school years.

## Give Praise

For school-age children, so much of “learning” is based on grades. Many have heard the all too familiar phrase, “I HATE SCHOOL!”

While we all love to see “A”s on the report card, that is not always reality.

Each child has different strengths and weaknesses; likes and dislikes. Also, children learn in different ways. Some are visual learners—learning better by reading and using pictures and graphs. Auditory learners do better when they can listen and interact in discussions. Tactile learners prefer to learn through hands-on activities—they are the “doers.” And some children use a combination of all learning styles.

No matter how your children learn, focus on doing their best. Sometimes children [just like parents] learn more when they don’t do well. They need to know that this is ok and you are still proud of them. Help them to understand how they can improve the next time.

By showing parental support, children are encouraged to keep trying. Criticism can cause fear in trying something new, which may slow their growth and keep them from reaching their full potential. Your constant praise and reassurance continues to build on their learning progress.

## Be Involved

You can show that learning can be fun through your involvement at school. Volunteer in your child’s classroom. Talk with the teacher and ask how you can help your child. Get involved in a mentoring or tutoring program. Start a book reading club.

Also, after school and work, ask what they learned that day. You may get, “Nothing,” but you know that is not true. A few probing questions will start a conversation. This also will encourage your children to ask you questions in return.

## Ways to Encourage Learning

- Pursue your own hobbies and interests. Do not require that your child follow in your footsteps.
- Encourage your children to have their own interests. Support them as much as your finances will allow.
- Read books. Read alone, or read to your children, including babies. This will help get them hooked on the enjoyment of reading.
- Play “thinking games” such as Scrabble or Checkers.
- Let them have free time. Children need time to explore and discover new things on their own.
- Expose your children to a variety of activities and let them choose what interests them the most.
- Speak to your child in a positive manner about your own school experiences.
- Set regular routines. Children find it easier to learn when a regular schedule is set up for homework, play time, family meals, and bedtime.
- Explain why it’s fun to learn, and how it will benefit your child as they grow up (e.g. learning how to multiply and divide).

**If you or someone you know is having a problem, contact your EAP—help is available!**



For further information, please call your EAP:

**1.800.492.4357**

Callers with TTY equipment, please call:  
**1.800.338.2039**

Online Services: [www.mhnetep.com](http://www.mhnetep.com)

