

The EdBank Insider

A RESOURCE FROM THE PARENT ACADEMY,
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The Parent Academy's Curriculum

Parents are coming together to network, build a community and gain skills to engage with their children at home and become more positively involved at school. September and October will cover some valuable topics:

- Taking care of yourself, so you can take care of your child(ren)
- Positive messaging to your children makes all the difference to their success
- Financial Planning
- How to Talk to Teachers — partnering for success
- Encouraging literacy, reading in your native language, demonstrating your love of reading
- Advocating positively to resolve issues at school

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Message From our Founder

Theresa Pastore

September is often a positive time for our kids as they return to friends and routine. It does require some patience and understanding from parents while school administrators adjust class sizes and programs for the upcoming year.

Send your child to school with encouragement and begin building a strong, collaborative relationship with their teacher.

At the **Parent Academy** we are discussing reducing stress and taking a positive approach to the new school year. Great conversations happening between parents.

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Education Bank
PARENT ACADEMY

YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND BEST TEACHER

Simple ways to get involved in your child's education in Ontario



Every child can succeed when parents and schools work together.
No matter your situation, you can make a difference.

WHY YOUR INVOLVEMENT MATTERS



Better school success

Children do better in school when parents are involved.



Builds confidence

Kids feel proud and believe in themselves.



Stronger relationships

It builds trust between you, your child and the school.



Prepares for the future

Engaged kids are more likely to graduate and achieve their goals.

Every child.
Every opportunity.
Stronger communities.

OVERCOMING COMMON CHALLENGES



Not enough time?

Try small moments—before bed, at mealtime, on-the-go, while travelling.



Worried about money?

There are free programs, meals and supplies available in your community.



Language barrier?

Ask for support. Schools have interpreters and translation services.



Feeling stressed?

Take care of yourself. A healthy parent helps a child thrive.



New to Canada?

Schools and community groups can help you learn the system and feel welcome.

START SMALL – EVERY STEP COUNTS

- ✓ Ask your child about their day.
- ✓ Read together for 10 minutes.
- ✓ Help with homework when you can.
- ✓ Encourage and praise their effort.
- ✓ Stay in touch with the school.



TIP SHEET FOR PARENTS

For families with limited time, money or support—

You are not alone.

Small steps can make a big difference.



10 TIPS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

1

Talk about learning

Ask your child what they are learning. Show interest and listen.



2

Create a routine

Set regular times for homework, reading and sleep.



3

Make learning part of daily life

Cook together, count money, read signs, explore nature—learning is everywhere!



4

Read together

Read books, magazines or stories in any language.



5

Use library & community resources

Libraries, community centres and settlement agencies offer free programs, tutoring and activities.



6

Communicate with the school

Let teachers know how your child is doing. Attend meetings or call the school.



7

Encourage, don't compare

Celebrate your child's effort, not just results. Every child is on their own journey.



8

Support social & emotional well-being

Talk about feelings. Encourage friendships and kindness.



9

Stay connected

Join school events or parent groups. You'll get support and build community.



10

Believe in your child

Your belief in them gives them the confidence to reach their dreams.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

- ✓ Focus on behaviour you want to see more of.
- ✓ Stay positive and patient.
- ✓ Avoid comparing your child to others.
- ✓ Every child is unique and grows at their own pace.
- ✓ Your encouragement today shapes their tomorrow!



FREE SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES IN ONTARIO



Your Child's School

Talk to your child's teacher, school social worker or guidance counsellor. They are there to help.



Community Centres & Agencies

Many offer free homework help, mentoring, settlement support and parenting



Public Libraries

Free books, digital resources, storytime, homework help and learning programs.



Ontario.ca

Find programs, child care, financial support and educational resources.



Find Help Near You

Dial 211 or visit 211Ontario.ca to find free community services in your area.



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PARENT ACADEMY

Building a Strong Partnership with Your Child's Teacher

When parents and teachers work together, children learn, grow and thrive!

You are your child's first teacher. Your voice, questions and involvement make a big difference in their success at school.



WHY IT CAN BE HARD

- ✓ Not knowing what to say or how to start
- ✓ Language or cultural differences
- ✓ Busy work schedules and many responsibilities
- ✓ Past negative experiences with school
- ✓ Feeling nervous or intimidated
- ✓ Transportation or childcare challenges



SMALL STEPS—BIG DIFFERENCE

- ✓ **Reach out:** A short email, phone call, or note is a great start.
- ✓ **Ask questions:** You don't need all the answers—just show you care.
- ✓ **Share what you can:** Let them know about your child's strengths, interests and any challenges.
- ✓ **Listen and learn:** Every conversation helps you understand how to support your child better.
- ✓ **Be a team:** Working together helps your child succeed.



TIPS TO CONNECT WITH CONFIDENCE

1

START SMALL

A simple "Hello" or "How is my child doing?" is enough to begin.



2

USE WHAT FEELS EASY

Connect in the way that works for you: email, phone, text (or through the school office).



3

PREPARE A FEW POINTS

Write down 1–2 questions or things you want to share before the conversation.



4

BE HONEST & OPEN

Share what's happening at home—it helps teachers support your child.



5

ATTEND WHEN YOU CAN

Parent-teacher meetings, school events, or short updates make a big impact.



6

KEEP THE CONNECTION GOING

Thank your child's teacher. Small gestures build strong, lasting relationships.



HELPFUL PHRASES YOU CAN USE

- ✓ "I want to support my child the best I can. Can you help me understand how?"
- ✓ "What can I do at home to help?"
- ✓ "Please let me know if there's anything I should be aware of."
- ✓ "Thank you for everything you do for my child."



REMEMBER

- ✓ You know your child best.
- ✓ Teachers want what's best for your child too.
- ✓ Respect, kindness and communication open doors.
- ✓ Every step you take makes a difference.



♥ *Together, we can help every child succeed!*



Scan for more resources! →



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Helping Children Successfully Transition from Grade to Grade

Moving from one grade to the next is an exciting milestone, but it can also bring uncertainty for children. Each new grade may mean a different teacher, new classmates, more challenging schoolwork, increased responsibilities and changing expectations. Parents and caregivers play an important role in helping children approach these changes with confidence.

One of the best ways parents can help is by **talking openly** about the transition. Ask your child what they are looking forward to and whether anything is worrying them. **Listen carefully** and reassure them that it is normal to need time to adjust. Rather than focusing only on marks, celebrate effort, improvement, curiosity and perseverance.



Parents can also help children develop the routines and independence they will need in their new grade. **Encourage age-appropriate responsibilities** such as organizing a backpack, completing homework, keeping track of assignments and preparing for school the night before. **Reading together**, practising math through everyday activities and maintaining regular sleep routines can also help children feel ready to learn.

As children get older, they may want more independence, but parent involvement is still **important**. Stay connected with teachers, attend school events and parent-teacher meetings, and ask your child about what they are learning. If your child begins struggling academically, socially or emotionally, communicate with the school early so that everyone can work together to provide support.

Most importantly, remind your child that moving to the next grade is about growth, not perfection. Children need to know that **mistakes are part of learning** and that **asking for help is a strength**. When families and schools work together, children are more likely to feel supported, confident and ready to take the next step in their educational journey.

Every New Grade Is a New Opportunity

A parent's encouragement can make a big difference. Stay involved. Keep communicating. Celebrate progress. Help your child believe that they can succeed.



The Debate over Screen Time for young people.

Screens are now a normal part of childhood. Children use tablets, computers, televisions and phones for schoolwork, entertainment and communication. Current research suggests that the question for parents should not simply be “How much screen time is my child getting?” but also “What is my child doing on the screen, and what is the screen replacing?”

A major 2024 systematic review and meta-analysis involving 100 studies and over 176,000 children under six found that the context of screen use matters. Background television and greater program viewing were associated with poorer cognitive outcomes, while using screens together with a parent or caregiver was associated with better cognitive outcomes. Age-inappropriate content was also associated with poorer social and emotional outcomes.

Not All Screen Time Is the Same

Research increasingly distinguishes between passive screen use and purposeful, interactive use. A child spending time watching entertainment videos is having a very different experience from a child using a well-designed literacy program, researching a school project, creating a presentation or learning coding.

Research on children’s language development has similarly found that greater amounts of screen use and background television are associated with weaker language skills, while educational programming and watching or interacting with media with an adult are associated with stronger language outcomes. A 2024 meta-analysis specifically examining adult-child digital media use found a small but statistically significant learning benefit when adults and young children used digital media together.

Screens Should Add to Learning—not Replace It

A important consideration to screen time is what screen time may be displacing. Children still need conversation with adults, reading, imaginative play, physical activity, hands-on exploration, friendships and adequate sleep. Recent research of screen use, learning and concentration also reports associations between heavier digital-device use and concentration difficulties, particularly when children are multitasking with social media. Researchers note much of the evidence is observational, so it should not be interpreted as proof that screens caused the difficulties.

For parents, the message from the research is therefore more balanced than “screens are bad.” Technology can be a valuable educational tool when it is age-appropriate, purposeful and connected to real learning. Parents can strengthen its value by sitting with younger children, asking questions about what they are seeing, connecting digital activities to everyday experiences and encouraging children to create and explore rather than simply consume content.

The goal is balance. A screen can help a child discover the world, but it should not become a substitute for experiencing that world. Reading together, talking, playing, building, creating and spending time with other people remain essential parts of children’s learning and development.



Introducing the Education Bank, *powered by Parents Engaged in Education*



STEM/ROBOTICS PROGRAMS

We offer STEM / Robotics programs from age 4 to 18. Utilizing the First Lego League and First Robotics Programs, we are preparing future leaders.



PARENT ACADEMY

The newly launched Parent Academy, provides parents with the skills and resources to better engage with their children at home, resulting in higher academic achievement for their children.



THE EDUCATION BANK

The Education Bank provides underserved children and youth with free school supplies, books, art sessions, LEGO challenges, family game nights and much more.

Building the future!

For more information, contact us at parentengagementgroup@gmail.com.