

Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

The adage that it takes a village to raise a child may be a cliché but it's not wrong.

In education, it's important that families and teachers work together to help young people succeed.

When I was a teacher, I found that having a connection with parents made my job easier. They knew that I was as interested and invested in their child's success as they were.

These early weeks of school are a good time to ask parents to share with you any information about their children that might help you as a teacher.

Is he a visual or an aural learner? Does she respond well to constructive criticism or need a lighter touch? What are their child's strengths and interests?

All of this information helps develop relationships and build trust between the teacher and parent and the teacher and student.

During this information gathering, it can also be a good time to let parents know how they can help their child.

Studies have shown that children whose parents or caregivers are involved in their school community are more likely to get better grades; finish high school; have fewer behavior problems; and receive attention for learning difficulties (Child Trends, Dec. 1, 2016).

The Learning Community, a nonprofit organization that runs a Web site to provide parenting resources, recommends that parents engage their child after the school day with questions that require more than one-word answers. Some suggested conversation starters are:

- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- What's the biggest difference between this year and last year?
- Can you show me something you learned or



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"At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents."

~Jane D. Hull

did today?

See more conversation starters and homework tips for parents at www.thelearningcommunity.us/resources-by-format/tips-for-parents/your-role-in-school-success.aspx.

A challenge that parents and teachers may face is keeping kids excited about school through 12th grade. According to the 2016 Gallup Student Poll, student enthusiasm decreases as they get closer to graduating.

Specifically, the poll found that fifth-graders are the most engaged with school, while 11th-graders are the least.

Valerie J. Calderon, a senior research consultant at Gallup, wrote in her findings about the survey that there are six ways to keep kids excited about school:

- create hope
- foster talent
- care a lot
- recognize creative teachers and teaching
- have fun
- model engagement

Read her tips in full at https://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/211886/keep-kids-excited-school.aspx?&g_source=link_wwwv9&g_campaign=item_231752&g_medium=copy.

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