

100 Ways to Know More. Do. More.

There are many ways to be involved. Here, you'll find 100 suggestions. You're probably doing some of these things already. The goal is to find a few new ones that you'd be comfortable trying now. Whatever you choose, you'll soon see the effects your efforts have on your children, their schools, and yourself. That's because when parents get involved in their children's education, everyone benefits.

Communicating

1. Give positive feedback and show appreciation for teachers and the principal.
2. Approach interactions with school administration and staff with a positive attitude and an open mind.
3. Listen to others' viewpoints when having a discussion.
4. Share your child's strengths, talents, and interests with teachers.
5. Share expectations and set goals for your child with his or her teacher.
6. Make appointments as needed to discuss your child's progress or concerns.
7. Attend parent-teacher conferences with specific questions you want to ask.
8. Decide with your child's teacher the best way to stay in touch (phone, e-mail, notes, etc.).
9. Understand and reinforce school rules and expectations at home.
10. Participate in informal opportunities to talk with and get to know school administration, teachers, and other staff.
11. Address concerns or questions honestly, openly, and early on.
12. Attend PTA or parent meetings regularly.
13. Read classroom and/or school newsletters.
14. Visit your school's Web page.
15. Know the names of your child's teacher(s), school principal, and school nurse.
16. Read and know your school's handbook.
17. Request that information be available in all languages spoken by school families.
18. Share your family's practices related to culture, values, and parenting with your child's school.
19. Communicate your perceptions of how parents are treated and, when necessary, work with school staff to improve perceptions and school climate.
20. Notify teachers of any significant changes that have taken place in a child's life (such as death of a pet, family move, loss of income, family member's illness, divorce).

Parenting

21. Meet your child's friends and get to know their parents.
22. Take advantage of family programs and resources offered at the school.
23. Work with others to establish a parent resource center at the school.
24. Help create a school toy/book lending library and visit it regularly.
25. Assist in developing parent support programs/groups.
26. Arrange to visit your child's classroom or have lunch with your child at the school.
27. Seek out classes or information on child development, learning styles, discipline, etc.
28. Attend parent education fairs and other special events at school.
29. Start a parent book club to discuss current publications.
30. Help create and/or contribute to a school newsletter on parenting.
31. Promote and volunteer for before- and after-school programs.
32. Build an at-home child I.D. file including items such as medical records, pictures, and fingerprints.
33. Make donations and/or offer to work at clothing drives and food banks to benefit economically-disadvantaged families in the community.
34. Ask teachers or school counselors about how to talk with your children about tough topics.

Student Learning

35. Discuss your child's school day and homework daily.
36. Know your child's academic strengths and weaknesses.
37. Provide a quiet, well-lighted place with basic school supplies for studying/homework.
38. Help your children break down big homework projects into smaller, more manageable steps.
39. Develop a consistent daily routine and time for studying and homework.
40. Provide encouragement and praise for your child's efforts.
41. Share your interests, hobbies, and talents with your children.
42. Provide children with books, magazines, newspapers, and other materials, and encourage regular reading.
43. View selected TV programs together and then discuss them.

44. Make family trips to the library, zoo, museum, or park a fun learning experience.
45. Talk with your child's teacher about creating home learning games and activities.
46. Assist with homework, but avoid doing it for your child.
47. Attend school meetings on learning expectations, assessment, and grading procedures.
48. Help set goals and develop a personalized education plan for your child.
49. Participate in activities that help you understand school technology.
50. Help plan and attend family nights on improving study habits, doing homework, etc.
51. Help develop, visit, or offer services to your school's study/tutor center.
52. Participate in academic fairs as a family.

Volunteering

53. Respond to school surveys on your interests, talents, and skills.
54. Let school staff know your availability to volunteer (days, times, and how often).
55. Coordinate and participate in evening and weekend volunteer activities at school.
56. Assist your child's teacher in the classroom or on field trips when you are able.
57. Work with school staff and teachers to develop volunteer activities you can do from home.
58. Assist school staff and educators in creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for parents.
59. Help provide child care and/or transportation for volunteering parents.
60. Collaborate to develop creative ways to use volunteers at school.
61. Work with others to develop volunteer job descriptions and evaluations.
62. Assist school staff in recruiting parents and community members as volunteers.
63. Attend training and orientation on how to be an effective volunteer.
64. Learn and uphold school discipline, confidentiality, and other policies as a volunteer.
65. Set a time to talk regularly with school staff and educators with whom you are working.
66. Participate in organizing and planning ways to recognize and appreciate volunteers.
67. Respond to school surveys/questionnaires on the effectiveness of volunteer programs.
68. Help develop and distribute a volunteer directory to parents, school staff, and teachers.
69. Volunteer your consulting services in your areas of expertise to school staff or educators.

Partnering with the School

70. Learn of school and district policies and practices that affect children.
71. Voice your support or concerns on any issue that will affect your family.
72. Serve on school task forces that examine such things as school dress codes or bully prevention policies.
73. Participate in meetings to determine special educational needs and services.
74. Attend workshops on problem solving, conflict resolution, and public speaking to develop your advocacy skills.
75. Serve on school advisory councils or committees on curriculum, discipline, and so forth.
76. Become part of a school-based management team with teachers and the principal.
77. Encourage and support children to serve in student leadership positions.
78. Help your school create a student's rights and responsibilities guide for families.
79. Attend PTA, school board, and/or town meetings and speak to issues of concern.
80. Learn candidates' positions and participate in school board elections.
81. Work with teachers and school administrators to develop a parent involvement policy.
82. Write, call, or visit local or state decision makers to support or oppose proposed education legislation.
83. Participate in petition drives or letter-writing campaigns to Congress on legislation affecting public schools and other child-related issues.
84. Give testimony at public hearings in support of or in opposition to proposed education legislation.
85. Vote in local, state, and federal elections for public officials who support education.

Collaborating with the Community

86. Find out about and use information on community resources and organizations.
87. Help your school develop a directory of social and community services.
88. Make local agencies and businesses aware of what's happening at your school.
89. Help coordinate and participate in events that support community groups.
90. Talk with employers about holding parent meetings or parenting workshops on-site.
91. Encourage employers to adopt flexible work schedules and time off so that employees might attend school functions.

92. Ask employers and local businesses to make donations and support school programs.
93. Help organize and/or participate in community health fairs.
94. Recruit community members (seniors, business people) to volunteer at school.
95. Become active in community groups such as YMCA and Boy and Girl Scouts.
96. Serve on local community advisory councils and committees.
97. Work with local authorities and public officials to sponsor community events.
98. Help organize and/or participate in a community "clean up" or "beautification" project.
99. Encourage and help facilitate your child's participation in community service.
100. Be a role model; be active in community service yourself or together with your child.

The 100 Ways are based on National PTA's six National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs, which have been endorsed by more than 100 education, health, and parenting organizations.

© 2001-2004 National PTA