

Stay Involved Beyond Back-to-School Night



Research shows children whose parents advocate for them are more confident and achieve more at school. There is nothing more exciting than to know you're involved with your child's school and education.

The challenge for many parents is figuring out what they can do. I have heard the hearts of many parents who ask, "How can I be involved in my child's school and learning when I work a full-time job and keep a busy schedule to support my family?"

While every parent's involvement is different, being engaged in your child's learning is an essential foundation to their success. Here are ways to get involved beyond back-to-school night at school and home:

Join the PTA

Get involved with your local parent teacher association. Even if you are an on-the-go mom or dad, you will find support from other parents in PTA. You will be part of a dedicated network of families, educators, businesses and community leaders who care and want to provide a high-quality education for all children. That means, even if you aren't able to be at every meeting, you know there are a group of parents who are invested in the success of every child at your school, including yours.

Connect with your child

Listen to your kids. According to the [Harvard Family Research Project](#), respectful two-way communication is important in achieving meaningful home-school dialogue. Let them express their concerns about their day or a homework assignment. Learn about their strengths and weaknesses and what activities they like and don't like. Talk to your child while riding in the car or playing outside. Two-way communication is essential to developing an active and positive relationship. Then if any issues come up at school, your child will feel more comfortable talking to you about it.

Volunteer and be present at school

Be a chaperone at your child's next field trip. Help out with the school band or events like prom, bake sales or family reading nights. Volunteer to speak on Career Day. Talk to your child's teacher about opportunities to help in the classroom or for school events. You don't have to do it all — do what you can. When your child — and their teacher — see you volunteering your time, they know you care.

Get engaged online

If you're not engaged online — think about it as a way to stay in the loop. In [a recent Pew study](#), more than 70% of parents already have an active social media presence and are active on the Internet. You can also attend online webinars and read parent blogs to stay abreast of school, parenting and student issues.

Find helpful learning resources

National PTA's most popular parent resources on our website are the [Parents' Guides to Student Success](#), which provide a road map to what students should be learning in math and English language from grades K-8. Our parents also love our fun reading activities from the [National PTA Family Reading Experience, Powered by Kindle](#), which reinforces core literacy skills.

Think of an after-school strategy

Most parents are not able to pick up their child from school or meet them at home when they get off the school bus. Your child's school may offer an after-school enrichment program — or ask your PTA network about a community program — which can be a safe haven when your child's school day is over.

We hope these tips and resources will help you be involved in your child's school year from back-to-school night through the last day of school. Remember, what you do as a parent truly makes a difference in your child's success. Have an awesome school year!