

SEPTEMBER



# DARE to EXCEL:

Creating home environments that help kids succeed at school

Did you know that most kids spend 80 percent of their waking hours throughout the year at home or in the community? This may seem high, but when weekends, school breaks, and summer are added together, kids spend many hours outside of school walls. How this time is spent affects kids' growth and development, as well as their success at school. This monthly newsletter shares information about what parents can do at home or in the community that will help children succeed at school.

The right column of this newsletter will consistently feature the seven Proven Parenting Practices that research has shown helps children become better learners. This newsletter series will offer your family practical suggestions and tips and cover topics such as:

- Importance of routines.
- Setting limits when using electronic media.
- Benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- Good nutrition.
- Keeping children safe and family information private.
- Civic engagement and service learning.
- Value of enrichment opportunities.
- Life skill development for children.

## PROVEN PARENTING PRACTICES

**Routines at home help kids learn**

**Learning at home helps kids learn at school**

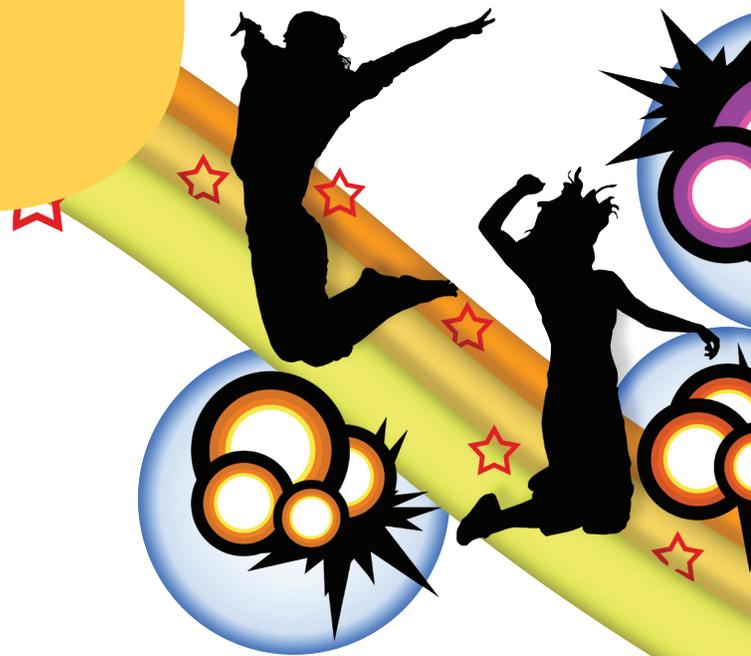
**Setting limits with love helps kids learn at school**

**Good nutrition helps kids learn**

**Physical activity helps kids learn**

**Sleep helps kids learn**

**Community programs help kids learn at school**



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Extension and Outreach

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## Back to School Tips for *F*AMILIES

**TALK** to your kids about their class schedule. Ask them what they like and if they have any questions.

**HELP** your child get ready for school the night before (pick out clothes and pack a school bag, go to bed in time to get enough rest).

**CHECK** with your school to make sure your children have the supplies they need.

**TALK** to your kids about activities they do at school or new friends they've made.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING EMOTIONAL CONTROL

### RESEARCH SHOWS:

- Children can experience overwhelming feelings and not know how to handle them.
- Helping kids learn to control their emotions can improve learning and motivation.
- Controlling emotions helps children improve impulsive behavior and their ability to work well with others.

**Helping children learn how to cope with stress will help them become capable and caring adults.**

### YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Talking with children about their feelings and concerns.
- Allowing children to experience their feelings and listen to them.
- Letting children know that strong, overwhelming feelings are normal and experienced by adults, too.
- Being honest with children.
- Teaching children relaxation exercises to use when they feel tense, such as taking 10 deep breaths.
- Helping children use their imagination to create possible solutions to problems.
- Praising children for accomplishments and their efforts no matter how small.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LIMITS AND HEALTHY GUIDANCE

As children become older, parents need to help them take steps to become independent and live responsibly. Respectful, kind discipline and firm limits help youth to be responsible and to gain self-discipline and inner strength.

### TIPS for Parents to Help Their Children Develop POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

**TALK** to your children about what is expected and why it is expected.

**ALLOW** children to make choices — it helps them develop confidence and self-control.

**RELATE** consequences to behavior, be fair and respectful of children's feelings.

**LEAD** by example — a calm, clear voice shows children a positive way to solve problems.



## RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

**SCIENCE OF PARENTING:** [blog, podcasts and tip sheets](http://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/scienceofparenting) <http://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/scienceofparenting>

Research based information and resources to help parents in their important role of raising children.

**PARENTING YOUNG TEENS:** [fact sheet series](http://extension.iastate.edu/homefamily/parenting/teens.ht) [extension.iastate.edu/homefamily/parenting/teens.ht](http://extension.iastate.edu/homefamily/parenting/teens.ht)

**JUST IN TIME PARENTING:** [free parenting eNewsletters](http://extension.org/parenting) [extension.org/parenting](http://extension.org/parenting)

This newsletter series is based on information in Partnering in Communities: Strong Families, Strong Communities, an ISU Extension led community-based project focused on creating communities that help parents develop knowledge and skills to help their children be successful learners. This project was developed in partnership with Iowa Statewide Parenting Information Resource Center.