

**Education Is.....
by anonymous**

Education is definitely a community effort. When I say community, I mean it takes equal commitment from the teachers, from the student, and from the parents. We all have our roles. If one slips, the other two are there to pick you back up again. It is very similar to the “Checks and Balances” system of our own government.

But do all view it this way? Unfortunately no. Because our roles as teachers, parents, and students are abstractly defined, there are no “guidelines” for checking and balancing. It must come from within, and unfortunately not everyone is programmed to do so.

I have taught school for many, many years. In that amount of time, I have seen trends come and go. I have seen students that were highly motivated, and I have taught students who barely understood what education was about. I have seen students such as this blossom right before my eyes. And that happens when the three way ‘community’ of teachers, parents, and students all work in harmony.

So what can parents do to help their children reach their full potential in school?

1. They must make sure that their child feels loved.

Sounds simple, right? Easy one! (You would think) But often times the brightest of children will not work up to their potential because they feel they don’t matter to anyone. Each and every child was brought into this world by two parents that not only have the responsibility but the OPPORTUNITY to love a being in a way that will make that child feel important and worthy. When a child feels important and worthy.....the child succeeds, and continues to feel important and worthy. Always love your child!

2. Establish boundaries from day one of your child’s life.

I’ve often said, “If you can hang in there and be the major “law enforcer” for the first four years of your child’s life, you will seriously feel like you are on auto pilot as you cruise through your child’s school years. OK, sure you’ve heard over and over again that kids need and crave boundaries. Yes. But that does not mean that they are going to

ask for them. Huh!!! So they expect us as parents to create them.....but not too late. You have to do this early to set the moral standards and values that you hope will guide your child along the path to adulthood. When your child enters kindergarten and hears the teacher saying the same things that you've been teaching during your child's first years of life, imagine the connections made! "My Mommy and Daddy are right!" You win credibility. The child trusts that what the teacher says is right. "She is just like my mommy!" This is when community works. Student trusts teacher / teacher substantiates parents / parents rely upon and trusts teacher. This leads us to the third item on the list...

3. Keep the lines of communications open with your child and with your child's teacher.

When your child hears the teacher confirm what you have already taught, your child comes home and tells you. And that keeps lines of communication open with your child. Establish 'talking time' each night at the dinner table, at bed time, or after homework. Whatever is best for you. But to 'deprogram' after the school day, is an important step for your child. It keeps you informed and it lets your child know that you are interested. It also sends a message to your child that this is important and worthy.....But your parental communication shouldn't stop with your child. Teachers must show responsibility by communicating issues with the parents, and parents with the teachers. This is why parent / teacher conferences are so imperative. Explain to the teacher how your child operates. Help the teacher get to know your child. And listen to what the teacher tells you about your child's behavior at school. Be open to the fact that children may behave differently at school than at home. Don't be close minded and say "My child would never!" Parent / teacher / child conferences are valuable, as there is not a 'middleman' delivering information. The child knows that what his parents know, the teacher also knows and vice versa. The child has a chance to explain things before everyone, as do the parents, and the teacher without misinterpretation from the 'middleman' of hearsay. Parents..... be open to this idea. It will do so very much good for your child.

4. Hold your child accountable.

In truth, everyone is held accountable. Teachers have the role of providing knowledge by various means so that your child will grasp the

information. They must provide methods and purposes and motivational means which will help your child learn. Children must accept the responsibilities and be held accountable for completing assignments and tasks expected of them. Parents must provide their children with means in order to do this. Parents can not over program their children and then expect them to still have the time and energy to be a 'student'

Parents, teachers, and children must work together as a team. Parents must stay involved. This holds teacher and student accountable. Teachers must keep parents and children informed. This enables parents to know when to confront their child with praise, and when to confront their child with motivation. Children must put fourth their full effort enabling parents and teachers to see that children can indeed reach their full potential when they feel loved, important, and worthy.

Parents are the key.....after all.....without you.....where are the children?