

SCHOOL DAYS: PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL, PARENT, CHILD



KEY POINTS

PROGRAM SUMMARY

This program focuses on the concept that children need parents' **care and concern** as much as ever as they start any experiences outside the home. The program is dedicated chiefly to reminding parents that when their children become "beginners" either at day-care, formal pre-school, or school, they require a lot of support from their major caregivers - Mom and/or Dad. Key advice and a series of tips concerning how to offer needed support to youngsters is supplied.

MAJOR MESSAGE

Parents and a child's caregiver or teacher at day-care or school should work as partners. This requires effort and interaction on the part of everyone. Parents should plan and carry out interactions with their child and the school routinely. Parents should think through children's daily routine at day-care or school and consider the many steps they might take to provide critical support to their child as the youngster enters a broader world beyond the home. (All this requires a lot of thoughtful analysis and much dedication.)

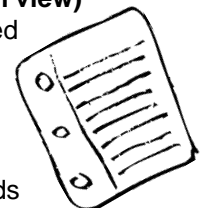
WHILE VIEWING

Select two things from the lists of "ideas and suggestions to watch for." Note how the points are presented.

As time approaches for day-care, pre-school, or 1st grade, parents should inspect the site where the child will spend time, raising such questions as these: Are safety-cautions evident? Do caregivers/teachers seem interested and concerned? Does the group of children in care seem satisfied and well-occupied? And, as the parent interacts with the child daily, is evidence such as bruises; torn clothing; missing belongings; change in personality; dissatisfaction; or sadness ever found? If so - a parent should follow up appropriately with the care-giver or teacher.

Day-care or school should not be relied on to take the place of a loving parent. In the home, the parent(s) should routinely promote the child's readiness for school (such as learning to follow a story ... draw a reasonable representation of a "man" ... cross the street safely ... tie shoes and put on clothes, and so on). The following ideas and suggestions that promote school success are important. The parent should ...

- (1) teach the child his name, address, and phone number
- (2) teach the child the way to school
- (3) pay a visit with the child to the school before it opens
- (4) label clothing with the child's name (**hidden from view**)
- (5) send a note or call the school when help is needed
- (6) show an interest in schoolwork and events
- (7) serve healthy balanced meals
- (8) regularly read to the child
- (9) monitor and regulate TV use
- (10) keep a file of important medical and school records



Parents can also encourage the child's academic development at home by:

- (1) teaching phonics with flash cards
- (2) helping a child write out and follow shopping lists
- (3) helping a child read and write brief notes
- (4) giving books as gifts
- (5) attending school PTA meetings and parent conferences
- (6) talking about school at home

TURN OVER →

REFLECTIONS

Think over the Key Points presented in this program. Select the one that you think is the most important idea of all. Discuss it with a friend or a group. Also, ponder the implication of the quote used to close the program: "Parents are the bones on which children sharpen their teeth." In your experience, is this true? How *so*? And how *not so*?

All children, including those who spend part of each day alone (as “latch-key children” or “children in charge”) need ongoing parental guidance and “ground rules” on basic safety, such as the following:

“What to do when _____ occurs” (i.e. a fire; an accident; the child gets lost; the phone rings and someone says “_____”) (In the blanks, parents should identify several possibilities.)

It is a good idea for the parents to “pretend” one of the above things has happened, and the parent and child then “role-play” what should be done. Doing such “pretending” should be done frequently, changing the pretended “event” each time. Even “pretending” about things that might happen at school is a good idea. **Practice** a variety of phone call situations. **Role-play** how to handle visitors or personal responsibilities when alone. Additionally do the following:

- discuss “rules” and “privileges”
- post a list of the rules
- leave an extra key with a neighbor/friend
- call home often
- praise a child for showing responsibility
- train a child to “think for himself”
- stress the rule “don’t take anything or go with strangers”

Following are some ideas for helping with homework:

- help the child set-up study space
- be calm when offering help
- suggest helpful ways to proceed
- be patient
- don’t hold excessive expectations
- don’t try to mold a child to fit **your** dream
- promote achievement but not extreme performance
- always appreciate efforts

It’s a good idea to form a partnership with a few other parents of children your child’s age and school situation: try to monitor and assist the children through meeting, interacting, and preparing for various possibilities that might occur at home or school.

Being cautious, concerned, supportive, and interactive about the school progress of your young child helps to prepare both of you for the oncoming **challenge** of adolescence - a time when most parents report that their child offers “something new and startling to deal with”!

