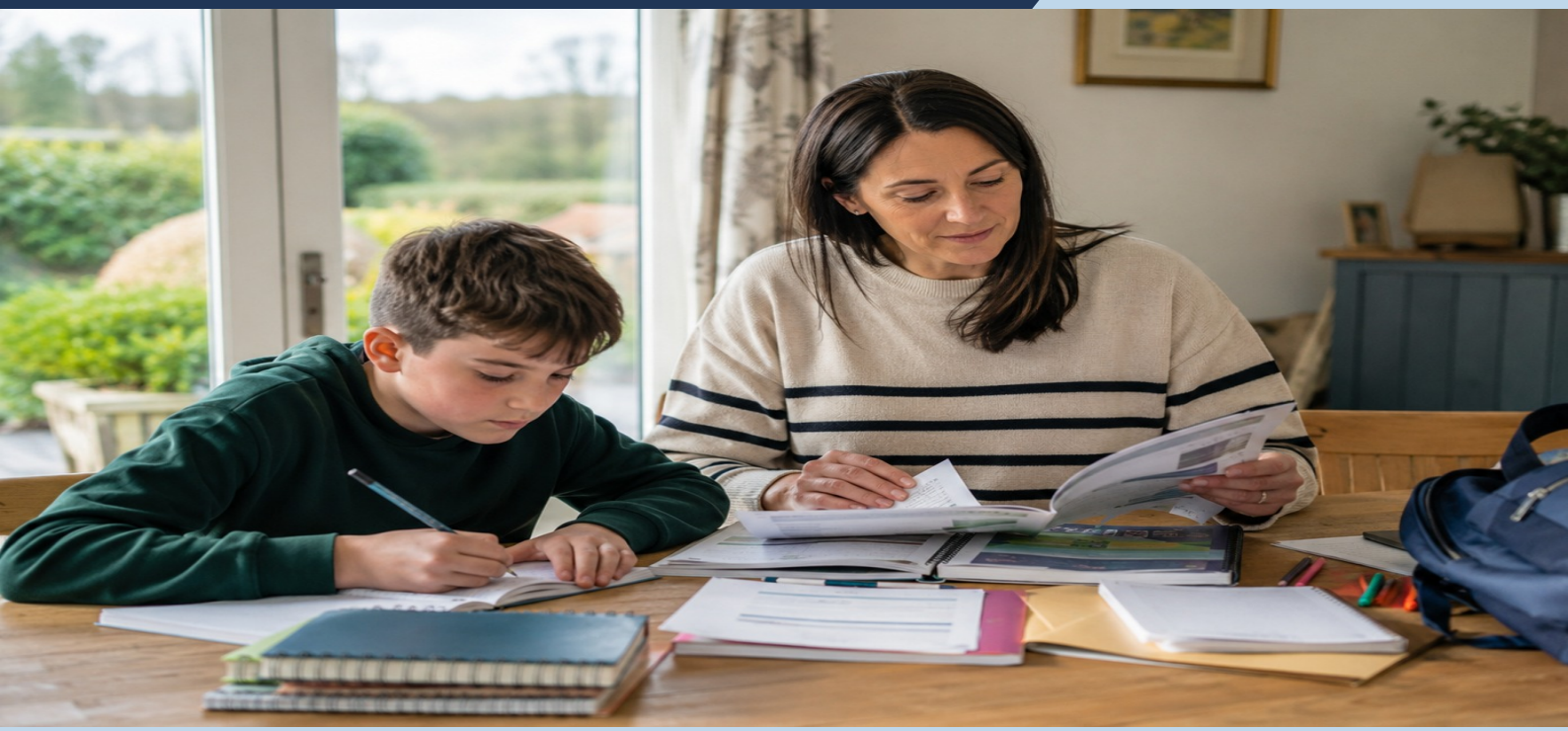
NPC
SUPPORTING PARENTS
SUPPORTING CHILDREN

PRIMARY

Supporting Your Child's Learning at Home



Why is this important?

Children spend only 15 percent of their time in school. From a very young age, long before they start school, your child is already learning from you. From birth they are learning from you. When you smile at your child, they learn to smile. When you talk to them, they learn to make sounds. They learn the feel and shape of things by playing with toys, boxes, teddy bears and everyday objects.

You can help build your child's self esteem through encouragement, praise and by listening to your child's opinions and feelings.

Things that can help

In supporting your child's learning, it is really important that you set high but realistic goals for your child. To do this effectively, you, your child's teacher and your child need to work and communicate well together.

You collectively need to discuss and share your expectations and beliefs about achievable goals and then all work together in achieving these goals. Ongoing communication is also important in evaluating progress and making changes that might be needed in your home or in school to support your child's achievements.

Your child cannot learn if they are tired or hungry. Nutritious meals and plenty of sleep will support them to perform to the best of their ability.

It is natural that your child will seek attention from you as their parent. By showing an interest in their school life, asking questions and commenting on their work, you are giving attention in a very positive way.

By regularly talking to your child about the work they are doing in school, encouraging them to do their best, praising and displaying the work they bring home, you are showing how important school work and learning is.

Home and school working together

It is important that you attend information sessions and parent teacher meetings in your child's school whenever possible. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and find out how you can further support your child's learning at home.

Information sessions can also give you valuable information at school level, helping you understand how the school is operating. Your attendance at school meetings and events also shows your child a clear connection between home life and school life. This can help them feel a sense of belonging and security in their school environment.

Homework

Homework can give you an opportunity to get involved in your child's learning in a very practical way. You can show how you value homework by setting aside a particular time and place for it. Show an interest in what is being done and be available to discuss any problems.

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What can you do at home?

Play	Play is critical for your child's growth and development. Through play your child learns to solve problems, get along with other children and develop motor skills such as reaching, grasping, running and climbing.
Read	Reading aloud to your child is an easy and effective way to encourage reading and build a love of books. It stimulates imagination and supports language, vocabulary, literacy, curiosity and memory.

Reading together

If you do not feel reading is one of your strengths, you can still support your child's reading in important and effective ways. Having books in the house is really helpful. Sitting with your child and looking at a book, discussing the pictures and what might be happening, can develop your relationship with your child and support their love of books.

Experience

You can support your child's learning by sharing experiences with them. Encourage your child to participate in outdoor activities and experiences by taking them to the park, playground, beach, library, musical events and places of interest whenever you can.

Create time with your child by playing with them, reading with them or involving them in activities around the house. This helps build your bond with your child. It can also give you an opportunity to communicate with your child and learn new things about them through open questions such as what, when, where and how.

Each shared experience is an opportunity for your child to learn socially and academically.

Being a good role model

Modelling appropriate behaviour is essential, as your child learns their behaviour from you. If children see their parents expressing gratitude, sharing feelings or being helpful to others, they develop a good understanding of how to communicate with people inside and outside the home.

If children see their parents reading, communicating well with each other and enjoying outside activities, they will experience this as normal and positive.

Encouragement

Your child learns by doing. Encourage your child to try new things. It does not have to be perfect. The experience of trying will help improve their abilities and motivate them to do better. It helps them feel more positive about themselves and improves their self esteem.