

Back-to-School DAYS

Helping Students In Need Of Extra Help

Parents want their kids to be as successful as possible in the classroom. Good grades illustrate a desire to learn and excel, and high marks can make it easier for students to be accepted into top-rated secondary schools later on in their academic careers. But some students still need a little extra help with their classes no matter how hard they work. These children may benefit from tutoring or one-on-one sessions in the classroom.

Learning disabilities vary greatly. Some students have trouble taking tests, while others have difficulty paying attention in the classroom. Because learning disabilities encompass so many different issues, estimates as to the number of children with learning disabilities can be difficult to pinpoint. But according to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, as of the 2009-10 school year, 13 percent of all enrolled children ages three to 21 were classified as having some sort of learning disability. That number has grown from 8 percent in 1976, when records were

first kept.

Whether a student has a previously diagnosed learning disability or seems to need some additional guidance, there are steps parents can take to help such youngsters reach their full academic potential.

* Pay attention to your child's progress. All children learn at a different pace. However, if your child seems to be falling well behind his or her peers, you may need to explore ways to help the child with his or her studies. Spend time doing homework with your child and figure out where his or her strengths and weaknesses lie. This may help you to determine if the child has a legitimate learning disability or if he or she is simply having difficulty with a particular subject.

* Schedule an appointment with the teacher. Your child's teacher likely spends six or more hours per day in the classroom with students and will be able to better recognize if your son or daughter is falling behind. He or she also may have a cursory understanding of some learning disability



warning signs. The teacher also may refer specialized counselors who can screen students for certain conditions. If the teacher has not reached out to you but your child is lagging behind, take a proactive approach and request a meeting.

* Analyze the home environment. Has there been

a traumatic situation or big changes at home? A move, a death in the family, a divorce, and other incidents can affect how a child performs in the classroom. Your child may not have a learning disability, he or she may be experiencing emotional problems that are creating difficulties in and

out of the classroom. Rather than help with schoolwork, he or she may need some emotional support or counseling.

* Develop a tutoring plan. Some parents can tutor their kids on their own. Others prefer a third party to remove the emotional aspect from the tutoring. The school may be able to suggest tutors for afterschool hours. Your child also may be able to spend some time during school hours with specialized tutors. For example, some schools break children into guided reading groups depending on their aptitudes. Children who need more instruction sit with a reading tutor, who helps them at the students' own pace.

* Be supportive. Very often children who have a learning disability or are underperforming in the classroom experience self-

esteem issues. This can impair their confidence in other subjects or even outside of the classroom. As a parent you can show support for your child, praising his or her success rather than pointing out any failings.

* Set reasonable goals. Progress may be slow-going, but no one should get discouraged. Discuss your child's progress with a tutor or teacher and make sure that the goals your child has are attainable so he or she can feel good about academics. Praise and small rewards may provide the inspiration kids need to stick with the program.

Not every student catches on to lessons at the same rate as others. Parents may have to work together with educators to develop personalized tutoring for children who are lagging behind for any number of reasons.

Reading

From Page 8

today's youngsters can appreciate. Reading also is a great way for kids to relax and unwind while simultaneously giving their brains a workout.

While many parents recognize the impact reading can have on their children, it's no secret that getting kids to embrace reading can be difficult. Distractions such as video games, social media and even the great outdoors are all there to draw kids away from reading. But parents who want to instill a love of reading in their children can still take steps to ensure their kids don't miss out on the benefits of a good book.

* Read to your children. Numerous studies have discovered various benefits of reading to children when they are young. The National Center for Education Statistics notes that children whose parents read to them typically become better readers and perform better in school. Reading to children early on is the first step toward fostering a love of reading kids will develop

and continue throughout their lives. Many parents read to their children at night before bedtime, but any time of day will suffice.

* Don't be discouraged if kids are not interested in books. While reading fiction can help develop a youngster's imagination, parents should not be discouraged if kids don't want to read books. Reading the newspaper, magazines and even comic books can help kids develop strong reading skills and an extensive vocabulary and, in the case of comic books, inspire their imaginations. Young sports fans might be more inclined to read the sports page than a novel, so let them do so. Kids are more likely to embrace reading if what they're reading interests them, so encourage kids to read up on those interests, even if that reading does not involve picking up a book.

* Get your youngster his or her own library card. Thanks to the popularity of e-readers, many adults would be hard pressed to locate their local library if asked to do so. But visiting the library is a great way to encourage kids to read, especially if kids have their

own library cards. Kids with their own library cards tend to look at visits to the library as shopping trips where they get to make their own choices about what they're taking home with them. And once kids reach a certain age, they can visit the library on their own.

* Share your own reading experiences with children. Kids look up to their parents and often want to mimic their behavior. So parents can set a good example by reading as well. On trips to the library, check out your own book. While you might not want to discuss every book you read with your children, discuss the books they're reading. Chances are you read many of those same books yourself when you were a child, and discussing books with your child is a great way to improve his or her reading comprehension.

Distractions abound for today's youngsters, who might not embrace reading as readily as they do video games or social networking. But parents can take many steps to instill a love of reading in their kids that will last a lifetime.

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(TECH 241) Manufacturing Technology

Tuesdays 5-8pm

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Black Hills State University offers an **Engineering Technology Associate's Degree** and four certificates at RTEC, Inc., in Yankton. Certificates include: Industrial Leadership & Management, Lean Concepts & Management, Mechanical Computer Aided Drafting, and Advanced Computer Aided Manufacturing.

For More
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