

NEWSLETTER

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HALFWAY THROUGH THE SCHOOL YEAR

January starts a new calendar year but we are halfway through the school year.

It's time for a progress report.

It isn't enough to know that your children like going to school and are getting passing grades in their school work.

Are they learning? Are they working to their potential? How do they do on standardized tests? Are they motivated at school? Do they participate well in class discussions? Are they learning how to work in a team? Do they take initiative? Do they understand team work? Do they know how to look things up both the old way (encyclopedia) and the new (Google)? Do they behave kindly toward others?

Start with the teacher, one part of the vital equilateral triangle of learning--child, teacher, and parent. Discuss these issues with the teacher. If there are areas that need work ask about what you can do at home and what can be done at school.

Observe your child with other children. Notice how they go about figuring out how to do new things at home. How do they approach a new task? How do they solve problems? Are they reading for fun or only what is assigned? Are they kind to their siblings (most of the time!) And their peers?. What is your child passionate about? What is he or she good at doing?

Ask your child about new interests, dreams of the future. Change the old , "What do you want to be when you grow up?" to, "What do you see yourself doing when you are growing up? The questions are similar but the latter gives the child more dreaming room. Initiate family discussions about what's in the news.

Ask yourself what YOU have learned since the school year started. Are you modeling life-long learning for your child?

We need more than passing grades. We need children who can grow up to run this screwy world. The school kids of today are the human capital of the future. They must be ready to compete in a global economy. Foster a love of learning and expect the best from your children. We need them

PS You may not only have to turn off the TV but also schedule all-gadget-free hours like we used to have study halls. EVERYTHING OFF kids, it's learning time!