

Suggestions for Parents: Helping Your Child Take Tests Successfully

All parents want to see their children do well in school and reach their full potential. Decades of research have reinforced what we already know: Parents play a significant role their children's school success. Children who hear their parents talking about the value of education and its important role in one's future life tend to adopt those values themselves and tend to be better school achievers. We also know that parents who read to their children, and/or who set aside time for reading and homework have children who are more successful in school.

One of the realities of education is testing. State law mandates the testing program implemented by the Emery County School District. Testing provides some good information about how students are doing. Standardized tests like the *Iowa Basic Skills Test* help provide information on a global scale relative to how schools or districts are doing as compared to other schools across the State. The *End-of-Level* tests given at the end of each school year provide a more specific measure of how well individual students are mastering the State Core Curriculum. However, it is critical to remember that while such tests are important, they are only one indicator of how children are doing in school. Schools do much more than teach academic skills, they also teach citizenship, fine arts, work habits, social skills, etc.

Your child will be involved in the testing program at his/her school as follows:

_____ Iowa Test of Basic Skills

_____ End-of-Level Tests (Math, Language Arts, Science)

_____ Kindergarten

_____ Pre- test

_____ Post-test

_____ Other:

Testing will be conducted on the following days: _____

Your child's test results will be shared with you once the school receives them.

Additional Information: _____

General Suggestions

The following information has been summarized from a variety of sources and is provided to you on how you can help your child do his/her best in testing situations.

1. Take an interest in the test. However, don't be too outwardly concerned as to raise your child's anxiety level.
2. Explain that tests are not competitions with others, but are "opportunities to show what you've learned".
3. Encourage your child to listen to the directions to make sure he/she understands the instructions.
4. Remind your child that it is okay to ask questions if the directions are not clear.
5. Be positive and express your confidence that your child will handle the test well.
6. Urge your child to do his/her best.
7. Remind your child of the things he/she does well. Remind him/her of past school successes.
8. Show interest in your child's schooling everyday, not just before the test!

Preparing for Test Day

The Night Before

- Help you child get a good night's sleep. Research shows that being well rested improves performance.
- Try not to argue with your child or introduce a new stressful element into his/her life.
- Mention the test to your child to show you're aware and interested.
- Plan ahead so the morning routine goes smoothly.

The Morning of the Test

- Get up early enough to avoid a harried morning.
- Have your child eat a good, nutritious breakfast.
- Make sure he/she is dressed in comfortable clothing.
- Be positive about the test.
- Acknowledge that tests can be hard but you are confident that he/she will do his/her best.
- Acknowledge that he/she may not know the answer to every question.

After the Test

- Talk about your child's feelings about the test.
- Acknowledge their effort for trying.
- Discuss what was easy and what was hard.
- Talk about what your child learned from the test.
- Be sure that your child knows that success on this or any other tests is not a condition of your love!