



Resource 10

# Ideas for Busy Parents

No matter how busy you are, spending quality time with your child cannot be put off. Giving personal time and effort to your child will provide many long-term benefits for both of you.

Each of the following ideas take less than thirty minutes – and it just may be the best half hour you could spend to help your child learn and grow. Go through this list and check the things you are doing now. Go through the list a second time and check the things you can start to do right away.

- Read to your child**—at least twenty minutes a day. Keep lots of books or magazines around. Books and books on tape can be checked out of most libraries. Studies show that children of parents who read to them earn higher grades.
- Help your child organize his/her work area.** Make sure they have pencils, markers, crayons, glue sticks, a dictionary and any other materials they need to complete their assignments in a quiet environment.
- Review homework assignments to make sure it is done.** Talk to his/her teacher right away if the homework seems too hard or too easy for your child.
- Find out what’s going on in school.** Let your child know that you will ask questions everyday about what he or she learned at school. Read the school or classroom newsletter to learn about what is going on in school.
- Play word games or listening games.** Play “Simon Says” with your child to increase vocabulary and memory skills. Ask your child’s teacher or the librarian for other ideas of things to do.
- Set rules about your child’s TV viewing time.** Instead of letting your child watch television for fun and relaxation, have him or her read a good book, play a board game or have free-play time.
- Get to know your child’s teacher.** Write a personal note or introduce yourself in person. Share with the teacher your child’s feelings about school and any special needs or interests that he or she has.
- Talk as a family about everyday happenings.** Whether it’s from the front page of the daily newspaper, or something you saw or read, help your child see their place in the larger world. Listen carefully to your child and he or she will learn how to listen to others.
- Take advantage of time in the car.** Use this time to chat with children about what is going on in your lives (save heavier issues or concerns for family meetings). This is also a good time to share musical interests and listen to books on tape.

Source: The Shell Poll, 1999. [http://www.countonshell.com/shell\\_poll.html](http://www.countonshell.com/shell_poll.html)