

From the Desk of Mr. Todd Beck, High School Principal



Key Messages

The Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS), pronounced "en-skass," is a balanced statewide assessment system that embodies Nebraska's holistic view of students and helps them prepare for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life.

NSCAS Summative-English Language Arts (ELA)

In 2017, the NSCAS Summative-ELA assessment replaced the Nebraska School Accountability (NeSA) tests in reading and writing for grades 3 – 8.

- The combined NSCAS-ELA means fewer exams for students at each grade level
- The NSCAS-ELA is aligned to the Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts, leading to better outcomes for students, schools, and communities

The NSCAS-ELA brings increased rigor, relevance, and expectations for all students.

- Revised ELA standards better prepare students for the next level of learning
- New item types on NSCAS-ELA assess students' higher-order thinking abilities
- Raising the bar on assessments requires substantial movement to align efforts to meet expectations for the future
- Due to the increased rigor, and changes to the assessment system, scores in year two may vary
- At the state level, scores remained the same or improved slightly
- As state standards are raised to meet college and career readiness standards, and instruction reflects those standards, scores are expected to improve and growth is anticipated as the assessment system stabilizes in 2019

NSCAS-ACT

NSCAS-ACT replaced NeSA-Reading, Math, Science, and Writing for all high school juniors in 2017.

- The FREE exam is administered to all juniors
- Taking the comprehensive ACT, including the writing component, means fewer exams for students in the 11th grade
- The Nebraska ACT is aligned to the national ACT standards and meeting expectations on the exam indicates college readiness in our students

NSCAS-ACT brings increased rigor, relevance, and expectations for all students.

- All juniors take the ACT, giving a more comprehensive view of ALL Nebraska students*
- ACT scores remained steady in the initial year of testing even with a larger number of students tested and increased rigor of the exam
- NSCAS-ACT math and science scores were identical to the previous year while NSCAS-ACT ELA dropped slightly
- As state standards are raised to meet national ACT standards, and instruction reflects those standards, scores are expected to improve

* An alternate exam was available for those students who qualified for having significant cognitive disabilities.

NSCAS-ACT provides more post-secondary opportunities for students in Nebraska.

- The ACT presents equal testing opportunities for all students at the junior level
- All juniors may choose to send their scores to the colleges of their choice at no cost to the students
- The ACT paves the way for more college scholarship application opportunities

Inside this issue:

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Inserts included in the hard copy newsletter are the menus, activity calendars and The Parent Institute. Menus and calendars may be found on the CV Home page. Please be sure to check the calendars online as changes may occur!



REMINDER!!!!

- **Mon., Jan. 7—School resumes for students with an early dismissal**
- **Wed., Jan. 9—Early dismissal for Teacher Inservice**
- **Fri., Jan. 25—Wrestling Invite @ Greeley 1:00pm Teacher Inservice**
No school for students





NSCAS Summative-Mathematics

Key Messages

The Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS), pronounced "en-skass," is a balanced, statewide assessment system that embodies Nebraska's holistic view of students and helps them prepare for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life. The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics is a new, computer-adaptive statewide assessment within the NSCAS system.

The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment replaced the Nebraska School Accountability (NeSA) test in math for grades 3 – 8.

- The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics measures student performance against Nebraska's College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics, showing whether students have learned what they were expected to learn

The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment better prepares students for the next level of learning.

- NSCAS Summative-Mathematics brings increased rigor, relevance, and high expectations for all students
- Scores on the NSCAS Summative-Mathematics may seem lower than expected in the initial year of testing due to the increased rigor of the standards as assessed by the test
- There is no comparison to previous summative assessment scores in mathematics as NeSA-Math assessed student performance against a different set of standards
- As district curriculum is adopted to meet Nebraska's College and Career Ready Standards for Mathematics, and instruction reflects those standards, scores are expected to improve

The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment is adaptive and provides in-depth information about what students know in less time.

- The NSCAS Summative-Mathematics assessment adapts dynamically based on each student's ability
- Innovative, interactive question formats engage students and enable them to demonstrate higher order thinking
- The assessment provides deeper information about student knowledge
- In 2019, results will be available shortly after the close of the testing window, enabling educators and parents to address roadblocks to student progress in a timely fashion, ahead of the next school year

At the high school level, the NSCAS Summative-ACT, provided for free to all juniors, will continue to serve as the summative assessment in mathematics.

- The NSCAS Summative-ACT is aligned to the national ACT standards and meeting expectations on the exam indicates college readiness in Nebraska students
- The assessment provides more postsecondary opportunities for students in Nebraska

A note on NSCAS Summative-Science

- The Nebraska State Board of Education approved Nebraska's College and Career Ready Standards for Science in 2017
- The NSCAS Summative-Science assessment will assess the college and career ready standards in the spring of 2021
- Districts have one year to adopt the Nebraska standards or standards deemed equal to or more rigorous, during which time assessments will continue to reflect legacy standards
- Scores may vary during this transition process as instruction shifts to reflect these standards

2018 Statewide NSCAS ACT Performance

	Developing	On Track	ACT Bench- mark		Meets Expectations (On Track + ACT Benchmark)
ELA	50%	13%	37%		50%
Math	50%	20%	31%		50%
Science	46%	26%	28%		54%

2018 Statewide NSCAS (General & Alternate) Performance

	Developing	On Track	CCR Bench- mark		Percent Proficient (On Track + CCR Benchmark)
ELA	49%	35%	16%		51%
Math	49%	41%	10%		51%
Science	32%	50%	17%		68%

*Principal's Desk,
Central Valley Elementary
Mrs. Connie Shafer*

Happy New Year to all of you! I wish you much happiness and health in this coming year. I wish you a year that you will remember with joy in the future.

Help your child begin 2019 on a positive note. As your child/children return to school, have them ease back into familiar routines. They may need gentle reminders to resume habits like setting an alarm before bed, laying out their clothes to wear in the morning, showing you papers from their backpack after school, or getting their book bag ready and placed in a special spot so it can easily be grabbed on the way out in the morning.

Just a reminder, as long as the temperature and the wind chill isn't too drastically cold

students do go outside daily for recess. Please send your child with appropriate outerwear each day so that she/he is able to enjoy playing with friends during time outdoors. Even if it is below 20 degrees in the morning, the weather changes. Students cannot play in the snow unless they have all of their snow gear – coat, hat, mittens, and boots. They will walk during recess break, play on the basketball court, or play on a cleared area if boots are not worn. If there is not a cleared area, a para or teacher will walk in the gym with them for their recess break.

Our theme this year is Kindness Counts.

To take risks in our learning, we all need a peaceful, safe, trusting environment. Students and adults alike must listen to understand and

Continued from Mrs. Connie Shafer, CV Elementry

must respond respectfully. Our students need to be cheerleaders for each other, encouraging each other to “try it”, maybe even “try it” in a new, unexpected way. We learn from our efforts and trials. An area that we all need to focus on is what is called “disrespect”. It is not a blatant disregard for others’ feelings at Central Valley, not at all. Instead, it is more subtle, such as interrupting a speaker, not including others, teasing on the bus with words that are hurtful, etc. We actively work to model respectful behavior and then, in turn, expect it from our students. We teach that words can be emotionally hurtful and can stay with a person for a long time, affecting how they feel about themselves. I hope that you will have a similar conversation with your students at home. It can be difficult for some children to call out the disrespectful behavior or language when it is happening by saying, “That’s not ok”, or “I don’t think that was funny”, but that would be most helpful in stopping unwanted behaviors. Certainly, students need to feel comfortable telling us, as educators and as family members, when they have heard something that made them uncomfortable. Then we can intervene and help, by teaching, all those involved. Sometimes, language may be acceptable at home but not at school. We teach that but would appreciate your support in helping them understand that there are societal norms that dictate appropriate language. When we are all on the same page, it offers our students the consistency that helps them learn and feel safer. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Winter MAPs Testing—January 15-18 and January 21-24

Parents, please talk to your children about the Winter MAPs tests they will soon be taking. Have them get a good night’s sleep and a good breakfast. These tests are taken at the beginning of the year, middle, and end of the year. Watch for reminders in your students take-home folders. Teachers will send reminders in their weekly letters or Class Dojo etc.

MAP Growth is a computer adaptive test—which means every student gets a unique set of test questions based on responses to previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions get harder. If the student answers

incorrectly, the questions get easier. By the end of the test, most students will answer about half the questions correctly, as is common on adaptive tests. The purpose of MAP Growth is to determine what the student knows and is ready to learn next. MAP Growth can track students’ individual growth over time – wherever they are starting from and regardless of the grade they are in. For instance, if a third grader is actually reading like a fifth grader, MAP Growth will be able to identify that. Or, if a fifth grader is doing math like a third grader, MAP Growth will identify that, too. Both things are incredibly important for a teacher to know so that they can plan instruction efficiently.

When students finish their MAP Growth test, they receive a number called a RIT score for each area they are tested in (reading, language usage, math, or science). This score represents a student’s achievement level at any given moment and helps measure their academic growth over time. The RIT scale is a stable scale, like feet and inches, that accurately measures student performance, regardless of age, grades, or grade level. Like marking height on a growth chart, and being able to see how tall your child is at various points in time, you can also see how much they have grown between tests. You can find out more about the RIT scale here.

Stay in touch with teachers

Think of communication with your child’s teacher as an ongoing conversation. Consider these tips.

- **Share the good.** Let the teacher know that your youngster enjoyed working on a project or that you like the class play. Email her, or send a note to school with your child.
- **Work through problems.** If the teacher contacts you with a concern about your youngster, first listen to what she has to say. Respond calmly, and ask what you can do at home to help. Then, follow up with the teacher regularly to see how things are going.

(2018 Resources for Educators, a division of CCH incorporated- Home & School Connection)

Instilling Pride! Inspiring Others!

2nd GRADE

**Happy New Year
from Mrs. Mary Wood
and the 2nd graders!**

The first semester flew by with fun times in our classroom and enormous learning growth. Our first writing assignment for 2019 included goal setting and a discussion around becoming a better person. With that in mind, the students made the following New Year's Resolutions:

- ◆ Colter Goodrich - I will be a kind student every day to everyone.
- ◆ Jesse Klemptner - I will listen to my mom.
- ◆ Autumn Luby - I will do my best to make my Accelerated Reading goal.
- ◆ Alexa Marshall - I will tell the truth.
- ◆ Alec Massing - I will try not to argue.
- ◆ Kaylee Nuss - I will work hard to "Never Give Up!"
- ◆ Claire O'Connor - I will work hard to listen to my teachers.
- ◆ Landen Poss - I will continue to be kind and respectful to everyone.
- ◆ Taylor Rosander - I will think of others before myself.
- ◆ Piper Terzoli- I will encourage others!
- ◆ Callan Vogeler - I will work hard to listen to my mom and not fight with my brother.

No matter what age, we can learn from others. I am grateful to be surrounded by such happy, conscientious students! They are a blessing in my life.



The Central Valley 7th Grade Class is putting on a soup supper.



Come eat some delicious Chili or Chicken Noodle Soup at the CV vs Pleasanton basketball game on Tuesday, January 8 and support the class of 2024!

Cost is \$5.00 for a bowl of soup, a dessert bar and a drink.

We will start serving soup at 5:00pm



Central Valley 10th graders win third Annual Central Valley High School Christmas Tree Decorating Contest on Dec. 17.

Front row, l-r ~ Kyle Nekoliczak, Morgan Behnk, Trevor Cargill, Jackson McIntyre.

Middle row, l-r ~ McKenzie Johnson, Cayton Butcher, Ashlyn Wright, Taryn Barr, Olivia Nelson.

Back row, l-r ~ Meghan Gydesen, Becca Houtby, Rika Takeuchi, Audrey Wood, Ty Nekoliczak, Gale Treat, Lexi Schaffert, Ivan Sanchez, Thomas Bonge, Reilly Cadek, Jackson Wibbels, Gabriel Davis, Dani Wadsworth.

Not pictured: Larista Barner, Emma Crome, Demi Daniels

Helping Children Learn[®]

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School



January 2019

Title I Cooperative
Educational Service Unit 10

Bring out the leader inside your elementary schooler

Children who are leaders at school develop important skills, such as problem-solving, communication and responsibility. These students are often self-confident, creative, helpful and friendly. That makes their classmates want to work with them.

All children have the ability to become leaders. To nurture your child's leadership skills:

- **Point out leaders of all kinds.** Talk about successful group efforts, from winning football seasons to community food drives. Remind your child that someone led those groups. Discuss what makes a good leader.
- **Teach her to look at things** from other people's points of view. Good leaders aren't bossy or mean. They make people want to work together.
- **Offer her leadership opportunities.** Athletic teams, clubs, Scouts and many other activities can provide chances for your child to lead. At home, let your child lead a family meeting or manage a family project.
- **Don't push.** Too much pressure can backfire. If your child seems stressed or unhappy, it's time to lighten up.
- **Set an example.** When you take a leadership role, talk to your child about what you are doing and why.



Source: "Leadership and children," Better Kid Care, PennState Extension, niswc.com/lead.



Be a reading role model for your child

The best way to show your child that reading matters to you is to let him see you reading every day. Be sure to:

- **Make it clear** that you *choose* to read. Pick up books, newspapers and magazines whenever you get the chance.
- **Explain the purpose.** Are you reading to find out information? To double-check something? To learn how to do something? Or just for pure enjoyment?
- **Look up words** you are unsure of in the dictionary. Ask your child if he knows the meanings.
- **Share.** When you come across something that would interest your child, read a small part of it aloud to him. He may be motivated to continue reading the rest to himself.
- **Join him when he reads.** Grab something you'd like to read and enjoy the time together. Look for ways to make it fun—turn off the lights and have everyone read by flashlight, for example.

Improve conversations with observations

Greeting your child in the afternoon with questions about school can shut down the conversation fast. Instead, take time to look at the schoolwork she brings home. Offer several observations about what you see—what you remember liking about the topic, what it reminds you of, etc. Only then, ask, "What did you learn about this today?"

To see symmetry, fold here

Fold a picture of a butterfly in half, and the two sides match up. That means the butterfly is *symmetrical*. The fold line is the *line of symmetry*. Lines of symmetry can be vertical, horizontal—even diagonal.

Go on a symmetry hunt with your child. When he finds an item he thinks is symmetrical, have him:

1. **Take** or draw a picture of it.
2. **Predict** where the line of symmetry will be. (There may be more than one!)
3. **Fold** his picture along the line. If the sides match, he's right!



Offer tips, not answers

Some kids arrive at a hard question in their homework and immediately look to parents for help. Instead of providing answers, help your child learn how to find them herself:

1. **Have her skip** the difficult question and answer all the others that she can. Then she should think again about the one she skipped. It may be clearer now.
2. **Ask**, "Where could you find out about that? Was there a class handout?" Show her how to use resources like the encyclopedia, too.



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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

January 2019

Q&A Is it a good idea to offer money for good grades?

Q: My son gets average grades, but I know he could do better. Should I pay him for top grades?

A: It's natural to want your child to live up to his potential. While researchers have experimented with paying students for performance, the results don't show much long-term benefit. And there are some serious drawbacks to this kind of incentive.



Paying for grades:

- **Deprives your child** of the satisfaction of learning for its own sake. Mastering new skills and learning new things gives kids confidence in themselves and their abilities as students. When you pay your child for grades, you run the risk of decreasing his self-confidence.
- **Ignores effort.** If your child is giving his best effort, neither of you should worry if he earns a B instead of an A. And if he's trying hard and earns a low grade, you know that it's time to consult the teacher about how to help your child.
- **Reduces internal motivation.** A love of learning will always motivate your child. But paying him shifts his focus to the money. And he's more likely to put his hand out every time he's asked to do something.

Instead of offering cash, help your child build his study skills and focus on what he is learning. Encourage him to recognize and be proud of his new abilities. And praise him for working hard and doing his best.

Parent Quiz

Are you encouraging resilience?

Failure is scary for kids—and parents. But learning how to bounce back from a failure is a valuable lesson. Are you teaching your child that failure isn't the end of the world? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you allow** your child to solve problems on her own, even if she may fail?
2. **Do you encourage** her to think about what she can do differently next time, when things don't go right?
3. **Do you admit** your own failures, and talk about how to fix them?
4. **Do you help** your child put setbacks into perspective? "You didn't ace your test, but you earned a higher grade than last time!"
5. **Do you teach** her to win graciously and lose cheerfully?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are showing your child how to rebound from failure. For each no, try that idea.

"With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts."
—Eleanor Roosevelt

The new year is a new chance to achieve goals

If your child set some goals in September, but didn't really follow through, January is the perfect time to start again. To make this the year your child learns how to achieve his goals, encourage him to:

1. **State** his goal. Have your child write it down and post it where he will see it.
2. **Plan** how to meet the goal. What specific steps will he take?
3. **Talk** about the goal with others. This builds commitment. Have your child tell the teacher his goal.
4. **Carry out** his plan, one step at a time. If problems arise, your child can discuss possible solutions with you.

Review the rules together

Sometimes children get in trouble at school because they don't remember the rules. Review the school rules with your child. Talk about how they are needed to keep the school a safe, peaceful and orderly place where kids can learn. Let your child know that you expect her to follow the rules.

Stay flexible when your child solves problems

When you find yourself stuck in traffic, you can sometimes choose another route. Getting to your destination matters more than which road you take.



When your child has a problem to solve, instead of giving him a road map (first do this, then do that), remind him of his destination: "You need to find a way to finish your report even though your classmate has the book you need." He may not select the solution you would. But if he arrives at his destination honestly, let the solution stand.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

Helping Students Learn[®]

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School



January 2019

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Teach your child strategies for improving reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is much more than being able to recognize the words in a passage. It means understanding the meaning of the passage as a whole. In middle school, your child's ability to comprehend and think about what he reads has a significant effect on his academic success.



To strengthen your child's reading comprehension, encourage him to:

- **Read often.** The more your child reads, the easier reading will become for him. And the easier it becomes, the more energy and interest he'll have left over to focus on the meaning of what he reads.
- **Create links to things he already knows.** When your child reads something that reminds him of something he has learned, seen or done, the material has meaning. To reinforce these links, suggest that your child mark the passages with a sticky note saying what they remind him of.
- **Ask thinking questions** before, during and after he reads. For example, he might ask: *What do I hope to learn from this? What kind of personality does the main character have? What do I think will happen? How is this different from what I expected?* As he comes across passages that relate to his questions, he can add more sticky notes with thoughts about his answers.

Source: J. Willis, "Aiding Reading Comprehension With Post-its," Edutopia, niswc.com/stickyread.



Coach your child to school success

By January, most middle schoolers can use some guidance, encouragement and inspiration to keep doing their best in school. Think of yourself as your child's academic coach. To support and motivate her:

- **Talk** about what she is learning. Grades are important, but the real point of education is knowledge. Emphasize the learning process. This includes responsible effort, persistence and improvement.
- **Act** as a resource. When your child studies, be available whenever you can to answer questions and offer suggestions on where to find the information she needs, such as in her textbook.
- **Accept** that there will be times when you can't answer your child's questions. It's OK to say, "I don't know. Are there any hints on the class website?"
- **Understand** that your child has strengths and weaknesses. Support and encourage her in every subject, but don't expect the same results in every class.

Source: K.T. Alvy, Ph.D., *The Positive Parent*, Teachers College Press.

Foster school friendships

Forming friendships with other kids at school can help your child feel more connected to school. The strongest friendships, however, often involve spending time together outside of school. If your child has been eating lunch with the same four boys for the last month, encourage him to ask them to your home to hang out. Or perhaps you could offer to drive them to the movies.



Translate science into life

Science is all around us all the time. To encourage your child to notice, help her translate science terms into middle school experience. In physics, for example:

- **Rest** is the state of the book your child has dropped on the floor—not moving.
- **Inertia** is what's keeping her from moving to pick the book up.
- **Force** is the energy it will take for her to get up and put the book away.



Source: D. and C. Johnson, *Homework Heroes, Grades 6-8*, Kaplan Publishing.

Give your child a blueprint for better paragraphs

Paragraphs are the basic structural elements of writing. Once a student knows how to build paragraphs, writing a paper isn't quite as overwhelming. To construct a strong paragraph, your child should:

1. **Write a topic sentence** that says what the paragraph will be about.
2. **Include details** that support the topic sentence.
3. **Read the paragraph** out loud to see if all the sentences relate to the topic and make sense together.
4. **Proofread** spelling and grammar.

Helping Students Learn[®]

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School



MIDDLE SCHOOL

January 2019

Q&A What can I do to help my child get back on track?

Q: The first half of the school year didn't go very well for my seventh grader. Her grades were lower than we both would have liked. How can I make sure she does better in the second half?

A: Encourage your daughter to look at the new calendar year as a fresh start. To promote positive school habits:

- **Help her set appropriate goals.** You can't expect your child to turn the year around overnight. For goals to be motivating, they should be attainable. For example, if she slacked off on finishing assignments, she can strive to complete them all on time.
- **Insist on a regular homework time.** If your child is freshest right after school, then make that her work time. If she needs a little downtime first, give her an hour before having her crack open the books.
- **Monitor her progress.** Don't wait until your child fails a quiz to discover she's struggling in a class. Talk often with your child about what she's learning, and stay in contact with her teachers.
- **Recognize signs of improvement.** Is your daughter more organized? Is she making schoolwork a priority? Congratulate her. When you do, avoid bringing up her past habits. She already knows she made mistakes; there's no reason to remind her of them.



Snuff out inhalant abuse

According to a national survey, abuse of inhalants is on the rise again after years of decline. Inhalants—including household products like glue, nail polish remover and canned whipped cream—are abused by eighth graders more than any other group. To deter your child from abusing inhalants:

- **Talk about the dangers.** Fewer eighth graders now see inhalant use as very risky. But these drugs can cause serious health problems, including death—even the first time they are used.
- **Make healthy living** a family priority.
- **Switch to non-aerosol products,** and keep paints, solvents and similar items locked up.

Source: L.D. Johnston and others, "Monitoring the Future: Key Findings on Adolescent Drug Use," National Institute on Drug Abuse, nisdw.com/noinhale.

Reward conduct with praise

When your child earns a good grade or makes a great play on the sports field, it's appropriate to praise his accomplishment. But be sure you also praise your child for demonstrating good character. Compliment his kindness and his sense of responsibility. Applaud him for not giving up, even when the going gets tough.



Bolster vocabulary growth

The greater your child's vocabulary, the more she will understand higher-level reading, conversation and thinking. Encourage your child to:

- **Read** something a little above her level every so often.
- **Practice.** New words your child encounters won't stick if she doesn't use them.
- **Speak** with adults. Be careful not to do the talking for her!

Parent Quiz

Are you encouraging careful work?

Careless mistakes are the downfall of many middle school students. Are you emphasizing the importance of doing thorough, accurate work? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you remind** your child to pay attention to details, such as putting his name and the correct date on papers?
2. **Do you encourage** your child to double-check his answers before submitting work?
3. **Do you reinforce** the concept that "neatness counts," both at home and at school?
4. **Do you suggest** that your child include time for editing and proofreading when he plans his time for projects?
5. **Do you review** your child's finished work with him to ensure it is neat and complete?

How well are you doing?

More *yes* answers mean you are helping your child produce work he can be proud of. For each *no*, try that idea.

"It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen."

—John Wooden

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Helping Students Learn[®]

HIGH SCHOOL

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School



January 2019

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Underachieving teen? Avoid these common motivation mistakes

It can be very frustrating to know that your teen is capable of putting more effort into school than he does. But motivating teens can be tricky business. Here are three common traps many parents fall into, and how you can avoid them:



- 1. The need to control.** Some decisions, such as matters of safety, require parental control. But otherwise controlling your teen won't help him take responsibility for his own learning. Give him the supplies and work space he needs and tell him that you will do all you can to support his efforts. Then leave the decision of how to do the work to your teen—and let him live with the consequences.
- 2. The urge to rescue.** If you constantly bail your teen out, he has no incentive to stop problematic behaviors like procrastination. He also learns that you don't think he can do better. Avoid stepping right in, and he'll be more likely to figure solutions out for himself.
- 3. Anger and guilt.** You probably already know this doesn't work. When you get angry, your teen gets angrier. And the homework still doesn't get finished. So if you feel yourself losing your temper, take a break until you can approach things calmly.

Source: D. Heacox, Ed.D., *Up from Underachievement: How Teachers, Students, and Parents Can Work Together to Promote Student Success*, Free Spirit.



Study time is always on the agenda

Even if your teen has no assignments due the next day, there is always something she can do to keep up with or improve her schoolwork. Have her spend her regular homework time on one or more of the following activities:

- **Read something.** Whether it's a classic novel or a news magazine, any reading is worthwhile.
- **Review class notes.** Frequent review will help the material stick in her mind.
- **Create a test,** using her textbook and notes, then take it. Or she could ask you to quiz her.
- **Get started** on a long-term project. It's never too early, and there's less pressure than when the deadline is looming.
- **Practice math problems.** The more she solves, the easier they'll become.
- **Write something.** It could be a story, a poem, a journal entry, a summary of the book she's reading, or a letter to a friend.

Source: E. Kiester, "11 Secret Habits of Straight-A Students Even Post-Grads Will Want to Steal," *Reader's Digest*, niswc.com/studytime.

Try this winning move

Practice is as critical to improving reading skills as it is to strengthening sports skills. If your teen loves sports, reading about his athletic heroes can help him do both. Suggest that he ask the librarian to help him find biographies of the all-stars in his sport.



Make 2019 the year your teen achieves goals

The joy of January is in new beginnings. Help your teen use this time to think about her academic goals and how she can meet them. Share this four-step process:

- 1. Take a look backward.** What goals did she meet last year? What lessons did she learn that will be helpful this year?
- 2. Envision success.** What does academic achievement look like to your teen? The more specific her image is, the better.
- 3. Write the goal down.** This encourages commitment.
- 4. Break the goal down** into smaller steps. Big goals take time. But your teen can start today to build the habits that will put her on the right path.

Rein in risky behavior

A strong desire for new experiences can lead teens into risky behavior. To encourage self-discipline in your teen:

- **Focus on big issues,** like schoolwork, safety and respect for others.
- **Make sure he knows** his limits and the consequences for violating them.
- **Grant more freedom** as your teen shows more responsibility.



Source: D. Romer and others, "Beyond stereotypes of adolescent risk taking: Placing the adolescent brain in developmental context," *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*, niswc.com/risky.

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY

To ask questions
about your baby's
development



CALL TOLL FREE
1.888.806.6287

All children develop at different rates.
Listed below are some guides to see
how your child is developing.

0-1 YEARS

- ✓ Holds head up by four months
- ✓ Picks up objects by six months
- ✓ Responds to sounds by six months
- ✓ Makes some of the sounds made by others by nine months
- ✓ Uses furniture to pull self to standing position by 12 months

1-2 YEARS

- ✓ Holds out arms and legs while being dressed by 18 months
- ✓ Points to objects he/she wants by 18 months
- ✓ Walks without help by 18 months
- ✓ Says two words by 18 months
- ✓ Drinks from a cup by two years
- ✓ Shows one body part (eyes, nose) when asked by two years

2-3 YEARS

- ✓ Speaks in 2-3 word sentences by three years
- ✓ Walks up and down stairs without help by three years
- ✓ Plays with an adult by three years
- ✓ Undresses self by three years
- ✓ Asks some questions by three years
- ✓ Speaks so non-family members understand most words by three years

For your questions or concerns contact your
doctor, your local school district or call

NEBRASKA CHILDFIND
1.888.806.6287