

The secret to your child's academic success

Written by [Marc Fey](#)

Themes covered

[Parenting](#) [Parenting tips](#) [Learning and education](#)

Research tells us that the key to academic achievement is engagement. This means that regardless of intelligence, economic status or other social factors, students who are involved, active participants do better in school than students who are uninterested. Oh yeah, and their parents are engaged, too!

So how do you ensure that your children are engaged?

- **Create a home environment of acceptance, firmness and responsibility.** Parents are the primary factor in their child's academic success, but not for the reason you might think.
- **Make sure your children place first priority on their education – before sports, leisure and other activities.** You can do this by making your home, whether you're a home-schooler or not, a place of informal and formal learning. Be a direct participant by choosing to teach your child personally. This can be as involved as home-schooling or as simple as including them in one of your interests.
- **Adopt a parenting style that contributes to your child's academic success.** We know that authoritative parents provide a balanced environment of acceptance and discipline. This style is most conducive to children's success in life.
- **Learn and know about the needs of your children.** Individuals learn in a variety of manners. Some are very visual, others are very auditory and still others need physical touch and movement to learn best. Get to know your child's learning style and do what you can to make your teaching technique and environment match that style.
- **Select the best educational option for each child.** Today, most communities offer multiple options for educating your children.
 - Home-school allows for flexible schedules and curricula.
 - Many public schools offer a variety of special programs.
 - Private schools are often established around a founding set of ideas.
Find the program that best meets your priorities. Some public school parents fill in the gaps by teaching certain subjects at home, while home-schoolers join co-operatives to satisfy social and activity needs.
- **Surround your child with other achievers.** Peers have the most profound influence on student achievement, often outweighing even parental influence. This explains why selecting the right program for your child is so important.

Marc Fey is director of Christian Worldview Outreach and The Truth Project.

© 2004 Focus on the Family. All rights reserved. International copyright secured. Used by permission.

If you liked this article and would like to go deeper, we have some helpful resources below.