

Why is a Good Education Important

Education is the gateway to a fulfilling life. Education can mean the difference between a low paying job or a higher paying job . Education also allows a person to follow a career path in which he or she finds work that is fulfilling not just a job to earn a paycheck. Education opens doors.

Children receive their education in many ways. In the earliest days, children observe what happens in the family. The parents are usually the first teachers, along with brothers and sisters. The attitude that the family takes towards the important of learning will affect the child for a lifetime. As a parent, take time with your child to explore the world that surrounds him. Start early to read to children. Reading to your child at a young age will help him or her to become a better reader. Early math concepts can be taught by helping your child count blocks as you stack them together. Counting the number of animals or some other object on the page in a book can also be an activity you do together. It is important to make learning fun.

Think of all the things that your child will need to learn before he leaves home for a job or college. Start to teach these skills early in life. Include your child in your work around the house. A young child may start by setting the table, next the child may help get out the ingredients for the meal, next the child may help prepare the food and finally the child may cook a dish by himself. When teaching a child, break a task down into small pieces. Let the child master one part of the project before moving on. Praise your child for a job well done. If you must correct what your child has done, do so gently. You might say something like, “ you are doing a good job but maybe next time you could stir the soup longer”. This example concerned cooking but the same principles apply to cleaning, yard work or gardening, car care, laundry, anything you do around the house. Remember to keep the task appropriate to the child’s age. Seize the opportunity of a child’s curious nature to foster a love of learning.

Education comes in many varieties. We often think only of the formal education that a child receives in school. In everything we do we learn something. As parents take the time to be involved with your child. Set an example that learning is important. If your child asks a question, help the child find the answer by doing research together. This research might be on the web, at the library or trying an experiment at home. When you do not know an answer, tell your child and then together search for that answer. This will show your child that learning is a life long experience.

Instilling a love of learning from an early age will open many doors for your child. In addition, it will help your child stay in school, not use alcohol and other drugs, reduce problem behavior such as violence and early sexual activity.

To help your child achieve his potential in life, have your child set goals. This can start early in life. Some goals will be short term such as completing a homework assignment that will take several days. A more intermediate goal may be to learn to play a musical instrument, or an athletic skill or dance. A long term goal would be graduation from high school. After graduation a goal may be a specific job or further education. By setting goals the child will be more directed in school and other activities. Having a goal such as college can also help a child stay away from alcohol and other drugs. Knowing that a scholarship or acceptance by a particular school could be jeopardized by a drug conviction can help students say no.

Ask your child how he or she would like their life to be when they are older and then help them set goals to achieve these goals.



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Communication Skills — A Must

Good parents are not born being good parents, they work at it. There are many skills you can develop to help you become a good parent. During this coming school year we will be focusing on some of these skills. By practicing some of the skills we will be discussing you can reduce the chances your son or daughter will use cigarettes, alcohol or other drugs, become involved with a gang or suffer from mental health issues. If your child does engage in any of these activities, being an involved parent will help you to recognize the danger signals early and get appropriate help for your child.

The first skill a parent needs is good communications. Communication can be one way such as a radio program or two way such as talking with a friend. You want to have two way communication with your child. In order to have two way communications with your child, you need to talk but also to listen. It is very important for you to listen to what your child says. There are several reasons for this. First, you can not know what is really happening in your child's life if you do not know how he is seeing the circumstances surrounding him. What you see as something trivial, your child may see as a very scary situation. Second, by listening to your child you will know if he understood what you said. A good way to make sure your child understands what you say is to ask questions. If you say that homework must be done before the child can watch television, ask your child when is he permitted to watch television. Re-state what you say in the form of a question. Third, by listening to your child, you are showing your child that you really care about him or her. You value his feelings and thoughts. When your child tells you something, repeat it back to them in your own words. This will make sure that you understood exactly what your child meant. Think how many times you have misinterpreted something someone told you. This can be an even bigger problem between generations.

Many parents will say they do not have time to talk with their children. How many of you are playing taxi to your children? Do you drive them to school, to practice, to shopping? There are many opportunities to have conversations. If the subject makes you uncomfortable, you might bring it up when doing chores together. When you talk while working together, you do not necessarily have to have direct eye contact. The work can also be used as a distraction if the discussion becomes too strained. Remember you can always bring up the topic at another time. Most conversations, such as rules about homework, how to treat other people, the dangers of drugs, problems with bullying etc. will need to be discussed multiple times. Important points need to be reinforced.

One good way to introduce topics is while reading to your child or watching television. Ask your child what other options the character had in the particular situation. Ask how your child would handle the situation. Does your child think this is a good way to deal with what is happening? This will help to develop your child's thinking skills and start the child to think about options and consequences. Use questions that the child must answer with more than one or two words.

Good communication skills take practice. If you feel strained at first talking with your child just keep working at it. You have been doing this since they were born, you just may not have been as conscious of it before.



Prepare for H1N1 Influenza (swine flu) from the NM Dept. of Health

In your community

Know your neighbors

- ◆ Talk with family, friends and neighbors to make sure everyone is prepared.

Know school policies

- ◆ For more information, visit the Public Education Department web site at: www.ped.state.nm.us and follow the H1N1 link.

At work

Be ready for the possibility that you may not be able to go to work:

- ◆ Know your workplace's policies concerning sick leave, absences and telecommuting.
- ◆ Encourage planning. Every business, organization, and agency should have a plan **for making sure** essential work will get done if large numbers of employees are absent over many months.
- ◆ Explore ways to get your work done that reduce personal contact. For example, increase use of e-mails or phone conferences.

At home

Make household and family emergency plans

- ◆ Agree on a point of contact where all family members can check in if you are separated during an emergency.
- ◆ Decide who will take care of children if schools are closed.
- ◆ Plan to limit the number of trips you take to shop or to run errands. Also, remember public transportation routes and times may be limited.
- ◆ Determine how you will care for people in your family who have disabilities if support services are not available.
- ◆ Be prepared to get by for at least a week on what you have at home. Stores may not be open or may limited supplies.

Keep these items in your home

- ◆ Enough food and water per person for a week or more. (Pantry chart on the back of this page)
- ◆ Medications—at least a week's supply of those you take regularly.
- ◆ Items to relieve flu symptoms—medicines such as Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen for fever, cold packs, blankets, extra water, and fruit juice.
- ◆ Items for personal comfort—soap, shampoo, toothpaste, and toilet paper.
- ◆ Activities for yourself and your children.
- ◆ Cash.
- ◆ Pet supplies, medications and food.
- ◆ Cell phone or regular phone with a cord—cordless phones won't work if the power is out.
- ◆ Large trash bags.

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Caring for parents and children

[http://
www.co.eddy.nm.us/
dwiprogram.html](http://www.co.eddy.nm.us/dwiprogram.html)

H1N1 cont.

Protect your health

Prevent the spread of germs

The flu virus is spread from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes or touches things that others use. Do these simple, effective things to help protect yourself and others:

- ◆ Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough into your sleeve.
- ◆ Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- ◆ Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- ◆ Stay home when you're sick or have flu symptoms.
- ◆ Consult with your health care provider about receiving the seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccine.

Home care

- ◆ Learn basic care-giving. Know how to care for someone with a fever, body aches, and lung congestion.
- ◆ Learn to recognize and treat dehydration. Watch for weakness, fainting, dry mouth, dark concentrated urine, low blood pressure or a fast pulse when lying or sitting down. To prevent dehydration, it is very important for a person with the flu to drink a lot of water—up to 12 glasses a day.

For more information on home care, go to:
www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm

More information about H1N1 (swine flu)

New Mexico Department of Health

www.nmhealth.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/