

Firm, Fair & Consistent®

Perris Union High School District

Parents Guiding Students for School Success

Strong values are linked to success at school and in life

Parents work hard to teach their children values, so it's disappointing when kids slip up. But no child can be perfect. Moral development is a long process that involves making mistakes. If your child falters at times, but does well in general, that's normal. Keep your focus on issues such as:



- **Considering others' feelings.** Ask your child questions like, "How do you think Mason feels about what you said?" Discuss your child's effects on others' emotions.
- **Building self-control.** Explain to your child that it's especially important for him to think before he acts when he is upset. Compliment his good decisions. "I know it was hard to stay calm when your sister yelled at you. I'm proud of you!"
- **Taking responsibility for mistakes.** "Thank you for telling me the truth about your homework. I love being able to trust you."
- **Encouraging respect at home and at school.** Give your child specifics about how to be polite. Set an example by saying, "I don't agree with what you said. But I like hearing your opinion."
- **Teaching tolerance.** Talk about the value of people's differences. What if everyone looked the same, acted the same and wanted to do the same things?

Give your child a daily dose of respect

In order to be successful at school, your child needs to



be respectful with classmates, teachers and other adults. What's the best way to teach respect?

Children learn to be respectful when they are treated with respect. It's that simple! So make these efforts a daily habit:

- **Communicate with respect.** Listen attentively to your child and acknowledge her ideas.
- **Use "I statements"** instead of hurtful accusations. Say, "I feel ignored when you don't answer me" instead of, "You always ignore me."
- **Be encouraging** when it comes to your child's schoolwork. Acknowledge effort and focus on the positive.

When you make a rule for your child, remember to tell her *why* it's important.



It's much easier for your child to do the right thing if she understands why she's doing it.

For example, instead of saying, "Don't leave your school papers on the kitchen table," say, "Please put your homework in your backpack. That way, nothing will spill on it—and you won't forget it in the morning."

Source: "Family rules," Raising Children Network, http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/family_rules.html.

Debrief with your child at bedtime

How is your child doing at school? To find out what's on his mind and to keep up with what's going on at school, spend some time with your child just before lights out at bedtime.



And to really connect with him, ask specific questions. Instead of asking, "How was school?" ask, "What was the most interesting thing that happened at school today?" Then listen. It's an easy and effective way to go over the day's events and share thoughts.

Change up the routine

Homework routines keep your child organized and help prevent school-related meltdowns. Still, there's nothing wrong with mixing things up occasionally.



Let your child use one "Routine Pass" each month to change her after-school routine.

She might want to play before buckling down. Or perhaps she'll choose to learn vocabulary words lying on the floor instead of at her desk. As long as she completes her assignments, let her decide!

Make regular attendance a top priority

Strong attendance is as important to your child's school success as the foundation is to a house. Without it, there is nothing to build on. Here are just a few reasons your child must be in school every day:

- **It's the law.** Every school district requires students to attend school daily. The only exceptions are illness and family emergency.
- **Missing school affects everyone's performance.** Absent students have trouble keeping up. Classmates lose instruction time while the teacher tries to help absent students catch up.
- **Peer relations often get started at school.** A child who misses school may miss out on valuable friendships.

Make sure your child knows that you expect her to be in school every day. Schedule trips and appointments for non-school hours whenever possible. Let her see that school is important to your family.



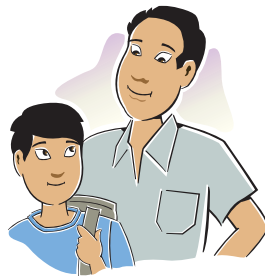
Questions & Answers?

Q: My fourth grader is a good kid, but he sometimes acts up at school. How can I let him know that I expect proper behavior at home and in class?

A: By staying connected to his school and partnering with his teacher. The more he sees you and his teacher "on the same page" as far as his behavior goes, the less tempted he may be to push the boundaries at school.

To demonstrate that you and his teacher are a team:

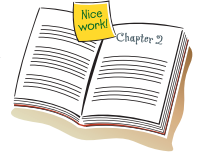
- **Take school-related misbehavior seriously.** If your child gets into trouble at school, there should be consequences at home, too. And make sure they're logical consequences. For instance, if he kept talking during the film in science class, he may lose some screen time at home.
- **Don't get defensive.** If your child's teacher tells you about something he's done wrong at school, don't leap to defend him. Instead, get all the facts and listen carefully to what the teacher is saying. Once you've heard her out, ask questions to clarify the issue. It'll show your child that you respect the teacher—and that he should, too.
- **Follow up.** A few days after a behavior issue crops up, check in with your child's teacher to make sure it's been resolved. Don't just forget about it and hope the problem goes away.
- **Be available.** Let your child's teacher know that you're always willing to discuss discipline issues. Give her your phone number and email address. Encourage her to contact you when necessary.



Find opportunities to be positive

Your child's misbehavior at home can lead to misbehavior at school. To avoid this:

- **Remark on behaviors** you want to encourage. "I like how you're getting yourself ready for school with plenty of time to spare every morning."
- **Pay attention** to what your child does well. "You already started reading the next chapter! You are doing a great job."
- **Offer choices** to avoid arguments. "Would you rather take out the trash or put away the clean dishes?" Then thank him for his work.



Source: "Behavior Problems Guide," Keepkidshealthy.com, www.keepkidshealthy.com/welcome/treatment-guides/behavior.html.

Prepare your child for tough situations

People often associate peer pressure with the teen years. But kids start to feel pressure long before then. To help your child react well:

- **Discuss challenging situations** and role-play ways to handle them.
- **Offer to take the blame.** Your child could say, "No way. My mom would ground me forever!"
- **Support your child.** If she tells you about a mistake she's made at school, help her learn from the experience.

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