

## **Parent Engagement Module 5: Supporting Your Child to Be Successful in School**

### **1.1 Welcome**

Welcome to Supporting Your Child to Be Successful in School.

This is the fifth module in the supporting parent engagement module series.

Welcome and thanks for coming today to hear about what school success means and how to help your child do their best in school.

These modules may be viewed in any order, so it may not be the fifth module for you.

The content of this module focuses on behaviors that help your child get the most out of their school experiences to prepare them for success in the world.

### **1.2 Navigating the Module**

The following information will help you navigate this module:

Use the menu on the left side panel and the navigation bar on the bottom of the screen to control this module.

The tab key can also be used to navigate forward through the module components; shift+tab can be used to move backward.

Use the audio button at the bottom right of the screen to turn the slide's audio narration on and off.

Use the captions button at the bottom of the screen to turn the captions on and off.

Use the transcript button at the bottom left of the screen to turn the transcript on and off.

Transcripts for the complete module can be accessed in the resources menu.

The following keyboard shortcuts have been enabled for ease of use:

- N = Move to the next slide
- P = Move the previous slide
- S = Stop/Pause slide
- R = Resume/Play slide
- C = Turn closed captions on/off
- A = Turn audio narration on/off

- T = Turn narration text transcript on/off

The module will automatically save any progress made if connected to the Internet.

### **1.3 Module Objectives**

Schools in the United States have minimum requirements for students in terms of standards and behaviors, but schools should also have the supports in place to help your child succeed no matter what their abilities are.

This means that if your child is a quick learner, schools should find a way to keep them excited and learning.

Throughout this module we will define what school success looks like and what types of resources and supports are available for parents.

During this module we will do the following:

Review what school success looks like in the United States.

Explore the benefits of schools success and why it is so important to the futures of our children.

Learn how to support and nurture your children in their school success.

Provide and discuss strategies for how to foster a strong school support system at home and in your community.

Reflect and plan our own strategies for our children's success in school. success in school for our children.

### **1.4 School Success: What is it?**

We are going to start with thinking about what school success is.

Success is not only defined by how well kids do in school.

It also includes emotional health and the skills and attitudes that will lead to a lifetime of success.

School success benefits children in their careers and other endeavors as adults.

There are many things that can be done at home to support school success as well.

You may already be employing strategies that your child is using toward their success; hopefully this module will introduce you to a few additional ideas to try.

### **1.5 Make it personal! (1)**

Let's take a few minutes to think about why school success is so important.

As discussed in Module 4, which examined school systems and culture in the United States (U.S.), success in school is a key factor in overall success.

In the U.S., children are in school for many years, which makes school a big piece of a child's developmental foundation.

School is where students learn many of their social skills, leadership skills, and how to behave appropriately inside and outside of school.

We previously asked you to think of your hopes and dreams for your children; can you recall them now?

Do you think success in school is important for your children to meet those hopes and dreams?

What is your idea of success in school?

What are the important pieces your children need to learn in school to be successful in life?

Think of your own life:

- Were there things that helped you find your success?
- Was school successful for you?
- What do you wish you could make different for your children?

### **1.6 Success in Schools**

This short video talks about how school success begins at home.

Select the video to watch.

### **1.7 Slow Down and Discuss**

Let's take a moment now to discuss the information from the video.

### **1.8 Benefits of School Success**

There are many benefits of school success.

Not all of these are directly related to academic success or high grades.

While grades are a good indicator of how a student is doing academically, other things like happiness, social connectedness, leadership skills, and sense of responsibility are all related to school success.

### **1.9 Future Job**

Success in school will can lead to a job or career is not only financially significant but also fulfilling for your child.

Many of us have careers that not only support us financially, but are something we love to do and are good at.

If a child is able to do well in school they may continue on to college or a career path that will land them in a consistent and meaningful job.

### **1.10 Higher Salary**

While money should not be how we determine happiness, it does allow people to have more opportunity in the United States.

Success in schools and preparation for a career will support a path that can lead to a higher paying job and salary.

When people have higher paying jobs, those careers typically include other benefits beyond money.

These benefits include a health insurance plan for the employee and their family, retirement benefits, workers' compensation, and paid time off work.

These are all important pieces to being able to take care of themselves, and their family, if needed.

### **1.11 More Options for Careers**

Many adults end up in a particular job because it was what was available to them when they started in the working world.

While it is sometimes important for young people to have to take jobs they may not like so they can be motivated to work hard to find a new job, school success opens options to a variety of job experiences.

High school students have many opportunities in school.

Some students may choose to try a class where they practice a trade, such as automotive work.

Others may choose to focus on their course work in order to take higher level classes that make getting into a college easier.

Either of these options is a great way for your children to find out what interests them and what they may want to do as a job in the future.

Additionally, either of these options require children to do well in school.

### **1.12 Mental and Physical Health**

Positive mental and physical health and school success go hand in hand.

It is difficult to determine if students who feel less stress do well in school or if doing well in school creates positive mental and physical health.

No matter how we look at it, doing well and enjoying school reduces stress on your children.

School can be hard and stressful for some; it can be hard on a child's health if they are really struggling in school.

If your child is able to use the skills that create success as they go through school, they will feel better physically and will be more mentally prepared and stable.

A stable mental state allows a student to make strong and positive decisions as they grow more independent.

Our goal should always be to keep a child's mental and physical health strong.

The following are just some examples of strong physical health:

- Your child does not get illnesses very often.
- Your child sleeps well at night.
- Your child is growing at a typical rate.

The following are just some examples of strong mental health:

- Your child spends time with family and friends.
- Your child is able to share feelings when they are happy, sad, or angry.

### **1.13 Sense of Responsibility and Commitment**

As children grow, their level of responsibility should grow with them.

What this means is that children who work hard in school have a sense of responsibility for their grades and their schoolwork; this sense of responsibility leads to a commitment to doing well in school.

Working hard doesn't need to mean getting the highest grades, it can mean that your child is putting their best effort into their work, turning assignments in on time, and asking teachers for help when needed.

Parents know their child best and know what working hard means for their child.

Encouraging hard work in school increases the child's success in school and gives the child a sense of responsibility and commitment.

These are important skills as children grow into adulthood.

### **1.14 Better Understanding of How the World Works**

Sometimes children, and even adults, forget why school is important and how much can be learned in school beyond what is learned from books and assignments.

Children learn more than math, reading, and writing in school; they also learn how to work hard on projects, ask for help when needed, try new activities, and talk with others.

Each of these things encourages success and are skills that can be used throughout life.

Working hard on projects teaches a child how to organize tasks and finish things on time.

Asking for help when needed teaches a child that there is always more to learn and that we learn from each other.

Trying new activities pushes a child out of their comfort zone while introducing them to something new.

Maybe the most important thing children learn in school is how to communicate effectively with others.

Children learn how to talk to different people, such as friends, teachers, other parents, and other children their age that they may not know.

Each person a child interacts with is different and many need to be spoken to and treated differently.

All of these experiences give a child a better understanding of how the world works.

Learning how to be successful in school is practice for becoming successful in the real world.

Putting in effort and completing goals leads to success.

### **1.15 Activity (1)**

Let's think about these benefits and how important they are to you.

### **1.16 Indicators of Success**

In order to reap the benefits of success in school, we must discuss the key factors-or indicators-that lead to that success.

Let's discuss them individually.

### **1.17 Attendance is Essential**

School attendance is a must for students for many reasons.

First, children cannot get back the time they miss when not in class.

Many topics are covered in great detail during class time and are harder to learn without instruction.

During classes, children get time to practice what was taught with teacher support; this cannot be recreated when a child is absent.

Second, absences also lead to children feeling disconnected from school and their social routines.

Children appreciate and thrive with consistency; when consistency is taken away, it affects routines and it may take time to start the routine again.

Lastly, and most important to remember, is that school attendance is REQUIRED in U.S. school systems.

Funding for schools is based on attendance.

When children aren't in school, schools don't get money; this leads to decreased funds to run schools and programs.

If a child misses school or is often late parents are notified.

Missing over 10% of the school days (or around 18 days in a year), is considered chronically absent.

Students with absence issues can be taken to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB).

That board can help parents find solutions to attendance problems, but they can also administer fines to parents who cannot get their children to school.

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Because education is required in the United States from first through twelfth grade, there will be lawful consequences if a child chooses not to attend school.

Students should stay home from school when they are truly sick-fever, vomiting, contagious disease, or guided by a doctor to stay home-or in rare cases, for a family emergency or crisis.

Having a headache, being tired, or just not feeling up to it are not excuses to stay home.

Family trips and travel should be limited to weekends and school holidays.

If a family does plan to miss a number of school days (typically more than five), they can ask for an Independent Study Contract which requires teachers to prepare work for the child to do while they are gone.

It is not an ideal way to learn, but can be helpful if a child is going to be missing school for a period of time.

### **1.18 Engaged, Connected, and Supportive Parents**

We have already discussed at length how important it is to be involved in the school life of your children.

The importance of being connected with the school and acting as a partner with the teacher and the staff of the school is essential.

We will remind you of that again here today.

Parents that are connected to and engaged with their child's school-from preschool all the way through high school-are much more likely to have children who find success in school.

It is also essential that you are educationally supportive in the home:

- Encourage reading, homework, and studying.
- Put school ahead of some other important activities in the home.
- Support the school verbally and physically to support the school in their efforts to make children love to learn and thrive emotionally.

Just having a positive attitude and encouraging your child to have a positive attitude about school can make all of the difference.

Cultural Connection/Reflection:



- Sometimes parents have had less than positive experiences in school and they worry their child may have the same problems.
- Children can sense worry and fear from adults; try to let your child develop their own feelings about school from their own experiences.

### **1.19 Executive Functioning Skills**

As previously discussed in Module 3, having strong executive functioning skills is important for school success.

These skills involve planning, organization, attention, and memory.

They help students to organize their thinking and their environment.

Parents can help children with these skills by giving them responsibility early in life, providing multi-step directions and tasks, and expecting them to follow through and complete tasks.

Helping children build these skills is key in school success because these are the skills expected of them in the classroom in completing work, projects, and in working with peers.

These skills also play a large role in social connectedness and how children interact and perform with other children.

These executive functioning skills are key to helping your child meet the hopes and dreams you have for them.

### **1.20 Social-Emotional Skills**

Students with strong and stable social-emotional skills are much more likely to find success in school.

Social-emotional skills relate to how well a child is able to control their emotions.

Children are always feeling things in strong ways.

The key is to help them develop the skills to control them.

It is always okay for a child to express their emotions when they are feeling them, but it is also important to teach them how to handle them in socially expected ways.

Strong feelings such as anger, sadness, and excitement are all feelings children should be able to express, but also control.

They need to have the skills to regulate themselves when they feel these strong emotions.

Children need to be taught how to do this; it is not always something they are born with.

Many schools today have programs that help children learn these skills, but they are skills that should be taught from an early age.

Helping children talk through their emotions and to feel supported when they do have strong emotional concerns is part of how they learn.

As adults we know that we cannot react in large emotional ways when things don't go our way and we need to teach our children that as well.

### **1.21 Reading and Literacy**

Reading and literacy is key factor in school success.

Children that know how to read proficiently are much more likely to be on grade level and have overall success throughout their education and in life.

Reading is not only essential to be successful, but reading a variety of books can also give children experiences they might not be able to have in their regular lives.

Take reading a book on the Egyptian pyramids; it isn't likely something that a child will ever get to experience in their lives in person, but through reading and literacy, they are able to learn and see the wonder and beauty of these amazing monuments.

Students need to read on their own and with others often and widely.

They can read anything they want!

Choosing books that are interesting and meaningful to them is key in making sure they learn to LOVE to read and don't see it as a chore or "homework."

Books should not be too difficult for students, especially when they are reading at home.

Just reading anything is building their reading life and teaching them that reading is not only an important skill but one that can open up unknown worlds to them.

Studies believe that readers who read independently and voluntarily, not being required to by homework or teacher classwork, are MUCH more likely to find success in school (Cullinan, B. "Independent reading and school achievement." School Library Media Research 3 [2000]: 1-24).

This holds true from a young toddler age all the way through high school.

Students should be reading things that are interesting to them often and a lot!

Your job as parents is to support this love of reading!

We'll talk more about how to do this in your home on future slides.

### **1.22 Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence**

Self-esteem and self-confidence also relate back to topics covered in other modules.

When students are confident in who they are and have positive views of themselves, then they are likely to find more success in school and beyond.

Building self-confidence and self-esteem can be directly related to executive functioning skills and strong social-emotional skills.

It can also be related to how students interact with peers, how they feel accepted by peers, and if they see themselves as connected with loving and caring adults who like them.

We build self-esteem by being positive with children, setting expectations that are within their emotional and developmental capacity, and taking opportunities to teach when we find something they struggle with.

When a child has a positive attitude about who they are, they are more willing to push themselves, to take risks, and are typically more mentally and physically healthy.

Cultural Connection: Culturally, we sometimes think that being positive, loving, and "coddling" or "babying" of children makes them weak or not tough enough.

Many of us might have been raised in homes where building someone up in a positive way was not well-modeled.

Some may also feel that always being positive and encouraging to kids doesn't teach them about the real world and the challenges and disappointments that may be coming their way.

However, **study after study shows that negative discipline, negative talk, and negative interactions with children do not benefit them in any way.**

Children are born with a predisposition to please the people who care for them (Child Mind Institute), this includes parents, teachers, coaches, and older siblings.

When a child experiences a negative interaction or negative discipline, it often ignites the flight or fight response in their brain and causes their thinking brain to shut down.

When the thinking brain is shut down they cannot learn, and when they cannot learn, then they cannot learn to change their behavior.

We don't want children to associate fear as being as a result of poor decisions; we want them to learn that poor decisions lead to consequences, and they need to LEARN to change their behavior so that those consequences don't occur again.

With a negative or punitive response, children's brains will shut down from learning and only go into response mode.

That is why positive and encouraging teaching opportunities are best.

This will build up their self-esteem about who they are and will help them build the self-confidence they need to try new things, take risks, and feel supported.

### **1.23 Accessing Available Resources**

A final, and very important indicator of school success has to do with access.

It is important that families and children are able to find, access, and utilize the many resources available to them.

We've discussed this in other modules about school connectedness and support.

These are things like in-school interventions, after school programs, free and reduced lunch programs, the food bank program, free tutoring at the local library, and bus pass distribution.

There are so many programs available, but many times schools and communities don't always know who needs them.

Do not be afraid to ask for these resources.

It will teach your child to not be afraid to ask for help and resources when they need them in school.

Many times, teachers will meet with students at lunch to help with a test they did not do well on, or the career center will offer after-school workshops on how to complete scholarship or financial aid applications.

There are school counselors on almost all school campuses now (elementary through high school) and their job is to help students and families find resources to help with academic support, social-emotional support, and family support.

Model to your child that utilizing the resources available is okay and encouraged.

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If you don't know how to ask for help, how can you ever find the success you are striving for?

Students who have school success know who to go to and where to find help when needed.

This is essential as they move on to their future goals.

Cultural Connection: Let's not forget that it is OKAY to ask for help from people other than your family and close friends.

This country is a place where helping people is how gratitude and support for citizens is shown.

Those resources are in place because many people want what is best for your children and your family.

We recognize that taking "handouts" or "asking for help" can be different than how you want to be viewed.

The world today has put stereotypes and prejudices against some people for asking for help.

This is part of what we call "privilege" in this country.

Many people that have privilege have no issue asking for help and support and see it as their right to get that support.

You have those same rights, and you have the same needs.

Do not be ashamed to ask for it, and do not be concerned with how people will view you or your family.

Know that you are doing what is best and right for your children and your family, and that you are building a better life for the children you are raising.

No one can judge you for that and no one can take away your right to the pursuit of liberty and happiness.

### **1.24 Cultural Connections Activity**

There were many references in the Indicators of Success section that might be different than how you think or feel or how you were raised.

Some of those differences might be related to the following:

Extended travel at holidays (winter break, spring break, summer break)

Negative school views based on your own personal experiences with school

Positive teaching versus negative discipline and punishment-building self-esteem

Accessing and utilizing resources as a right and privilege

Let's take a few minutes to discuss these or other indicators that stood out to you.

### **1.25 Activity (2)**

Several of the indicators of success that were discussed in this section were skills and behaviors that begin with children.

As parents, you experience children wanting (or not wanting) to do certain things and practicing (or not practicing) skills you know they are able to do.

Let's come up with some of the situations that you might experience.

### **1.26 Supporting and Nurturing Success Indicators**

We have gone into some detail about what helps a child be successful in school.

And through the activity, you may have identified some situations where your child struggles to be motivated to do well in school or practice the skills needed to succeed.

In this next section we are going to look at ways to encourage and support the behaviors and skills needed to be successful.

As we go through these next slides, think about whether your child would be able to do these now or if they would need some help from you as a parent or from a teacher at school.

### **1.27 Attendance and Transportation**

As we said earlier, attendance is key to your child's success.

Your child needs to be at school on time every day.

This is easier when a child is younger because parents help dress, feed, and prepare their child for the day.

All of the steps you take as a parent to get your child ready for school set an example and create a routine for your child. This helps children as they grow older and become more in control of getting to school each day on time.

There are a few key pieces to making sure attendance is a priority for your family:

- **Plan ahead.**

Start planning before school even starts.

Think ahead and use your resources to make a daily plan on what time to drop off and pick up your child from school.

Putting in the time before the first day of school can make things much easier for you and your child throughout the school year.

- **Find available options.**

Does the school district offer free or low-cost bus transportation from or near your home?

Many districts have transportation options and if you already qualify for the free and reduced lunch program, you can often have your transportation fees waived as well.

Bus service is a wonderful resource because it is reliable and on time.

A downfall to bus transportation is that pickups tend to be early and drop-offs late, so parents would need to determine if this option works with their family's schedule.

### **1.28 Attendance and Transportation (Continued)**

Know the school's schedules.

There are many different school schedules.

Not only is there the time that school starts and ends, but there are bus schedules and before or after school program schedules.

If your child takes the bus or participates in programs at school, it is essential to know all of the schedules.

Some of these even vary by week or by certain days of the week.

Check to see what days, if any, have a late start or early pick up time; many schools follow a schedule that varies.

Check which days are holidays or in-service days where children do not go to school.

Check when there are short or minimum days (e.g., conference weeks, finals week, etc.).

Things can get confusing with so many schedules.

A lot of information about schedules comes from the school through newsletters.

These are often sent through email and through mass calls to parents on their cell phones.

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Keep a copy of these schedules and highlight the days that might be different than a typical schedule, that way you know when you need to plan for something different.

Coordinate and organize.

Coordinate with neighbors and friends to carpool.

Typically, neighbor children are all going to the same school as your child, so you can help each other to get all the children to and from school.

Don't be afraid to ask for help and to use your resources; in some cases, you may be helping another parent too.

If you don't have a car, but can offer some childcare after or before school, maybe a neighbor will be willing to drive your child as a type of trade for childcare help with their child.

You will be surprised what people are willing to do to help another parent.

Remember, all parents are going through the same struggles with getting children to school.

Work together and make a plan that is helpful for everyone.

Have a back-up plan.

We can never anticipate what is going to happen.

Sometimes, a car breaks down or you have to work later than normal or someone is sick.

Have a plan for your child if this comes up; having your child stay home from school for the day should not be the plan. Identify possible back-up plans before school starts so you have an idea of how you might handle the unexpected:

- Is the school library open before or after school?
- Can you drive them part of the way to school and they can walk the rest?
- Do you have a friend or family member that can drive in rare cases?
- Is there a bus pass that you can use in some instances?

### **1.29 Connect with teachers and staff!**

Connecting with teachers and staff at school is a great way to help your child be successful in school.

For a parent, it may seem intimidating to talk to school workers of any kind.



Just remember that the teachers and staff want to get to know the families of the children in their school.

Select each textbox to learn more.

### **1.30 Connect with teachers and staff! (1)**

If you aren't comfortable speaking in English, find a bilingual staff member who can help you to connect.

Oftentimes, someone in the office, a teacher, or a custodian can help you with translation.

Don't allow a language barrier to keep you from performing this important action for your child's success.

Remember, the school wants your child to be successful and they want you to reach out and connect.

### **1.31 Connect with teachers and staff! (2)**

Introduce yourself to the teachers.

This can be done on the first day of school and again at any school event or anytime you are on campus.

### **1.32 Connect with teachers and staff! (3)**

Communication is very important.

Teachers should know who you are and how to get in touch with you.

Teachers will often ask for phone numbers and email addresses at the beginning of the school year.

It is important for you to give this information to them.

If you don't use email, let them know.

Teachers have a heavy workload and making communication easy for them makes it more likely you'll get the information you need.

If phone numbers change, the office and teacher need to know.

### **1.33 Connect with teachers and staff! (4)**

Active participation is important.

Participate in classroom activities or volunteer for other activities or events whenever possible and attend performances and meetings.

When teachers and staff see parents in person, they are able to reach out with concerns or successes.

### **1.34 Connect with teachers and staff! (5)**

Be known by the teachers at school.

When parents are involved at school it sends a message to the school that school is important to the family.

### **1.35 Teacher and School Websites**

Another way to stay connected and aware of what is going on at school is to check the school website.

Every school has a website that includes a calendar, important upcoming dates, contact information for staff and teachers, and other resources the school may provide.

Select the picture to see a sample of what a school website might look like.

Many teachers have webpages that can be accessed from the school webpage.

Teacher webpages sometimes share classroom events, homework assignments, or information about larger projects.

While school and classroom information usually comes home with the child, things can sometimes get lost in the child's backpack, so the website is a good place to check for more information.

### **1.36 Student Information Software Systems**

A student information system, sometimes called Parent Portal or Parent Connect, is a website or phone app that gives parents access a lot of information on their child.

Parents can see if their child did not attend a class period, what their current grades are, and if there are missing assignments or test scores.

This is also the place to check the amount of money left on a lunch card.

This system is translated into Spanish, if needed.

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To access this tool, parents need to obtain a login name and password from the school office and set up an account on the system.

Many schools have a staff person to help parents access this program.

Take advantage of the help the school is offering.

Just your child knowing you are connected and monitoring their schoolwork will help them be more accountable for what they do at school.

These programs are designed specifically to keep parents connected to the school.

Children need someone to monitor schoolwork.

Programs like these allow parents to monitor work, which is a key component to allowing more independence for a child and helps grow their responsibility.

Being connected and keeping up with a child's schoolwork is essential in middle and high school and can sometimes be the difference between a child graduating or not graduating.

### **1.37 Student Information Software System Example**

Parent portals may be new to many parents who have children in school.

Select the picture here to zoom into a sample of what you might see in a parent portal.

This picture shows a child's assignments and tests.

You can see the menu on the left side of the picture that has other menu options typically available on parent portals.

### **1.38 After-School Care**

Finding an after-school care program can be a great strategy for school success.

After school programs give children a consistent place to go each day before or after school.

Parents can be comfortable knowing their child is safe and being given some structured activities to do.

Often these programs have varied costs based on a family's income and some are even free (based on the types of programs that are funding them).

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Examples of these programs are the Boys and Girls Club, the YMCA, district supported after school programs, or even local organizations like a karate studio or gymnastics gym will sometimes transport children to their facilities for after school care.

Many parents appreciate the after-school support because the programs will often help students with homework while parents are still at work.

This gives parents a break from the stress of homework and students are able to be with their peers while completing work in case they need some extra help.

After school programs are a great resource for families and it is worth looking into them to determine the cost, time, and commitment required.

### **1.39 Get organized!**

Being organized is a strategy that parents find most helpful.

Having a system of cleaning out backpacks and reviewing papers at least once a week allows parents to see what their child is doing and helps a child be more accountable.

Teachers and schools send home important communication weekly, such as field trip forms, permission slips, or invitations to award assemblies.

Calendars keeps everyone organized and give children the opportunity to attend school events like their peers.

Knowing when important events are gives your child a sense of belonging to the school community.

Calendars can be on a wall at home or on a phone.

Many schools communicate information through email and/or a online flyer program.

Schools expect parents to have a usable and working email address that is checked regularly.

A lot of information is sent through email, including newsletters or opportunities for out-of-school activities.

When it comes to home-to-school communication, there are a lot of papers!

Some schools are trying to use less paper which is why it is important to have a working email address.

As important papers, appointments, or returned assignments and tests come home, things need to be reviewed, saved, or returned to school.

Creating a review plan and having an area at home to put these important papers helps keep parents up to date on school activities.

### **1.40 Reading/Literacy Rich Home**

Many studies today say reading is a key factor in school success.

Supporting reading at home is simple.

Reading is a regular activity in the home that everyone can participate in.

Having books, magazines, and newspapers around the home tells children reading is important to everyone.

Not everyone likes to read books, but there is usually something people do read: magazines, newspapers, or even advertisements.

When you read you show your child that there is value in reading.

Children in preschool through high school should be reading every day, whether through homework, through their own personal interests, or for personal growth.

Reading is an essential piece to being successful in school and support at home makes a difference.

Many libraries and schools have book giveaways and some communities have special areas in the library that have mini libraries where people leave books for others to keep.

Library cards are easy to get and only require a photo identification in most cities.

Children can get their own library card so they can find great books for no cost.

Modeling reading is a great way to show how important reading is, but reading with a child is even more powerful.

This can be done by listening to a child read or finding a book that can be read to a child.

It can be a book with just pictures and parents can make up their own story.

Reading is good practice for everyone.

As we continue to discuss success in school, it is essential that reading be a key part of building that success.

Without reading skills, students are unable to progress as needed in school.

As the video states, even if a child does not move on to college or post high school schooling, having access to books and having a love of reading contributes greatly toward success.

### **1.41 Bilingual Bonus!**

There are many beneficial reasons for children to keep their home language.

Being bilingual provides an advantage for children as they go through school and even beyond.

We discussed the importance of reading in general; reading in Spanish is equally important.

When parents read books in Spanish to their child, it supports the child in keeping their native language.

Many books have both Spanish and English translations.

Finding these types of books allows the child to practice their Spanish while the parent practices their English.

### **1.42 Bilingual Brain Benefits**

Many studies have been done on the benefits of being bilingual. Studies of the brain show that those who can speak two languages fluently have stronger overall executive functioning skills including attention, memory and cognition.

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According to a study on brain size, those who are bilingual have brain size growth allowing them to have better emotional control, stronger reading skills, and better overall school performance.

These studies continue to highlight the importance of children retaining their home language as they learn English in the American school system. For many years, people claimed these facts to be untrue. But in the past 20 years research has completely debunked the previous thinking. Because of this new research, American schools have seen a huge growth in dual-immersion and two-way immersion programs. This research is also the foundation for the passing of 2016 Prop 58 which demands bilingual education be available for children in California schools. More on Prop 58, as we continue.

Select the video button to view the YouTube video-Advantages of Multilingual Kids.

Source: <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/47054/whats-going-on-inside-the-brain-of-a-bilingual-child>

### **1.43 Proposition 58/Bilingualism in CA**

Beginning in July of 2017, if there are parents of 20 students in one grade level or 30 students school-wide who request a multilingual/biliteracy program, it will trigger the exploration and implementation, to the extent possible, of a biliteracy program at the site.

The passage of Prop 58 in 2016 undid the hindering effects of the "one size fits all" bilingual movement passed in 1998. Allows for schools and school districts to include bilingual programming in their schools and allows state funding to be used for it.

### **1.44 Proposition 58/Bilingualism in CA continued**

Parents must gather and UNITE in order to push schools and districts to look at the need of bilingual programming in their school. The expectation is at least 20 students in one grade level, or 30 students in one school. Once parents request this with the parameters listed, a district more explore the idea of adding bilingual program to the school. It is not REQUIRED for a school to implement this programming, but parents can be vocal and active in their desire to see this type of programming for their children. Parents should be vocal and active at all levels of administration - school, district and county levels.

Included is an important information sheet from California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) that will help guide and direct parents in this process.

For more information on Prop 58 from the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE), select the information button.

### **1.45 Cultural Connection – Family Engagement**

Family engagement is becoming increasingly more important for schools to encourage.

Studies continue to show that families that are involved with school have students that are more successful in school overall. This is why a lot of time and money is currently being spent on being sure families, especially those from less represented groups of people, have a voice and an active role in schools.

More than ever, parents are being asked about their opinions, thoughts, and needs.

Many different groups are asking for parents to be involved as they decide on what is taught in the classroom and build things such as school budgets and safety.

There is a desire and a need for the parent voice, and the voice of a migrant parent is incredibly valuable.

Schools work hard to include families of all backgrounds and they have bilingual staff available to help translate.

For example, if a teacher is not bilingual, they are required to find another staff member to assist parents in communicating with them.

Schools must also make every effort to include families and students in parent-teacher conferences.

Schools are working hard to help bridge the parent and school connection.

Parents should make their needs heard to help schools become more engaged with families; it will greatly benefit the children.

#### **1.46 Sharing Strategies**

The last section of this module focuses on strategies.

Many of the things we have discussed this far are also strategies for finding success in school for children.

Here are a few more tools to consider.

#### **1.47 Growth Mindset and Mindfulness**

The concept of growth mindset is covered in detail in Module 3; it is all about how we face challenges and setbacks.

Having a growth mindset means that you believe you have control over how and what you learn and that what you learn and how smart you are can be shaped by what you do.

Growth mindset concepts are becoming commonly used by teachers; promoting them means teaching children to have a positive attitude towards learning and school.

Growth mindset encourages children to continue to work hard even when they fail or when things are really hard.

Growth mindset can be encouraged in the home by doing the following:

Help your child understand that learning doesn't come easily to everyone, and that it is not about the grade on the test, but rather the effort made to improve and be better.



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Understand the work your child needs to do and being supportive of it.

Teach your child that it is okay to not get the right answer all of the time, but to work hard in learning.

Using mindfulness techniques can further help children practice growth mindset.

Mindfulness is a new term in education, but one that is commonly used by teachers.

Mindfulness is a practice that helps children train their attention and be more aware of what is happening around them.

Mindful practice can lead to greater well-being and mental health, better concentration and cognition, enhanced social and emotional learning, and improved behavior.

Some mindfulness strategies that teachers might use with children include deep breathing, practiced focusing, and guided visualization.

Teachers might also encourage children to be thoughtful of when and where they do their work and to pause and think before answering a question.

Using these strategies at home will support your child to development mindfulness.

### **1.48 Routines at Home**

We've discussed the importance of having an environment of learning support at home.

Along with this comes the idea of routines and consistency.

Children should know the expectations for morning routine each day they go to school.

For example: get up on time; eat breakfast; brush teeth; gather lunch, school backpack, and supplies, etc.

They should also know the expectations for the routine each day when they come home from school.

For example: eat a snack; take a break; finish homework; read for 20 minutes; do cleaning and chores; eat dinner; take a shower; get things ready for the morning routine; go to bed on time.

These routines should also include checking backpacks, reviewing returned work, and going on to the parent portal to review grades and attendance.

When children know there is a routine on school nights, they are more likely to get complete everything that needs to be done.

There are always exceptions and changes when there are family activities or sports, but what every child should know is that school is a priority and part of the routine every night.

When children know this, they are less likely to argue, avoid, or deny what needs to be done.

Routines make things easier for parents.

An essential part of the routine is reading every night.

It can be together or alone, but the child should read something every night.

Building this routine into the home helps to build a love of learning.

### **1.49 Create a Learning Environment at Home**

Having a home environment that is structured around the importance of school is another great strategy in making sure a child can be successful in school.

Here are some questions to consider:

Is there a quiet place to work that is clear of other papers and clutter so the child can complete their homework and study?

Is there a cozy and comfortable spot for the child to read?

Can the TV be turned off for a couple of hours, so the home is quieter with less distractions?

It is important to create an environment where the child feels like home is a place where school, and the work that needs to be done for school, is honored and important.

It is also important that students have the tools needed to be successful at home.

This includes having paper, pencils, and access to a computer and the internet.

Families do not need to buy a computer; they can go to the library to use one or use one that belongs to a family member.

A child of any age needs to know they have support in the work they are doing.

Parents don't need to have all of the answers; sometimes a child just needs someone to sit down and support them as they persevere through a tough assignment.

When a child knows their parent is invested in their learning, then they know school is important in their home.

### **1.50 Positive School Mindset**

A final strategy is one we've talked about many times throughout the module. Parents should have a positive mindset and attitude about school to help their child succeed in school.

This may be hard for some parents who did not have a good school experience. But parents can create a different experience for their children.

Being a partner with the school, having a relationship with key people, or going to school events all create a positive school mindset.

When a child knows that their parents and the schoolwork together, they see school as a positive experience.

### **1.51 Activity (3)**

This module shared a lot of strategies to try at home.

Sometimes, situations at home make it hard to try new strategies.

Let's do an activity about what your home is like on school nights to find ways to add in a new practice.

### **1.52 Taking It Home**

This module has shared several strategies for supporting your child to be successful in school.

From planning to get your child to and from school to helping them organize their school paperwork, all of these strategies help children build strong study habits.

Here are a few simple things that can be done in the home with and for your children:

Designate a spot for important papers that come home from school.

Designate a spot for homework to be completed that is clear, clean and in a place that is quiet.

Have a calendar for the week with jobs and homework that need to be done.

Develop a nighttime routine for getting stuff together for school and for nighttime reading.

Which of these will you do when you go back home?

Which of these do you already do?

### **1.53 Make a plan. (1)**

Many new ideas were shared in this module.

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You may be excited and ready to try some of the strategies you have learned.

As parents, you are very busy and sometimes working and taking care of the family feels like it takes up most of your day.

To support you in trying these new strategies, there is a resources called Action Planning.

Download this resource and answer the questions about what you are going to try with your children before the next meeting.

Keep this resource with you so you can make notes as you try new things at home.

We hope that you share your experiences with the group next time.

You may find that others have had the same types of experiences.

**1.54 Congratulations and thank you!**

This concludes Module 5: Supporting Your Child to Be Successful in School.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this module!