Helping young students develop effective study skills

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Now that the new school year is underway and students have become acquainted with new teachers and classmates, it's a good time to talk about improving study habits. Encouraging solid study skills in the early grades is a great way for parents to support their child's academic success.

Lori Kline

Study techniques—such as organization, prioritization, and time management—lay a strong foundation for ongoing learning from preschool through college.

Here are a few tips for parents to help their students build good study habits to stay on track this school year.

Start young

Children are instinctively curious and eager to explore new things, but learning to study doesn't come naturally to children; they need parents and teachers to guide them.

It's never too early for parents to share academic activities with children. Engage toddlers in foundational learning skills, like puzzles and read aloud, to assist with memorization, focus, and other useful study skills as they grow up.

As students get older, enter grade-school, and start getting more homework, parents should review study skills with their students and look for areas that need improvement.

Parental assistance

Grade-schoolers often learn better when parents are actively involved in their education. Teach children to be critical thinkers and make sure they're not just memorizing information. Questions like, "show me how you figured out this math equation?" can help prompt critical thinking skills.

If a student gets a bad grade on an assignment or is struggling in a class, parents should be optimistic, and encourage children to learn from their mistakes and do better next time. Make sure to praise students when appropriate to inspire them to keep up the good work they're doing.

Organize and prioritize

Many students have problems with schoolwork due to poor organizing and prioritizing, not because of unsatisfactory academic abilities. Show students how to make to-do lists for schoolwork and they'll be able to check off items they've achieved.

Using calendars and planners help students organize and keep track of both short and long-term assignments. A large dry-erase whiteboard works well to mark dates for important school projects and exciting things like winter break. Kids love technology and there are several apps available to record due dates for tests and assignments.

Children can also fall behind in their studies because they don't know how to prioritize homework and they're overwhelmed. There are students who prefer to study the easier subjects first and tackle the difficult ones later and others who are just the opposite. Learning to prioritize study tasks is an essential skill they'll use for years to come.

Study routine

Some children study better in the late afternoon, others in the evening. Parents need to establish a study routine based on a child's peak performance time.

Use the master calendar to reserve small study blocks. Students will avoid the stress of "cramming" the night before a big project is due and feel more prepared for class.

Taking breaks during study blocks is helpful, especially for younger students. After 20 minutes hitting the books children should stop and grab a snack, or exercise for 5 minutes. Having a study schedule takes practice, but it teaches kids efficient time management skills they will use later in life.

Note-taking

Encourage students to take notes to remember key concepts in the material they're studying. Show your children how to organize notes in a variety of ways, so that they can determine the best method for their learning style. Notes should be sorted into separate folders or notebooks as well, to help with organization.

Highlighting text is another effective option for note-taking, but make sure students don't highlight every sentence. And for test preparation, flashcards are a great tool to help review note material.

Study spaces and partners

Having a designated study space for students at home, free from as many distractions as possible, creates a healthy atmosphere for learning.

How about a study buddy? Parents can try trading off weekly study sessions with their child and a friend in the same class. Study partners can also quiz each other to prepare for exams.

Students have different learning styles and the way each child studies varies. However, if parents work with students on these study skills, they'll have a better chance of success in other areas of their lives, as they go through high school, and even beyond in college and careers.

Lori Kline is an elementary teacher at the Oregon Connections Academy. For more information on upcoming events or how to enroll, please visit www.OregonConnectionsAcademy.com/Events or call (800) 382–6010.

BRIEFS

Church to host rummage sale Nov. 16-17

Trinity Lutheran Church is hosting its two-day Used Treasure Sale Thursday and Friday, Nov. 16-17.

Donated household items, clothes, children's toys, and other items will be on sale inside the church from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. The church is located at 500 N. 2nd Street. For more information, call 503-873-2635.

Politics club to be backbone of youth council

The Government and Politics Club at Silverton High School will soon have a stronger connection to local politics.

The club will have a more direct connection to city business, thanks to an agreement approved by the City of Silverton and the Silver Falls School District this month. In the resolution approved by the council Nov. 5, staff noted that the club is already 20 members strong.

The Mayor's Youth Council would include those youth, as well as others who want to learn about and comment on municipal issues.

Now Mayor Kyle Palmer, Councilor Rhett Martin, assistant to the city manager Elizabeth Gray, and other elected officials have been invited to meet with the club on a monthly basis. Palmer and Martin first floated the idea of a youth council in 2017.

Sanctuary

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victory for the Trump agenda.

"I think that's the message that got through to voters," he said.

Unsurprisingly, all of those measures failed by similar margins.

Measure 105's defeat indicates that undocumented immigration is becoming normalized in parts of the state, Moore said.

But in other parts of the state, he said, people insist that illegal immigration remains a clear problem. These differing stances are emblematic of the division between Oregon's bigger cities and rural areas.

"There's a real divide between the less populated areas and the more populated areas," he said.

The measure failed by wide margins in the expected, more liberal counties. Almost 82 percent of voters in Multnomah County struck down the measure, and a majority of voters in Marion, Polk, Washington, Clackamas and Deschutes counties also voted "no."

Even some unexpected areas like Tillamook and Jackson counties nixed the measure, and it failed with a 62 percent no vote in Clatsop County, home of Sheriff Tom Bergin, who penned a letter wholeheartedly endorsing the measure.

"The statute undermines respect for law in significant ways," he said. "It tells illegal immigrants that Oregon considers immigration-law violations so inconsequential as to be unworthy of police and sheriffs' attention. In doing so, it legitimizes those violations and encourages more."

Deschutes County Sheriff L. Shane Nelson was among the 15 county sheriffs who signed the letter in support.

"The voters have spoken, and our office will continue to conduct business in the best interest of the community," Nelson said in a statement following the election.

Salem-area police, sheriff's offices and district attorney's offices did not take a stance on the measure.

"Yes" votes prevailed in Linn, Crook, Douglas, Josephine and Jefferson counties.

Moore is confident that the debate over Oregon's sanctuary status is not over.

"The people behind it have said they'll be back," he said. "They have to really think about how they do that because it's very clear that they have an uphill battle to pass anything in Oregon."

Williams said Oregonians made it clear with their no votes that Trump-style, radical immigration policies are unwelcome.

"In voting against 105, we affirm that racial profiling is wrong, it has no place in our state, and we don't want radical immigration policies in our state because we believe that America should remain a beacon of hope and freedom for people from all over the world," she said.

She said Causa would continue fighting to make Oregon a welcoming, tolerant state, adding that the victory gave them momentum to pass more inclusive policies in the next legislative session.

The ballot measure wasn't the first effort against immigrant rights, and it won't be the last, Williams said.

"We're not going to stop because we know that Trump isn't going to stop attacking immigrant families," she said. "The local groups aren't going to stop trying to take away our rights."

She said she was proud of the campaign that the opposition movement ran.

"It's really one of those campaigns where we brought together a unique set of partners," Williams said. "You don't normally see communities of color and law enforcement working this closely together — or businesses and unions."

That collaboration and the revealing stories those groups shared seemed to have struck a chord with voters, she added.

"I think what we proved in this campaign is that immigration issues actually unite people instead of dividing them," Williams said.

Proponents of the measure said its failure was regrettable.

"Well, that's disappointing, of course," Kendoll said Tuesday night. "But our goal was to give Oregon voters a chance to vote, and they voted."

As the outcome of the election sank in, Oregonians for Immigration Reform thanked their supporters and vowed to keep fighting.

"We may have lost this battle — but, the war continues," the group posted on Facebook.

For questions, comments and news tips, email reporter Whitney Woodworth at wmwoodwort@statesmanjournal.com, call 503-399-6884 or follow on Twitter @wmwoodworth.