

Pointers For Parents

Top Five Mistakes Bright Parents Make

(NAPSA)—Even the smartest, most-informed parents can make mistakes. Parenting children through their school years requires a balancing act between what's best for family dynamics and for a child's academic success.

Dr. Andrea Pastorok of Kumon Math and Reading Centers offers the following tips to help parents avoid five common mistakes when dealing with a child's scholastic achievement:

1. Expecting Perfection Instead of Progress—If you only praise your child when he completes a task or reaches a goal, he may give up long before he ever gets there. Demonstrate to your child that you believe in him by giving genuine and frequent praise for progress and effort.

2. Allowing Your Child to Quit Whenever the Work Gets Hard—Encourage your child to persevere when schoolwork becomes challenging by becoming her coach to get her through the tough spots. Help her to take a one-step-at-a-time approach. Work with her to identify the information needed to solve problems and pinpoint places where she gets “stuck.”

3. Underestimating Your Child's Ability—Don't assume your child will be weak in a subject because you were, and don't underestimate his abilities. Expect your child to reach his potential in all subjects, not just the ones that are easiest. If your child is struggling in math but loves reading, help your child discover new ways to enjoy math. However, keep your expectations realistic.

4. Allowing Your Child to be Disorganized—To ensure that children will become successful students, parents must help



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them acquire good study habits and strong organizational skills. Start by creating a special learning area at home; set aside time for homework and reading. For older children, teach them to organize their time by using a calendar or planner.

5. Refusing to Admit that Your Child is Capable of Wrongdoing—Not My Kid!—Children are individuals, and no matter how hard we try to raise smart, honest and caring children, they will make mistakes or poor decisions. If a teacher, friend or parent brings to your attention your child's behavior—don't deny it—listen. Depending on the situation, speak to your child about the incident in the privacy of your home and decide the best way to handle it.

Dr. Pastorok is an education specialist with Kumon Math and Reading Centers. She has a doctorate in educational psychology.

Since 1958, Kumon Math and Reading Centers has helped children strengthen math and reading skills, increase self-confidence and develop study skills that last a lifetime. To locate a Kumon Center in your neighborhood call: 1-800-ABC-MATH or visit www.kumon.com.