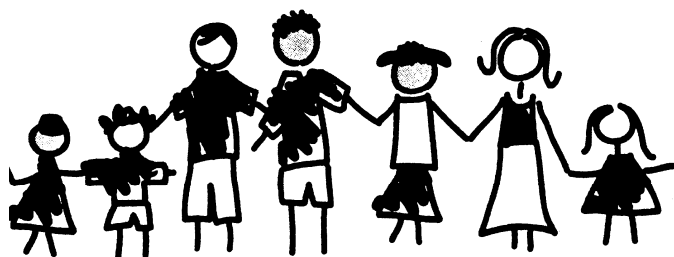


Family Resource Guide



Developed and distributed by NCPTA

www.ncpta.org

NCPTA is North Carolina's oldest and largest volunteer organization advocating for the education, health, and success of all children and youth while building strong families and communities.

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INTRODUCTION

For more than 100 years, PTA has promoted a fundamental value that continues to be the foundation for all that we do. That value is parent involvement. The evidence is consistent, positive, and convincing. Families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and in life. Research also shows that school quality often improves when teachers and administrators have positive attitudes towards parents, actively encourage parent involvement, and design effective parent involvement programs.

Families want to know how to help their children and how to communicate with teachers. Teachers and principals want to know how to build trust and work effectively with families and the community. Students want to succeed in school, and need the support of their families, teachers, and communities.

NCPTA is proud to bring you this Parent Resource Handbook. This handbook is a collaborative effort of many of our partnering organizations and agencies along with resources from National PTA. We hope this handbook will be helpful to the families and caregivers of all our children and youth of North Carolina.

North Carolina
PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT



Good schools require parental support and involvement. Parents can and should be active participants in the education of their children. Teachers and administrators can be most effective when they have such support.

As an integral part of its advocacy mission, NCPTA will work to increase meaningful parental involvement in our public schools. To further this goal, NCPTA will:

- Encourage parents to become more involved in the education of their children and in the work of their children's schools;
- Encourage teachers and administrators to seek and facilitate parental involvement;
- Encourage public officials, through legislation and otherwise, to support and facilitate increased parental involvement in public schools.

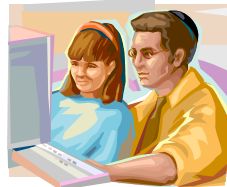
Research shows that schools with well-structured, consistent parent involvement programs are more likely to experience profound benefits for students, parents, teachers, administrators, and overall student quality. The most prominent and comprehensive survey on this topic was conducted in a series of publications by Anne Henderson and Nancy Berla. The most recent is *A New Generation of Evidence: the Family is Critical to Student Achievement* in 1995.

It has been proven that parent and family income or social status has little bearing on student achievement. Three specific actions that can only be taken by parent and family

involvement have a significant effect on student success. Any parent and family should:

1. Create a home environment that encourages learning
2. Communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for the child's achievement and future career
3. Become involved in the child's education at school and in the community

The benefits of parent and family involvement on student achievement cannot be understated. The more extensive the parent involvement, the higher the student achievement. When parents and family are involved in students' education, those students generally have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and more consistently completed homework. Students whose parents and families are involved have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment in postsecondary education. Children who are furthest behind are most likely to make the greatest gains in student achievement when parents and families get involved.



While there are some things that are out of the immediate control of students and their families that would improve their success (such as school funding, teacher quality, facilities, etc.), parent and family involvement carries no financial cost and everyone can make a commitment and personal investment in the life of a child.

National PTA has established standards, that when implemented by local PTAs, provide a framework for parent involvement. The local school PTA provides a means of regular, two-way, and meaningful communication between the home and the school. The local school PTA provides parenting

resources, classes and workshops to help parents become more effective. The local school PTA treats parents as partners in the education process by providing resources. The local school PTA works to create a school climate that is open and friendly to parents. The local school PTA provides a forum for parents to comment on school policies and share in decision-making opportunities. Finally, the local PTA establishes community partnerships to strengthen schools and impact student learning.

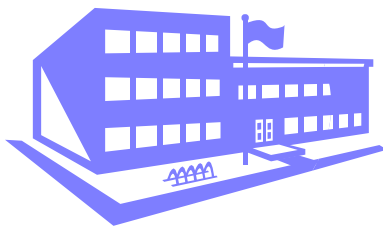
Parents and families can do many things to help their children succeed in school. It is a culmination of the little things, day in and day out, that stress the importance of learning and set an example for children of all ages. Parents and family should follow **the 20-point Parent Check Up** (from *Parents Assuring Student Success* by John Ban):

1. Talk to your child regularly about school
2. Keep an ample supply of reading material at home
3. Watch news programs and special events with your child
4. Frequently help your child with homework
5. Occasionally ask your child to look up the definition of new words or information in an encyclopedia
6. Set aside a special study area for your child
7. Take your child to the library
8. Frequently read in front of your child
9. Make a habit of showing your child interesting articles or pictures from magazines and newspapers
10. Regularly attend school activities
11. Discuss school events with your child
12. Schedule a set time for homework



13. Make sure noise levels and distractions are kept to a minimum during homework time
14. Make sure that your child has no health problems that could affect his or her learning in school
15. Ensure your child receives a balanced diet
16. Make sure that your child gets adequate rest to perform their best in school
17. Praise your child for both effort and achievement
18. Secure a library card for your child and encourage him or her to use it
19. Play educational and age appropriate games with your child
20. Know your child's friends

The 20 Point Parent Check-Up shows many ways for parents and families to get involved, both in the school and at home. Many employers will allow employees a certain amount of time off per year to volunteer in the schools. Check with your Human Resources office to find out if this is a benefit that you could take advantage of and give some volunteer time to your child's school.



PARENT SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

The Two Roles of Parents: Child's First Educator and School Partner

Parents share responsibility for their children's education. Involved parents are those who:



- Send to school a child who is ready and eager to learn, self-disciplined and prepared to accept the authority of school staff. Parents make sure the child understands and follows school rules.
- Supervise homework assignments as needed.
- Seek the advice of teachers to understand their children's growth and learning. Share information that will help school staff plan for their children.
- Learn about school programs, curriculum, regulations and procedures, and actively support them.
- Show commitment to education by attending parent-teacher conferences, open houses, PTA meetings, student concerts, and other school programs whenever possible.
- Understand the work for the passage of school funding initiatives.
- Understand the need for professional development programs for teachers. Attend programs to learn about current issues and trends in education, when possible, to open the way for informed discussion, mutual respect and teamwork.

NC General Statute for Parent Involvement Leave

Legal Ref: GS 95-28.3 Please Read

GS 95-28.3. Leave for parent involvement in schools.

(a) It is the belief of the General Assembly that parent involvement is an essential component of school success and positive student outcomes. Therefore, employers shall grant four hours per year leave to any employee who is a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of a school aged child so that the employee may attend or otherwise be involved at that child's school. However, any leave under this section is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The leave shall be at a mutually agreed upon time between the employer and the employee.
- (2) The employer may require an employee to provide the employer with a written request for the leave at least 48 hours before the time desired for the leave.
- (3) The employer may require that the employee furnish written verification from the child's school that the employee attended or was otherwise involved at that school during the time of the leave.

For the purpose of this section, "school" means any (i) public school, (ii) private church school, church of religious charter, or nonpublic school described in Parts 1 and 2 of Article 39 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes that regularly provides a course of grade school instruction, (iii) preschool, and (iv) child care facility as defined in G.S. 110-86(3).



(b) Employers shall not discharge, demote, or otherwise take an adverse employment action against an employee who requests or takes leave under this section. Nothing in this section shall require an employer to pay an employee for leave taken under this section.

(c) An employee who is demoted or discharged or who has had an adverse employment action taken against him or her in violation of this section may bring a civil action within one year from the date of the alleged violation against the employer who violates this section and obtain either of the following:

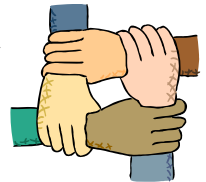
- (1) Any wages or benefits lost as a result of the violation; or
- (2) An order of reinstatement without loss of position, seniority, wages, or benefits.

The burden of proof shall be upon the employee.

[\(1993, c. 509, s. 1; 1997-506, s. 34.\)](#)

Relationships with the Principal

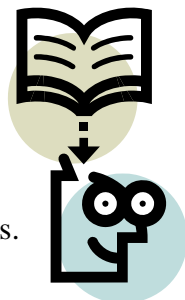
Teamwork has become the model for success in business and industry. It is the key to success in education as well. Teamwork begins at the local school with a partnership between the principal and parents. When parents and the principal work together, they can lead the way to success for all students.



What does it mean for the parents and the principal to work as partners? It means that each understands his or her responsibilities, and the other's. It means setting goals and working cooperatively to achieve them. It means respecting each other's opinion, not expecting automatic approval from the other and not withdrawing support if opinions differ. It

means reaching out to all parents and school staff to help our children and youth reach their potential.

10 Partnering Tips for a Strong School Community



1. **A principal can host a “welcome” night** where all the parents are invited to the school and the principal gives an opening address, establishes basic expectations for the year, and invites parents to ask questions. Provide a form on which parents can write their contact information, best times to contact them, and preferred methods of communication. The principal can provide the same information to parents.
2. **Parents can establish PTAs that are inclusive** and representative of the school community's culture, family structures (single parent, blended, etc.), and abilities. (Invite the principal to become a member.) PTAs must value and embrace all parents and caregivers in order to implement successful school programs.
3. **Invite the principal to take part in developing the PTA's plan of work.** The principal can work with the PTA to set goals for their collaboration for the year.
4. **Make the principal-parent dialog visible.** Invite the principal to write an article for the PTA newsletter or listserv. Ask him or her to host coffees or "chats with the principal," inviting bilingual parents to translate as necessary.
5. **Network with community establishments** (hospitals, community centers, banks, libraries) to get free services

or informational sessions for the school. Before moving ahead, a PTA might ask the principal for a list of priorities regarding services for the school and its families.

6. **Invite community groups and youth-serving organizations to school** shows, sporting events, and showcases of service-learning projects, thus publicizing what the students have accomplished. Ask these groups how you can work toward shared goals in support of the school.
7. **Carry out fundraisers tied to specific goals** relevant to the whole school community. Examples of such PTA fundraising goals might include campus beautification, providing school playing fields, or underwriting classroom field trips.
8. **Nominate the school or principal for awards,** including parents in the recognition process. (Consider National PTA's Parent Involvement Schools of Excellence Certification or the outstanding principal programs of the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.)
9. **Encourage two-way messaging.** Establish a principal-approved voice-mail system in which teachers regularly leave two-minute voice-mail messages for parents about the classroom curriculum, and parents can leave messages for teachers as they strive to support their children's homework and study habits.
10. **Promote health and nutrition.** Form a task force of parents, the school principal, and pertinent school district staff to examine the school lunch program. (This refers to schools not participating in the federal school lunch program.) Look at the time allotted for

lunch, the food options available; and the accessibility, pricing, and placement of healthy foods. Make recommendation for change if necessary.

The Parent's Role: Building a Partnership

Parent involvement becomes a reality when there is strong support from the principal and teachers build effective partnerships with parents to strengthen their participation in the school community. Some proven ways teachers encourage parent involvement include:

- Give your child a hug before she ventures out the door and you head to work. Look her in the eye, and tell her how proud you are of her. Your child's self-confidence and security will help her do well both in school and in life.
- At the end of each day create a predictable ritual such as 10–20 minutes listening to your child talk about his day—before you check phone messages, read the mail, or begin dinner. That way you are fully present to listen, and your child has a touchstone he can count on between school and home.
- Fill your child's lunchbox with healthy snacks and lunches. Have dinner at a reasonable hour and a healthy breakfast. A well-balanced diet maximizes your child's learning potential.
- Create a specific homework space that's clutter-free and quiet. Encourage editing and double-checking work, but allow your kids to make mistakes, as it's the only way teachers can gauge if they understand the material. It's also



how children learn responsibility for the quality of their work.

- Fill your child's life with a love for learning by showing him your own curiosity, respecting his questions, and encouraging his efforts.
- Fill your home with books to read, books simply to look at, and books that provide answers to life's many questions. The public or school library is an excellent resource.
- Be a partner with your child's teacher. When you need to speak to him or her in reference to a specific issue with your child, do it privately, not in front of your child. Make a point never to criticize your child's teacher in front of your child.
- Set up a system where routine items are easily located—such as backpacks, shoes, signed notices. Create a central calendar for upcoming events to avoid the unexpected.



Questions to Ask During a Parent-Teacher Conference:



- What subject does my student like most? Least?
- What can I do to help my student with subjects he finds difficult? How can I help my student study? Prepare for class? Improve his work? A good time to ask these questions is when the teacher gives you samples of your son's or daughter's work.
- Is my student trying as hard as he can?
- Does my student participate in class discussions and activities?
- Is my student in different classes or groups for different subjects? Which ones? How are the groups determined?

- How well does my student get along with others?
- Has my student missed classes?
- Have you noticed changes in the way my student acts? For example, have you noticed squinting, tiredness, or moodiness that might be a sign of physical or other problems?
- How are you measuring my student's progress? Through tests? Portfolios? Class participation? Projects?
- What kinds of tests do you give? What do the tests show about my student's progress? How does my student handle taking tests?

The Teacher's Roles: Building a Partnership

- Making parents aware of school policies and programs.
- Helping parents understand the importance of their support of school rules and procedures.
- Educating parents in parenting skills and ways to support children's learning at home.
- Strengthening parent –teacher communication and understanding through newsletters, workshops, events, and activities.
- Providing informal occasions for teachers and parents to get to know one another as individuals and as partners in education.
- Conducting volunteer programs in schools.
- Assisting parents through outreach programs and referrals to community resources.



Encouraging Students to take Advanced Placement Courses

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is encouraging students to challenge themselves academically by enrolling in rigorous courses. Parents are encouraged to become more involved in their student's course selection process by following these easy steps:

1. Become knowledgeable about course options (i.e. AIG, AP, IB and Honors) at your students school (for information on these programs visit www.collegeboard.com, www.ib.org, www.ncpublicschools.org/ec/development/gifted/, www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/honorsguide)
 - a. Visit the school or school districts website
 - b. Communicate with school officials (school counselor, principal)
 - c. Become actively involved in school related events (attend school related events, join the PTA, become a parent advocate in council groups, network with other parents)
 - d. Read information about the benefits of advance curriculum coursework on the academic achievement of students
 - e. Visit NC DPI AP/IB website at www.ncpublicschools.org/apinitiatives
2. Prepare students to take advance curriculum coursework early:
 - a. Read to your child
 - b. Consider enrolling students in pre-K program

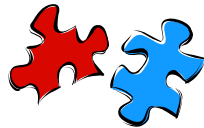


- c. Advocate for student enrollment in the local school districts AIG program
 - d. Keep student academically engaged by enrolling in summer enrichment programs
 - e. Establish routines and good study habits early
 - f. Limit the amount of television and video game time
3. Help students make decisions about course options during school registration:
- a. Have students explore their interest and values (visit www.cfnc.org and complete the Career Key, complete a four or more year educational plan and beyond, become involved in extracurricular activities that reflect interest and skill)
 - b. Visit colleges and college websites in order to have a good understanding of college expectations, admissions requirements, and dual credit acceptance policies
 - c. Encourage student to challenge her/ himself academically in order to prepare for college, the workforce, and the 21st century

PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.



Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3: Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5: Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

For further information about the National Standards and PTA programs that promote family-school partnerships, please visit www.pta.org.



PARENT ADVOCACY

What is Advocacy?

When you mobilize people to make changes in programs and policies, you are advocating. PTA has been an advocate for children and youth since 1897. Parents and caregivers are a child's first advocate. Everyday parents and others advocate for children in their communities to have better schools, safer play areas, and healthier lifestyles. Whatever you chose to advocate for, a few simple rules will serve you well:



- **Be Fearless**, you are a concerned citizen with a passion to make things better
- **Be Helpful**, sometimes the best way to deal with an issue is to offer your help in solving it.
- **Be Informed**, learn everything you can about the issue that concerns you. Know who the key decision makers are who can affect your proposed change. Know who in your community can help with your cause and get their help.
- **Be Civil**, tempers and tension never solve anything. Decision makers respect dedicated advocates who value good manners and civility.
- **Be Persistent**, don't take no for an answer. Some of the most important goals take a long time to achieve.
- **Be Visible**; attend public hearings, town meetings, candidate forums, local government meetings, State Legislature, etc.
- **Get Involved**, join community groups, serve on the school improvement team, work with the school PTA, or other school groups.

What is a School Improvement Team?

A *School Improvement Team (SIT)* is a group of people who implement school-based management at a local school by developing a plan to enhance student achievement. The state law mandates the inclusion of parents on the team and North Carolina PTA is helping parents learn exactly what part they play on the team and how to participate. NC General Statute § 115C-47. (38) To Establish School Improvement Teams. – Local boards shall adopt a policy to ensure that each principal has established a school improvement team.



The school improvement plan, as developed by the School Improvement Team, is the *end result* of a process by which a school team studies its past performance and develops a guide to improve student performance. School Improvement plans should include strategies for parent involvement, safe schools, and instructional practices for improving school performance.

Parent members should

- Attend all school improvement team meetings and actively participate in all functions, including subcommittees, as the law states;
- Provide accurate input to the team;
- Represent and speak for all parents, not just personal views;
- Communicate with other parents, keep them informed, and seek their opinions on issues before voting;
- Report to PTA and other parent organizations about SIT activities; and CIVIC
- Become knowledgeable about the operation of the school (budget, curriculum, etc.).

Challenges:

- Parents may be viewed as outsiders and have difficulty gaining acceptance by school staff.
- A lack of meaningful roles available for parent members.
- A lack of interest by parents to serve on school improvement teams.
- Parents may not be allowed to speak at school improvement team meetings.

A Civic Responsibility

The influence of parents and family on youth citizenship is by far the strongest of any defined group. Youth who report talking about politics at home demonstrate substantially higher levels of civic engagement (North Carolina Civic Education Consortium 2003, 8). Moreover, youth who report that they have applied what they have learned from their civics classes to real-life issues are nearly 50% more likely to report learning a great deal about government and community issues from their classes (North Carolina Civic Education Consortium 2003, 9).



Parents might ask their child to look for information on a specific topic in the newspaper or on the television news and then discuss what he or she found with someone in their family. Knowing what we know now about the state of civic education and engagement in our state and in our nation, we would be doing our children an injustice to ignore the pathways to the civic mission. Our children deserve to be well prepared to participate in a democratic society. With the help of parents, teachers, and administrators, we are poised to resume their civic mission.

RESOURCES

Kidsvote.org

NC Civic Education Consortium

<http://uncnews.unc.edu/news/government-and-law/n.c.-civic-education-consortium-funds-youth-civic-engagement-programs.html>

<http://www.nationalmockelection.org/>

National PTA Voter Guide www.pta.org

PTA Advocacy Milestones

- Child labor laws
- Early Childhood Education and the establishment of kindergarten
- Nationwide polio vaccination program
- Combating TV violence and development of ratings
- National Standards for School- Family Partnerships
- Child nutrition and healthy school meals
- “Rescue Recess” campaign to save physical activity in schools
- Parent Involvement Initiative 2007

Helpful Websites

www.pta.org Advocacy Toolkit

www.ncpta.org

www.ncleg.net

www.ncreportcards.org

www.ed.gov

www.ncpublicschools.org

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Exceptional Children (EC) Division serves both students with disabilities and students who are academically and intellectually gifted. Programs, policies, and funding are administered by the NCDPI Exceptional Children Division. To access NCDPI EC policies and programs, visit their website at www.ncpublicschools.org/ec/ then click on desired links or call (919) 807-3300.



To access Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) program information click on Program Improvement & Professional Development under the Exceptional Children link.

In North Carolina, local education agencies (school districts) may or may not separately administer programs for students with disabilities and students who are academically and intellectually gifted. Please check with your local school district or agency to determine how they are administered.

Definitions:

Student with a Disability

A student with a disability means a student evaluated in accordance with NC 1503-2 through NC 1503-3 (NCDPI policies) as having autism, deaf-blindness, developmental delay (applicable only to children ages three through seven), hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthotic impairment, other health impairment, serious emotional disability, specific learning disability, speech or language

impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment (including blindness), and who, by reason of the disability, needs special education and related services.

Student who is Academically & Intellectually Gifted

Academically or intellectually gifted students are identified by local education agencies (school districts) by a screening, identification, and placement process. Students perform or demonstrate the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishments when compared with others their age, experience, or environment. Academically or intellectually gifted students require differentiated education services beyond those ordinarily provided the regular education program. Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human behavior.



It is entirely possible for a student to qualify as both a student with a disability as well as academically and intellectually gifted.

NCPTA Exceptional Children Commission:

Purpose and Duties:

- Cover topics related to the education and well-being of students with exceptional educational needs (students with disabilities and academically and intellectually gifted students) and their families. Includes topics related educational policies, laws, legislation and advocacy.
- Promotes awareness and education of students with exceptional learning needs to public.
- Facilitates communication of resources and referral

- agencies to families, students, educators and PTA units.
- Establishes partnerships with appropriate agencies to advocate for and educate students, their families, and educators.
 - Encourages local PTA units to include representation from families of students with exceptional educational needs within their PTA executive boards and general membership.

Please visit the NCPTA website at www.ncpta.org or call (800) 255-0417 to access resources and become involved in advocating for students with exceptional learning needs!

Educational services for students with disabilities are governed by federal laws. These laws are the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). These laws can be accessed on the US Department of Education Website: <https://www.ed.gov/> . Parents and Guardians of students with disabilities need to understand federal laws, NCDPI policies, and become familiar with state and local resources. A few resources that can help you are:

North Carolina Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC) www.ecac-parentcenter.org or call 1-800-962-6817

Family Support Network of North Carolina (FSN-NC) <https://fsnnc.med.unc.edu/> or call 1-800-852-0042

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) <https://www.nichcy.org/> or call 1-800-695-0285.

Wrights Law – Organization that helps parents advocate and understand laws and policies regarding students

with disabilities. www.wrightslaw.com

Academically & Intellectually Gifted

Parents and Guardians need to network, advocate, and understand policies that impact students. Resources that can help include:

NC Association for the Gifted and Talented

<http://www.ncagt.org/>

PH: (919) 326-8463

Duke TIP – Talented Identification Program

<http://www.tipduke.edu/>

PH: (919)668-9100

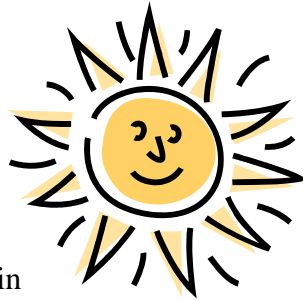
· LearnNC – UNC Chapel Hill School of Education

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/gifted0405-1>

HEALTH AND WELFARE

Sun Safety

Prevention is a key element of sun safety. Parents can help families prevent getting sunburned and sick from the sun with these helpful safety tips that should be practiced all year round. Wearing a hat and loose dry clothing, sunscreen with a minimum of SPF 15, even on cloudy days, in the shade and in the winter will help guard against the sun's harmful rays and prevent sunburn. Wearing sunglasses can help protect your eyes against UV rays from the glare of fresh white snow and the sun. Stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. as that is when the sun's rays are the strongest.



Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

SHAC is an advisory group composed primarily of school administrators, teachers, parents and community representatives who act collectively in advising the school district on a coordinated school health program or wellness policy. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization of 2004, required local education agencies that have a federally funded school meals program to evaluate what steps should be taken to improve physical activity and nutrition in schools. District education agencies must establish wellness policies before the 2006–2007 school year. This law requires schools to include parents in the developing of the wellness policy for their school. School Wellness Policies help to ensure students and staff is offered nutritious meals, snacks, health education programs and physical activity opportunity.

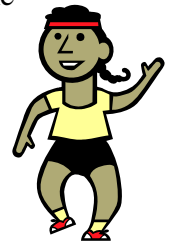


Healthy Eating Habits

Fueling the body with healthy foods is an excellent way to help prevent diseases such as heart disease, cancers and diabetes. Parents can help their child make healthy decisions by leading example of eating nutritious food. Eating a nutritious breakfast containing at least three of the five food groups provides a person with one-fourth of the nutrients they need each day. Helping your family to choose nutritious snacks will give them energy and help them to focus, learn and perform better. Keep fresh vegetables and fruits stocked in your household easily within reach for your family.

Regular Physical Activity and Exercise

Regular physical activity and exercise assist to prevent diseases. Parents can help children by limiting the amount of time viewing television and/or playing computer or video games. Help your children to choose games they like or physical activities the family can do together. In doing so, they will more likely do them regularly. Spending time in this way will strengthen your family not only by helping everyone to feel good and look good but also help a family unit grow closer to each other.



Healthy Active Children Policy State Board of Education Policy HSP-S-000

In March of 2005, the State Board of Education passed a statewide policy mandating that schools provide at least 30 - minutes of physical activity daily for grades K-8. Does this 30-minute requirement replace physical education? No. Physical

education is a component of Healthful Living Standard Course of Study. As part of the Basic Education plan, Healthful Living should be offered to every student. In physical education, students should be taught, have time to practice, and be assessed on skills and knowledge that create active adults.

What if a parent requests that the students not have physical activity? It is a State Board policy that every child receives at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day and it is not something that students can opt out. Students should have modifications based on their physical needs, including special needs students.

Help Your Child Succeed Local Wellness Policies



Federal law now requires every school district to have a local wellness policy. Research shows that children and teens who eat smart and move more focus better and have fewer behavior problems. They also have improved math, reading, and writing test scores.

Parents, do you know your school's local wellness policy?

A good wellness policy should address:

- Nutrition education goals
- Physical activity/physical education goals
- All foods and drinks on school grounds (fundraisers, concessions, school stores, celebrations, food as a reward, vending)
- À la Carte foods and beverages sold with school meals
- Mealtime and environment
- Foods brought from home
- Plan for measuring implementation of this policy

Here are just some ways you can make a difference from home:

- Encourage and bring healthy options for classroom parties, classroom rewards, school celebrations, concessions, and fundraising.
- Encourage your children to eat school meals.
- Send your child to school with healthier packed lunch options and snacks.
- Be a role model! Your children look up to you!

Resource: www.EatSmartMoveMoreNC.com.
www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org

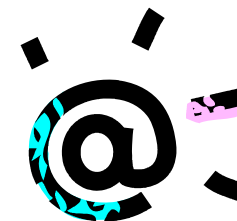
Internet Safety

The Internet is a great tool for searching for new ways to interact with the offline world. Families can use the Internet to learn more about community activities or to turn a rainy day into a virtual field trip. But with the click of a mouse our kids can find pornography and violence, and worse yet, a child predator cruising the Internet instead of the playground.

The number of children in North Carolina being abducted and sexually exploited as a result of Internet activity is increasing.

Here are a few tips to help keep you child safe on the internet:

- **Keep your computer in a central part of the house,** not a child's bedroom, so you can monitor their Internet use.
- **Take advantage of parental controls,** available through your Internet Service Provider, to make the Internet a safer place for your children. For instance, you can set up the computer so a child only has access



to certain websites that you've approved. You can also get an email detailing your child's activity each time your child goes on line.

- **Monitor your child's access to chat rooms and instant messaging.** Adults who are seeking to exploit children spend countless hours in chat rooms, and instant messaging (or "IMing") can be used to communicate secretly.
- **Access your child's email.** Share an email account with your child, or maintain access to your child's email account and check it frequently.
- **Keep screen names anonymous** when children go online, and tell your child not to post or share photographs online without your permission.
- **Remind your kids that computer use is not confidential.**

Resources:

www.isafe.org

Office of the NC Attorney General – www.ncdoj.com

www.staysafe.org

www.ncpta.org

Violence, Gangs, and Risky Teen Behaviors

Feeling safe is a key element of a student's success. The harsh reality is that out of 100 gang members, 93 of them will join before age 15. Tobacco is the leading preventable contributor to adult death in the United States and the vast majority of smokers begin smoking before the age of eighteen. Educational programs can include, but are not limited to the prevention of injury and violence, alcohol and other drug use, tobacco use, HIV/STD and teen pregnancy. Parents can assist to ensure safer schools by helping to provide education and resources on bullying, peer mediation and gang violence.



Prevention programs and resources that have been designed to create awareness and educate families will be updated regularly and made available through the www.ncpta.org website and community resources. Parents can help their children by knowing where they are, keeping communication lines open, and knowing who their friends are. Parents assisting their children through expectation and goal setting will help strengthen the family dynamics resulting in less risky teen behaviors or falling under the pressure of their peers.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Healthy Schools Initiative

The goal of North Carolina Healthy Schools is to create a working infrastructure between education and health to enable schools and communities to create a Coordinated School Health Program. A model school health program includes all eight components:



- * Comprehensive School Health Education
- * School Health Services
- * A Safe Physical Environment
- * School Counseling, Psychological and Social Services
- * Physical Education
- * Nutrition Services
- * School-Site Health Promotion for Staff
- * Family and Community Involvement in Schools

NC Healthy Schools focuses on improving the health of students and staff by providing coordination and resources in eight component areas of school health. With all of these components in place and working together, students will be healthier in school, in class, and ready to learn. In healthy schools, children are more alert, more focused on learning, and

miss less school. They not only learn better, but also learn lifelong healthy behaviors to prevent the leading causes of death in North Carolina: heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Healthier schools lead to healthier students which lead to healthier communities. It just makes sense.

The Healthy Schools Initiative provides programming and oversight of the federal abstinence until marriage grant, and policies and programs in HIV/AIDS prevention, physical activity, nutrition and tobacco.

Contact Healthy Schools at (ph): 919-807-3863 or (fax): 919-807-4046

Are Children in Your School Covered by Health Insurance?



North Carolina offers two child health insurance programs: Health Check (Medicaid for Children) and NC Health Choice. Your uninsured students may qualify for this free or low cost health insurance based on their family's income. Even a family of 4 earning \$41,304 or more a year may qualify. Both Health Check and NC Health Choice offer a full range of benefits including check-ups, immunizations, medicines, vision and hearing services, dental care, counseling, hospital care and specialty services.

For an application or more information, call:

NC Family Health Resource Line

1-800-367-2229 or go to www.NCHealthyStart.org

To order Health Check / NC Health Choice Outreach Materials FREE and in bulk, go to:

www.NCHealthyStart.org [Click on "Order"]

Help parents learn about this resource for their children! ABCs

The ABCs of Public Education is North Carolina's comprehensive plan to improve public schools. The plan is based on three goals: 1) strong accountability, "A," 2) mastery of basic skills, "B" and 3) localized control, "C." The ABCs was implemented in 1996-97.



The model focuses on schools meeting growth expectations for student achievement as well as on the overall percentage of students who score at or above grade level. The model uses end-of-grade tests in grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics to measure growth at the elementary and middle school levels and end-of-course tests to measure growth at the high school level and at the middle school level where appropriate. Certified staff receive bonuses based on student growth and schools receive recognition based on the percentage of students' scores at or above grade level.

ACT

American College Test. An assessment taken by students as a precursor to college/university admission.

ADM

Average Daily Membership. The number of days a student is in membership at a school divided by the number of days in a school month or school year.

AP

Advanced Placement. A program that enables high school students to complete college-level courses for college placement and/or credit.

AYP

Adequate Yearly Progress. All public schools, in North

Carolina and throughout the country, must measure and report AYP as outlined in the federal No Child Left Behind law. AYP measures the yearly progress of different groups of students at the school, district and state levels against yearly targets in reading and mathematics. Target goals are set for attendance and graduation rates as well. If a school misses one target, it does not make AYP.

CECAS

Comprehensive Exceptional Children Accountability System. A secure Web-based student information system for exceptional children that supports online case management, compliance monitoring, data analysis, and federal and state reporting requirements.

ELL

English Language Learner. Student whose first language is one other than English and who needs language assistance to participate fully in the regular curriculum.

EOC

End-of-Course. Tests designed to assess the competencies defined by the NC SCOS for each of the following courses: Algebra I, Algebra II, English I, Biology, Chemistry, Geometry, Physical Science, Physics, Civics and Economics, and U.S. History. Tests are taken during the last two weeks of school for students on a traditional calendar and the last week for students on the block schedule and summer school students.

EOG

End-of-Grade. Tests in reading and mathematics that are taken by students in grades 3-8 during the last three weeks of the school year.

ESEA

Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This is the principal federal law affecting K-12 education. When the ESEA of 1965 was reauthorized and amended in 2002, it was renamed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

ESL

English as a Second Language. A program model that delivers specialized instruction to students who are learning English as a new language.

FRL

Free and Reduced Priced Lunch. Children qualify, based upon parent or guardian financial status, to receive either free or reduced priced lunch through a federal governmental program.

IDEA

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This federal law, reauthorized in 2004, is designed to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living.

IEP

Individualized Education Program. The IEP is a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, at least annually, by a team of professionals knowledgeable about the student and the parent. The plan describes the strengths of the child and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child, and when, where, and how often services will be provided. The IEP is required by federal law for all exceptional children and must include specific information about how the student will be served

and what goals he or she should be meeting.

IPT

IDEA Proficiency Test. Test used to determine the appropriate assessment for limited English proficient students.

No Child Left Behind. NCLB is the 2002 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and represents a sweeping change in the federal government's role in local public education. NCLB's primary goal is for all public school children to be proficient or above in reading and mathematics by 2013-14. Title I schools that do not meet certain student achievement standards face sanctions under this law.

LEA

Local Education Agency. Synonymous with a local school system or a local school district, indicating that a public board of education or other public authority maintains administrative control of the public schools in a city or county.

LEP

Limited English Proficient. Students whose first language is one other than English who need language assistance to participate fully in the regular curriculum and the statewide assessment system.

NAEP

National Assessment of Educational Progress. Also known as the "Nation's Report Card," NAEP assesses the educational achievement of elementary and secondary students in various subject areas. It provides data for comparing the performance of students in North Carolina to that of their peers in the nation.

NCDPI

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. NCDPI administers the policies adopted by the State Board of Education and offers instructional, financial, technological and personnel support to all public school systems in the state.

NC WISE

North Carolina Window of Information for Student Education. This secure Web-based tool provides educators with direct and immediate access to a full spectrum of data on a student's entire career in the North Carolina schools.

NCCLAS

The North Carolina Checklist of Academic Standards is an alternate assessment designed to measure grade-level competencies of students identified as limited English proficient and some students with disabilities.

NCEXTEND2

The North Carolina EXTEND2 is an alternate assessment designed to measure grade-level competencies of students with disabilities using modified achievement standards in a simplified multiple choice format.

NCEXTEND1

The North Carolina EXTEND1 is an alternate assessment designed to measure the performance of students with significant cognitive disabilities using alternate achievement standards.

NCHSCT

North Carolina High School Comprehensive Tests of Reading and Mathematics for Grade 10. This is a multiple-choice test designed to assess the English language arts and mathematics competencies a student should have mastered

by the end of the 10th grade. Most North Carolina students now take English I and Algebra I end-of-course assessments and the Grade 10 Writing Assessment instead of the NCHSCT. The NCHSCT are used only to assess students who are following a course of study that does not require them to take the English I or Algebra I end-of-course assessments or the Grade 10 Writing Assessment.

NCLB

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PEP

Personalized Education Plan. An individualized educational plan designed to improve a student's performance to grade-level proficiency.

PEP

Principals' Executive Program. This preparation program for principals provides relevant and rigorous professional development opportunities based on the best current theories and practices.

PSAT

Pre-Scholastic Assessment Test. Normally taken by high school juniors as a practice test for the SAT. Some schools use the PSAT as a diagnostic tool to identify areas where students may need additional assistance or placement in more rigorous courses.
The SAT is often taken by high school juniors and seniors

as a precursor to college/university admission. It assesses a student's verbal, mathematical and writing skills.

SAS

Student Accountability Standards. Statewide standards
North Carolina public schools students are required to meet as one consideration for promotion from grades 3, 5 and 8 and high school graduation.

SAT

The SAT is often taken by high school juniors and seniors as a precursor to college/university admission. It assesses a student's verbal, mathematical and writing skills

SBE

State Board of Education. The State Board of Education is charged with supervising and administering "the free public school system and the educational funds provided for its support." The Board consists of the Lieutenant Governor, the Treasurer, and eleven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly in Joint Session.

SCOS or SCS

North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The NC SCOS is the guiding document outlining what should be taught in North Carolina public school classrooms.

SEA

State Education Agency. Federal term for each state education department. SEA is another name for NCDPI.

SIMS

Student Information Management System. SIMS is a state-level warehouse of student information (for example,

attendance, course information, and other data that must be reported on a state and federal level). This system is currently being replaced by NC WISE.

SIP

School Improvement Plan. A plan that includes strategies for improving student performance, how and when improvements will be implemented, use of state funds, requests for waivers, etc. Plans are in effect for no more than three years.

TIMS

Transportation Information Management System. The computer system used by North Carolina school districts for routing and scheduling school buses to ensure safe and efficient bus routes.

Title I A

Title I is the largest federal education funding program for schools. Its aim is to help students who are behind academically or at risk of falling behind. School funding is based on the number of low-income children, generally those eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program. Many of the major requirements in the No Child Left Behind federal law are outlined in Title I - Adequate Yearly Progress, teacher and paraprofessional standards, accountability, sanctions for schools designated for improvement, standards and assessments, annual state report cards, professional development and parent involvement. Title I used to be known as Chapter I.

Title III

Title III is the section of No Child Left Behind that provides funding and addresses English language acquisition and standards and accountability requirements for limited English proficient students.

Title IX

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 bans sex discrimination in schools receiving federal funds, whether it is in academics or athletics.

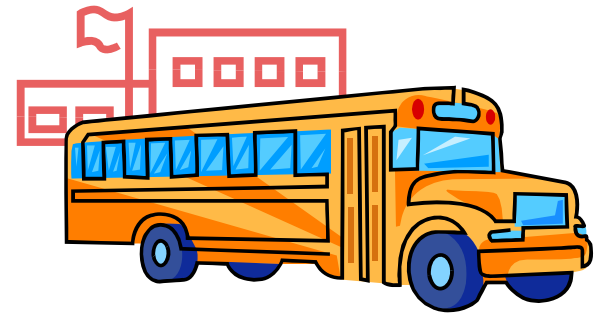
Source:

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction
6306 Mail Service Center
Raleigh NC 27699-6306
919.807.3450

www.ncpublicschools.org

Updated 11/06



OTHER RESOURCES

North Carolina PTA

www.ncpta.org office@ncpta.org

National PTA

www.pta.org info@pta.org

Both NCPTA and National PTA websites contain information on parent involvement, health & safety issues, internet safety, links to other helpful websites, etc.

NC Healthy Schools

www.nchealthyschools.org

American Heart Association

www.americanheart.org

Information on health issues for children and adolescents.

NC Association of Educators

www.ncae.org

Information on NC Teacher Cadet program, free parent guides, link to NC Pediatric Society.

NC Department of Public Instructions

www.ncpublicschools.org

For questions, email information@dpi.state.nc.us

Information on school report cards, dropout prevention, Governor's School, Graduation project, Safe & Drug Free Schools, and other programs involving schools and students.

NC Office of Crime Control and Public Safety

www.nccrimecontrol.org

Information on drinking & driving issues, underage access to alcohol, tobacco use, proper use of child safety seats, etc.

Mother Against Drunk Drivers. www.madd.org/nc

NC's Child Health Insurance Programs (Health Check & NC Health Choice)

www.nchealthystart.org/public/childhealth/index.htm

Information on insurance for children.

The Poe Center

www.poehealth.org

Information on programs for youth that address childhood obesity, physical inactivity, unhealthy food choices, drug and alcohol use, etc.

NC Center for After School Programs

www.nccap.net

Information on after school programs and issues associated with such programs.

NC New Schools Project

www.newschoolsproject.org

Information on program to build new schools or convert existing schools to model academically rigorous curriculum to prepare students for work and college.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Eat and Move program

www.eatandmove.com

Interactive programs and information on getting children and youth to eat and move for better health and fitness.