

Motivation for academic success

For a child to become motivated about school, they need to see learning as an enjoyable experience. Learning must be something children do for themselves, not for parents or teachers. There are several steps parents can take to promote academic motivation in their children:

- *Set attainable goals.* Teach or help your children to establish many goals within projects, both in school and with respect to everyday activities such as cleaning their room and getting dressed in the morning.
- *Celebrate when your child has achieved a goal.* Recognition and praise are powerful factors that encourage motivation. Reward your child with your time and attention.
- *Be specific with your praise.* "You did a great job" is not clear enough. Tell your child specifically what you think is wonderful about them and what you liked about what they did. This will highlight the behaviours that you would like to see again.
- *Help your child see the progress they are making.* Remind your child regularly of their accomplishments. Point out to an older child how their academic skills have increased gradually.
- *When you learn something new, share your excitement with your child.* If they see you getting excited about learning something new, or they see you reading or taking a course about something that interests you, they too may begin to feel excited about their own learning.

Some kids need to participate in activities outside school to build excitement around learning and that's where after school programs can come in. These programs, often offered by community-based organizations, provide structured and supervised activities such as computer instruction, sports, literacy tutoring, music and art lessons, nutrition guidance, and help with homework.

"We've funded hundreds of Canada's after school programs and have learned that kids enrolled in these programs actually become more motivated to excel in and stay in school," says Jasmina Zurovac, director of corporate donations at RBC.

The RBC After School Project supports programs that help kids learn, grow and reach their full potential. Visit www.rbc.com/afterschool for more information. These tips brought to you by Ceridian Canada.