

## As a parent, you can make a difference in how your child learns.

By getting involved in your child's education, you will build important relationships with the people and resources in your community. More importantly, you will inspire your child to learn and build the confidence and self-esteem that he or she needs to be successful. There are so many ways that you can participate. Find the ways that work for you.

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This booklet is available in English, French, Arabic, Mandarin, Urdu, Spanish, Farsi, and Somali.  
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Additional copies can be obtained by contacting  
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# Your Child's Education — Be a Part of It!



Sharing ideas from parents  
about getting involved

For more information about what's happening in your child's school, please contact the school directly.



## How can I help my child to be successful at school?

You can help your child reach his or her full potential at school by being actively involved in your child's learning — at home, in the school, and in the community. This means asking questions about what your child is learning, talking to your child's teachers, and showing your child how you use learning in your daily life.

## What are the benefits of playing a part in my child's education?

Alongside teachers, principals, support staff, administrators, and trustees, you are an important partner in your child's education. By being involved, you encourage good learning habits and support your child in making choices about his or her future. Studies show that when parents get involved in learning, students do better in school.

## Are there things that I can do at home?

Yes, learning starts at home. You can support your child's lifelong learning through reading. Reading, in any language and at any age, is one of the best ways to ensure student success at school. You can also help by talking to your child about his or her day, helping to create homework routines, and ensuring that your child is ready for school each day. Make learning fun — play board games, go to the public library, talk about current events.

## What are some of the obstacles that may make getting involved difficult for parents?

Many parents face the same challenges that you do. Work and family responsibilities often conflict with school hours. Language, transportation, cultural and financial issues can sometimes stop you from getting involved. Please don't let this happen. Your child's principal and teachers want to hear your ideas on how they can help you become more active in your child's education. The first step is simply contacting your child's school and asking how you can get involved.

## How can I participate in my child's education?

Whether you have five minutes, a few hours, or one night a month, you can make a difference in your child's education. This booklet offers some ideas to help you get involved. We encourage you to talk to your principal, your school council, and other parents to share your ideas. Find out what's happening in your school so you can get involved.

## Where can I get more information?

Your school is the best place to get information. Contact information is on the front of this booklet.

*Just by opening this booklet you are already participating in your child's education.*



*Help your child with homework at home.*



*Support your child's interests in after-school activities.*

# Opportunities at Home

At home, if you have . . .

A few minutes:

- Help your child develop routines to be ready for school each day.
- Ensure your child starts the day with breakfast.
- Ask your child what happened today in the classroom and on the playground.
- Connect with your school principal and your child's teachers through e-mail, telephone, or in person.
- Visit your school's website and your school council's website for an update on recent and upcoming activities.
- Read your school, school council, and classroom newsletters – check your child's backpack for a printed copy or view the newsletter on the website.

A few hours:

- Read with your child in any language to help your child to learn.
- Help your child with homework by providing a quiet place, by answering general questions, and by asking your child to explain what he or she has learned.
- Talk to your child about current affairs and encourage him or her to read local newspapers and magazines.
- Find out if you can be a volunteer or volunteer coordinator for your child's classroom or your school council.

A day:

- Clean out your cupboards and donate books or toys to the school (check with principals and teachers for a list of what is needed).
- Visit a museum or attend a special event in the city with your child to learn more about a topic that he or she is studying at school.
- Encourage active learning through outdoor play, board games, and helping at home.
- Teach your child to use the internet safely and effectively.

A few days or evenings:

- Find out if you can volunteer to prepare classroom materials or other items for special school events.
- Offer to translate documents, such as school projects and school council communications, into your first language to distribute to parents in your cultural community.
- Offer to work with your school and school council to complete grant applications, such as the Ministry's Parents Reaching Out Grants for Schools — [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).

Once a month:

- Find out if your school, school council, and/or child's classroom teacher has a monthly calendar of events and post it on your fridge door for everyone to read.

A season:

- Support your child's interests in after-school activities in the school or outside of the school, such as music, sports, or special interest programs.



*Find out how you can volunteer in the school.*



*Attend special events in the school.*

# Opportunities in Your Child's School

In your child's school, if you have . . .

## A few minutes:

- Arrange a time with your child's teacher to visit the classroom and learn about your child's successes and challenges.
- Say hello to the principal and the office staff in your child's school.
- Contact your school council chair to find out how you can get involved.
- Read the bulletin boards at your school.
- Find out what parent resources are available at your school and take advantage of them.

## A few hours:

- Attend your school's Meet-the-Teacher Night and take some time to visit with the teachers and members of the school administration.
- Attend Parent-Teacher Interviews to discuss your child's progress and upcoming coursework.
- Attend school assemblies, school council meetings, special events — your support is needed and welcomed.
- Get to know other parents at the school — stay in touch.

## A day:

- Find out how you can volunteer in the school — reading to students, participating in field trips, special events, holiday celebrations, helping with crafts, library improvements, or any administrative duties.
- Find out if you can volunteer to be a guest speaker or a parent tutor/mentor — your help is appreciated.

## A few days or evenings:

- Attend school special events, parent workshops, and other activities in your child's school — your attendance makes a difference.
- Volunteer to organize a school social event or fundraiser.
- Offer to translate at school council meetings to encourage parents in your cultural community to participate.
- Find out if you can work with your school and school council to prepare a welcome handbook for families new to the school.
- Offer to update the school council website.

## Once a month:

- Attend a school council meeting at your school (usually one evening a month).
- Volunteer to be a member of your school council or help with a special project, such as special event planning, and more — your talents are needed.

## A season:

- Find out if you can volunteer to coach a team or club at your school.
- Find out if you can volunteer to run a lunch hour club to teach or share a special skill with students.



*Work with a community organization to promote awareness.*



*Participate in maintaining schoolyard equipment.*

# Opportunities in Your Community

In the community, if you have . . .

A few minutes:

- Walk with your child through your community to school.
- If available, visit your neighbourhood association's website.
- Find out what is happening in your neighbourhood — read your community newspaper.

A few hours:

- Find out if you can volunteer to distribute school newsletters and flyers in your school neighbourhood.
- Volunteer to contact local businesses or organizations to support activities in your child's school or arrange for guest speakers.
- Visit your local public library.

A day:

- Find out if your school hosts an Open House for school students and parents to visit the school 'in action' and attend or offer to help.
- In consultation with your school and school council, distribute invitations for special events to local schools and the community.

- Make connections in your community — find opportunities for community members and the school to work together.
- Encourage your child to attend or volunteer at community events.

A few days:

- Attend school board and/or committee meetings at the OCDSB, 133 Greenbank Road.
- Talk to your school and school council about organizing tours of the school for parents new to the area.
- In consultation with your school and school council, offer to complete grant applications for schoolyard greening projects, such as the City of Ottawa's Tree Planting Grants — [www.ottawa.ca](http://www.ottawa.ca).
- Work with a community organization to host a special event.

Once a month:

- Offer to provide transportation for other parents to get to meetings.
- Organize a car pool.
- Attend an Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) meeting to find out what other schools are doing to increase parental involvement. — [www.ocasc.ca](http://www.ocasc.ca)
- Offer to write articles about your school's activities for your local newspaper.

A season:

- Coach a local team or club.
- Participate in 'greening' your schoolyard, planting trees, gardening, maintaining play equipment and/or outdoor rinks (in conjunction with our Facilities Department).

