

You can be a great help to your children if you will observe these do's and don'ts about tests and testing:

- Do talk to your child about testing. It's helpful for children to know the different kinds of tests they will take and why.
- Make sure your children are good readers. Reading comprehension is an essential skill in both learning and testing.
- Don't become anxious about your child's test scores. Too much pressure can affect his test performance.
- Do encourage your child to develop a positive attitude toward school and testing and to do his best. Provide plenty of reassurance that test taking is a natural part of their school year.
- Do help your child avoid test anxiety by providing him with test taking strategies including reading the directions carefully, getting a good night's rest before a test and practicing stress reducing techniques if he becomes nervous.
- Don't "cram" the night before. Cramming typically increases anxiety, which in turn can interfere with clear thinking.
- Do meet with your child's teacher on a regular basis to discuss his progress. Ask for suggested activities that you can use at home to help prepare your child for all tests.
- Do make sure that your child attends school regularly and make sure your child does his or her homework. This will help him stay on schedule and ensure that he is learning what is needed for teacher-made and standardized tests.
- Do make sure that your child is well rested, on the day of a test.
- Tests and grading systems are not perfect. Don't put too much emphasis on your child's test scores. Too much pressure can affect her test performance.
- Do make sure your child has a well rounded diet, especially breakfast. Those children who eat breakfast on a regular daily basis are more alert, pay better attention in class, and perform better on standardized achievement tests.
- Don't make a judgment on your child's performance on the basis of a single test score. There are many factors that can affect test scores and tests are only one tool to measure academic success.
- Do provide a variety of reading materials in your home. Check with your school or local librarian for age-appropriate suggestions.
- Do track your child's learning progress and needs by monitoring assignments, homework, and test performance. Make sure your child receives extra help if needed.