

Helping Your Child Become a Good Student – and a Good Person
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In an effort to encourage their child to be a good student, parents frequently lose focus on the larger goal of helping them to become the best person they can be. Instead, while helping your child become a good student, be sure to also provide the guidance and nurturance they need to grow into happier and more successful beings.

Along the way, you can help them grow by encouraging them to explore their interests in school, as well as out in the greater world. It is essential that your guidance does not turn into pushing them to pursue a life that fails to match who they are as an individual. A child who is a naturally talented artist can learn to pursue mathematics, but doing so by tamping down their creativity can squash their sense of themselves. An energetic and athletic child may forgo sports to hunker down and study for honors classes, but they will need to suppress and deny a part of themselves. Parents need to be aware that children, who go against their true nature, will suffer from it.

So, as you guide your child, it is essential that you are sensitive to who they are. The poet Kahlil Gibran's book *The Prophet* expressed this well in the following poem:

Your children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them,
but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children
as living arrows are sent forth.
The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,
and He bends you with His might
that His arrows may go swift and far.
Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so He loves also the bow that is stable.

As you do the tough job of parenting, keep this in mind: To help your child succeed in life, as well as in school, you must accept and love them for who they are while also offering encouragement.