

Parents' Page

Martha's Vineyard Public Schools
Sponsored by the Title 1 Grant

Highlights

- Help Your Child to Organize
- MCAS: How to Help Your Child Prepare
- Parent-Friendly Resources/ Websites

If you have any questions about Title 1 or a specific topic,

please feel free to contact Robyn Gurney, Title 1 Parent Coordinator @693-4489 or email gurney@mvyps.org

Help Your Child to Organize

Organization is one of the most important skills for students to learn in order to be successful. It helps them to keep track of homework assignments, library books, turn in projects on time, and study efficiently. When a child doesn't have to look for a lost item/ assignment or cram for a test, they will experience less anxiety knowing they are prepared.

But let's be honest, organization is extremely difficult for some children. Sometimes it seems easier to do it for them. They need someone to teach them how to get organized. You can help your child learn the essential skills of organization.

1. Point out why organizing things is important: less time looking for things, not losing items, being able to find things, no more last minute panic, no more all night cramming.
2. Consider your child's style and try to find a system that works for them.
3. Help your child find a place for things. (Labels, using word or pictures, may be necessary)
4. Schedule a clean-up time, whether daily or weekly.
5. Have a designated place and time for homework and studying.
6. Use checklists and/or calendars to keep track of what has to be done and when it is due.
7. Teach your child how to prioritize assignments. Avoid saving the longest or hardest for last.
8. Help your child break down longer assignments into smaller, more manageable pieces.
9. Prepare for the next day the night before – pack backpack, choose clothes, etc.
10. Most important, set a good example and be organized yourself.

Remember that changing habits may not happen right away, but you can do it with practice, consistency, and a positive attitude! There are only so many hours in a day, use them wisely!

Source: Title 1 Dissemination Project

MCAS: How to Help Your Child Prepare

M-C-A-S is four letters that often generates fear and anxiety in students and parents. MCAS, which stands for Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, is a series of tests designed to measure students' progress toward meeting state educational standards. Many of us have formed our own opinions about these tests, but whether we agree with them or not, they are a reality.

So how can parents help their children prepare for this test?

Throughout the Year - Many resources agree that what you do at home makes a big difference.

- All year long make sure your child gets enough sleep, eats properly and gets to school on time.
- Encourage your child to READ, READ, READ – even the math sections have directions and word problems.
- Provide a quiet, well lit place to study and do homework.
- Work with your child’s school/teachers to find out how you can support their learning at home.
- Review your child’s past MCAS tests to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Help your child practice MCAS test questions. Here are some great resources:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html> <http://mcasmentor.com>
<http://studyisland.com/demoAsk.cfm?myState=ma>
http://www.socrato.com/tag_cloud.php?ACTION=SEARCH7tag_ids=32

also...

<http://www.writingfix.com> (interactive writing prompts)
<http://www.usingenglish.com/quizzes/> (practice grammar)
<http://studygs.net/> (tips for test taking)

The Day of the Test

- Make sure your child is well rested and eats breakfast.
- Comfort counts. Make sure your child is dressed appropriately or with layers.
- Be positive and encourage your child to do the best work they are capable of.

Help create a positive test-taking experience. Your interest and support let your child know you believe in him/her and that you value education.

Source: Massachusetts Parent Information and Resource Center

Parent-Friendly Resources/Websites

The following are great sights that offer free resources for parents. They are all very user-friendly and easy to navigate. I encourage you to take some time and discover what they have to offer!

Parents’ Place - www.pplace.org

Massachusetts Parent Information and Resource Center offers free publications to families in English, Portuguese, and Spanish on topics related to family involvement in education and children’s development.

The Web-enhanced Family Literacy Initiative – www.wefli.org

This online education resource’s goal is “to assist parents in creating powerful, positive literacy experiences in the home”. This site offers parent-friendly literacy website link, as well as podcasts on education-related topics.

Thinkfinity.org – www.thinkfinity.org

This sight, supported by the Verizon foundation, has an abundance of free educational resources. It offers parent educational resources, as well as resources for the arts, social studies, literacy, math, reading and language arts, science and geography. Among other things they offer book lists, games and activities, maps, homework help, and a literary glossary.

May Your Life Be Like Mathematics ...

Your joys added,
Your sorrows subtracted,
Your cares divided, and
Your happiness multiplied

Author Unknown