


SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES

What Parents Need to Know




**New
School!**

Help me!



Now my children will have a better life.

But I don't know what to do to help them succeed in the schools in the United States!



Don't worry about it my friend... just read this booklet and you will learn.

***S*TRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOLS IN THE**

***U*NITED STATES**

1) **Preschool: Age 3 to 5.**

2) **Elementary School: Grades K to 6th. Age 6 to 12.**

3) **Middle School: Grades 7th to 8th. Age 13 to 14.**

4) **High School: Grades 9th to 12th. Age 15 to 18.**

***H*IGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

The curriculum may vary, but there are mandatory classes that are required in almost all schools in the United States.

- 1) **Science 3 years.**
- 2) **Mathematics 4 years.**
- 3) **English 4 years.**
- 4) **Social Studies 3 years.**
- 5) **Physical Education 4 years.**
- 6) **Some States require a Health Class.**

***E*XTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Soccer, Football, Baseball, Swimming;
Clubs: Photography, Drama;
Community Service Programs, etc.

All of them are activities outside the
academic curriculum, but they are
supervised by school personnel.



***S*SCHOOL SOCIAL LIFE AND ACTIVITIES**

Social events are part of U.S.
schools

Yes, we have:

Celebrations such as the Home
Coming Week, Parades, Prom,
etc.



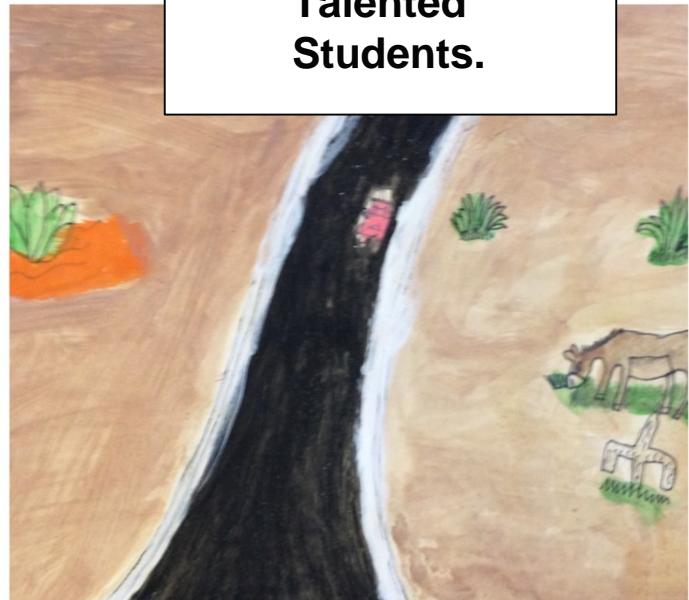
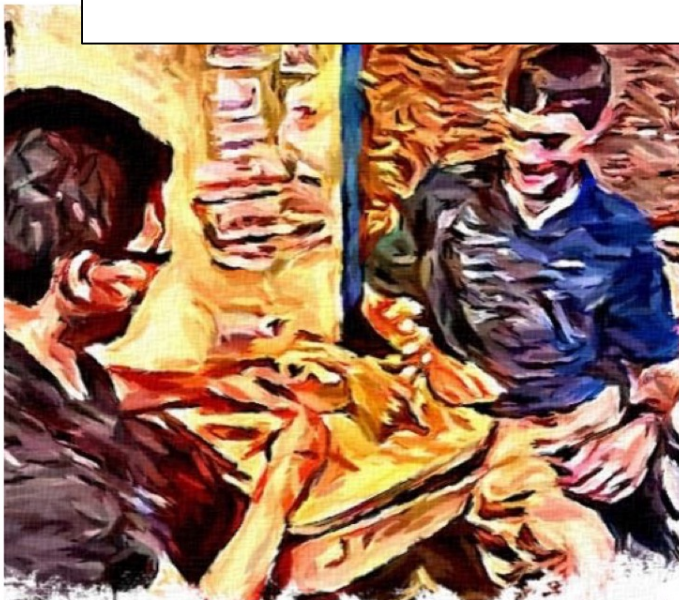
WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM PARENTS IN THE SCHOOLS

IN THE UNITED STATES?

- ✓ Meet the school staff: Principal, Teachers, Counselor, Teacher Aids, Nurse, Secretary, etc.
- ✓ Attend the School Open House.
- ✓ Attend Parent-Teacher Conferences (PTC).

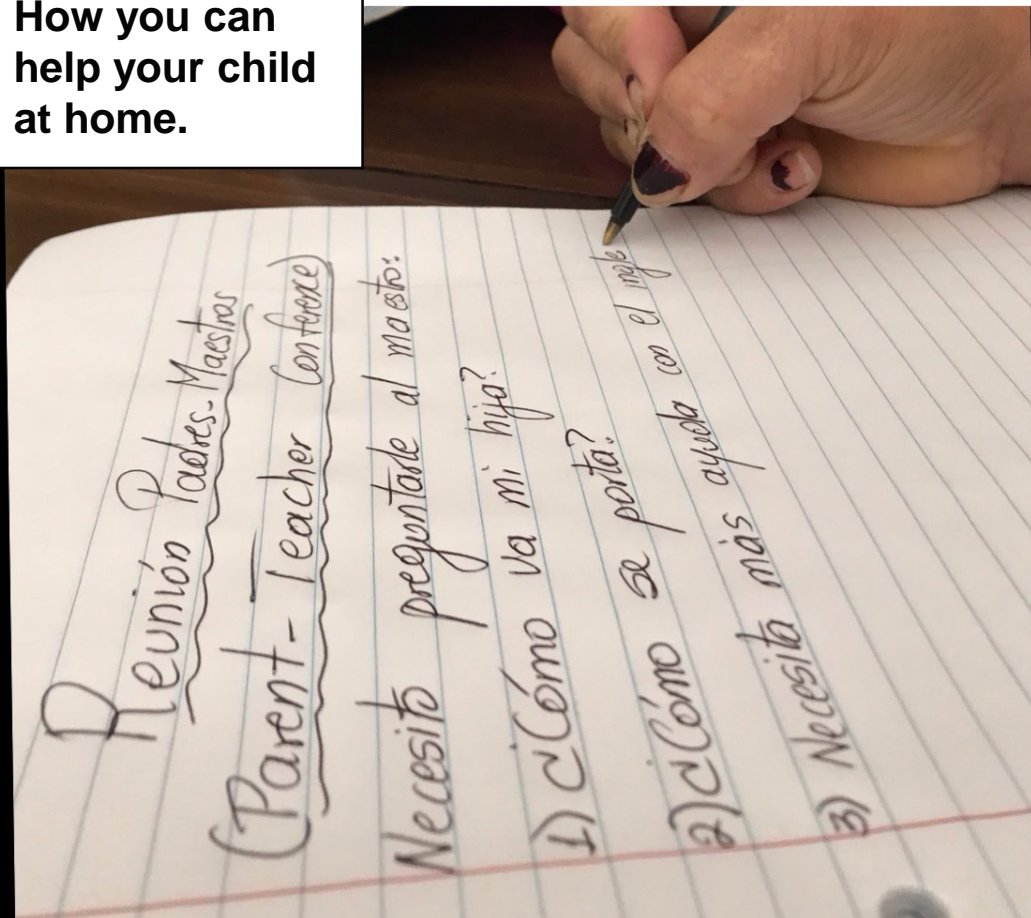
- ✓ Attend school celebrations where your child participates: Concerts, Hispanic Heritage Celebration, Plays, etc.
- ✓ Collaborate with special activities.
- ✓ Volunteer if you can.
- ✓ Attend meetings when your child has problems at school.
- ✓ Stay in contact with the school.

- ✓ Attend Special Services Meetings:
 - English as a New Language (ENL).
 - Special Education: Individualized Education Plan - (IEP) and the 504 Plan.
 - Gifted and Talented Students.



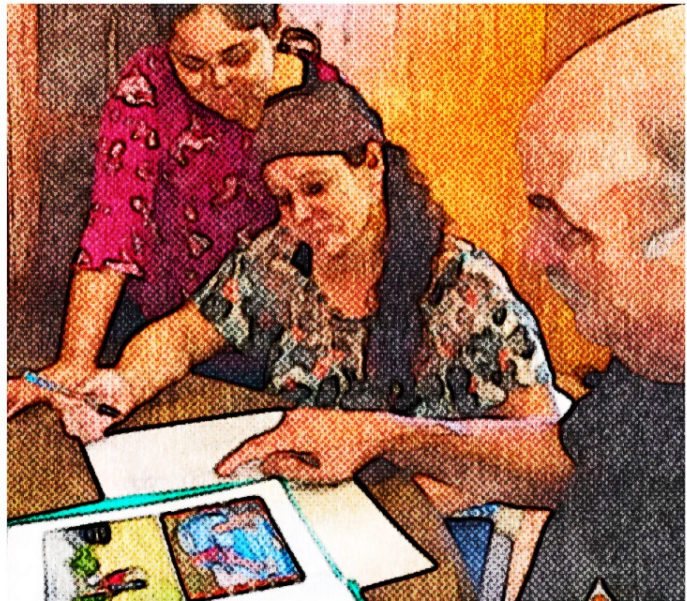
PREPARING FOR A PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

- ✓ Request an interpreter, if needed.
- ✓ Ask the teacher about:
 - Your child's behavior at school.
 - His/her grades.
 - How s/he works in class.
 - How s/he is doing with homework.
 - How you can help your child at home.
- ✓ Let teachers know:
 - Your child's learning needs.
 - His/her medical condition.
 - His/her talents and skills.
 - His/her academic strengths and weaknesses.
 - What s/he likes or dislikes.
 - Any problem at school.
 - Special situations at home: Divorce, death, new baby, etc.
 - Anything that worries you about his/her education.



DURING THE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

- ✓ Arrive to the meeting on time.
- ✓ Be calm.
- ✓ Ask questions when you do not understand.
- ✓ If your child is in the Special Education program or if s/he has a 504 Plan, ask for the Progress Report.
- ✓ Allow the meeting to end at the scheduled time.
- ✓ If you need more time, ask for another meeting.
- ✓ Thank the teacher(s).

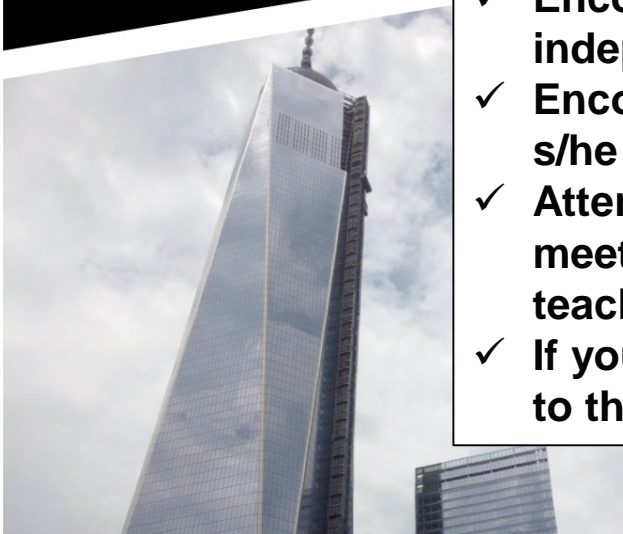


***H*OW TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN SUCCEED AT SCHOOL**

- ✓ Demonstrate a positive attitude towards education and give it the due importance.
- ✓ Check his/her backpack every day.
- ✓ Make sure your child does the homework. Some teachers require that you sign the completed assignments.

- ✓ If your child has an agenda or planner, sign it every night.
- ✓ Have your child read 15-20 minutes each day and encourage him/her to check out books from the school library.
- ✓ Make sure s/he sleeps well, 7 to 8 hours a day.
- ✓ Establish rules on the use of electronic devices (television, video games, cell phones, tablets, etc.) at home and at school. *For example, cell phones can be used on school nights after homework is done, and before bed.*

- ✓ Encourage your child to be independent.
- ✓ Encourage him/her to ask questions if s/he does not understand the class.
- ✓ Attend all conferences and other meetings that are scheduled with teachers.
- ✓ If you cannot attend, then send a note to the school letting them know.



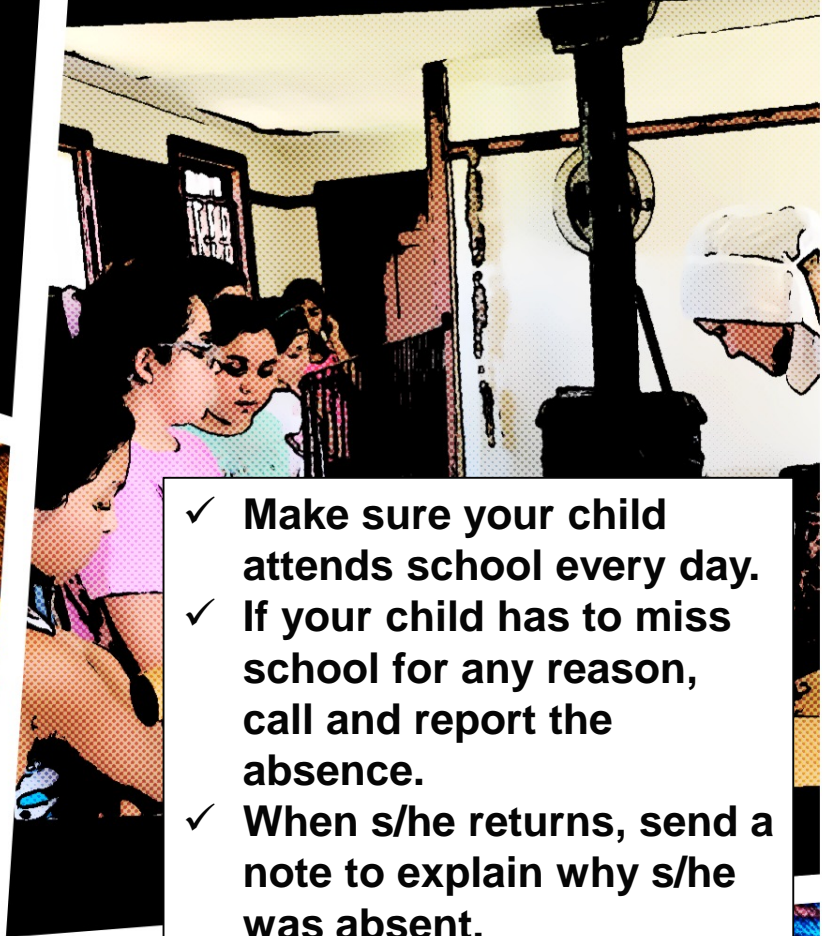
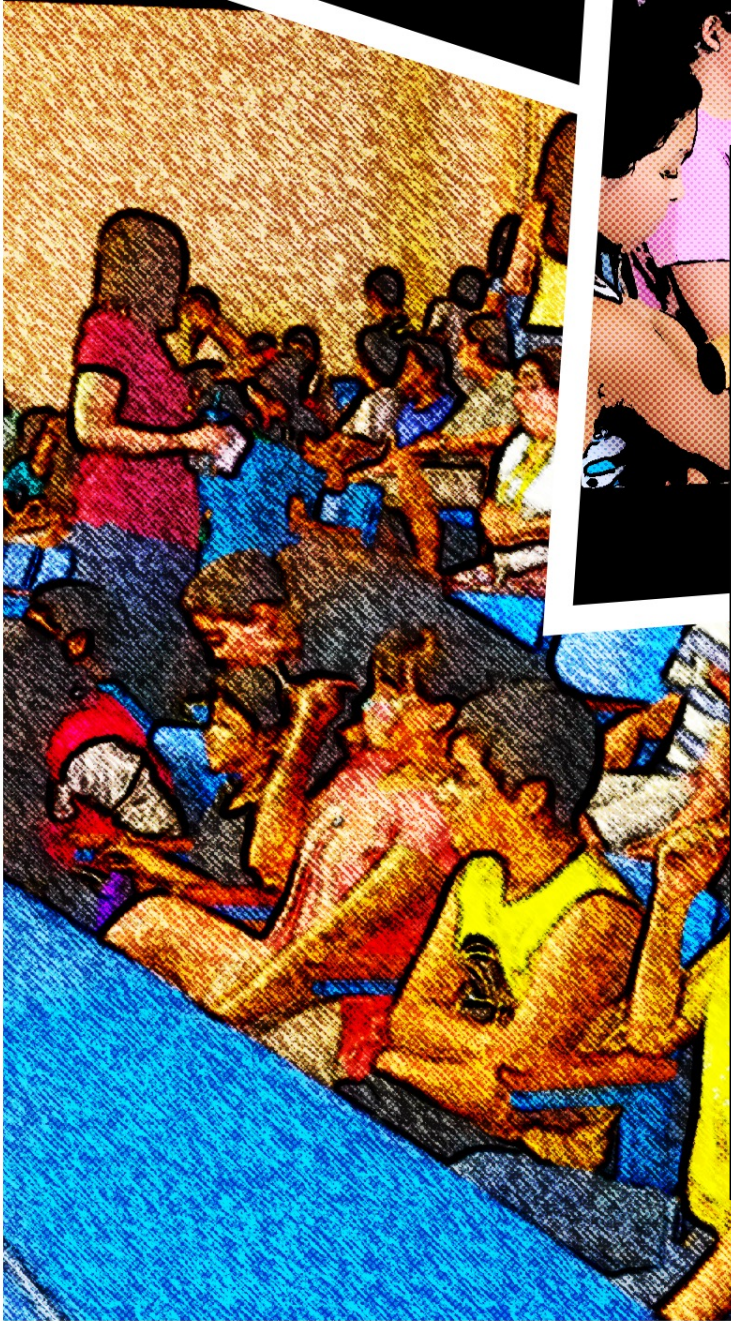
TALK TO YOUR CHILD DAILY

- ✓ Motivate and help your child to reinforce his/her self-esteem [tell him/her how much you believe in them, that you are proud of their effort, and they can achieve anything they are committed to].
- ✓ Remind him/her that s/he should:
 - Behave respectfully.
 - Work hard.
 - Behave everywhere.
 - Always look into the eyes; this is normal in the United States (it is what is expected from people).

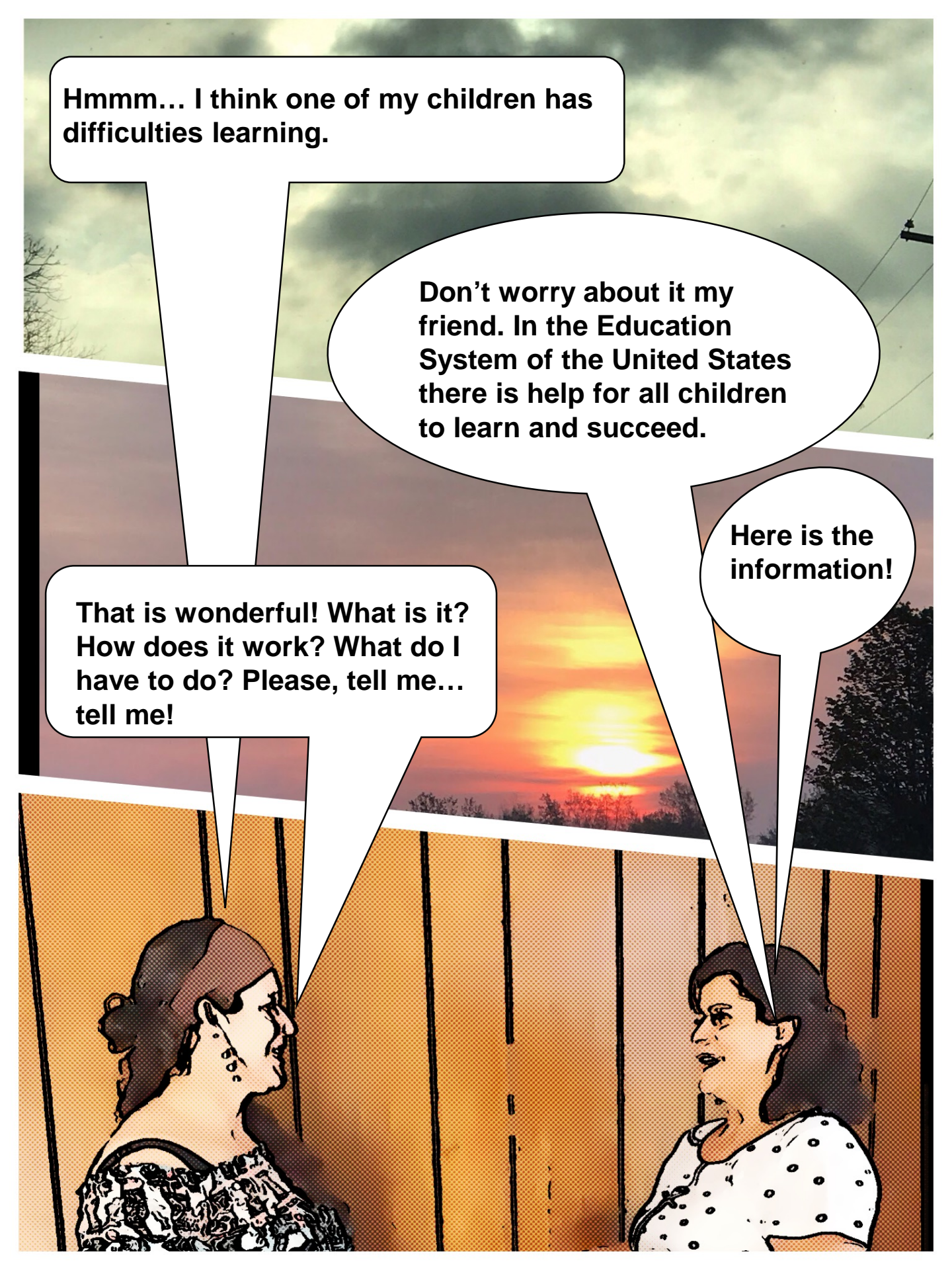


- ✓ Tell him/her that:
 - S/he has the right to express, respectfully, his/her thoughts if s/he feels unhappy.
 - Advocate for himself/herself.
 - Ask his/her teachers and parent for help.
 - Get help from any adult at school.
 - Have an ally [a friend of his/her age].
- ✓ Encourage him/her to be curious.

DAILY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS



- ✓ **Make sure your child attends school every day.**
- ✓ **If your child has to miss school for any reason, call and report the absence.**
- ✓ **When s/he returns, send a note to explain why s/he was absent.**
- ✓ **Remember that by law, you are required to send your child to school every day. If you do not, the school can report it to the Child Protection Service (CPS).**
- ✓ **Each time your child is absent from school, the chances of academic failure increases.**



Hmmm... I think one of my children has difficulties learning.

Don't worry about it my friend. In the Education System of the United States there is help for all children to learn and succeed.

Here is the information!

That is wonderful! What is it? How does it work? What do I have to do? Please, tell me... tell me!

SPECIAL EDUCATION

“Special Education refers to a range of educational and social services provided by the Public School System and other Educational Institutions to individuals with disabilities [physical, emotional and learning] who are between three and 21 years of age... This environment allows them be educated effectively” *(Special Education, 2018).*

What do I have to do for my child to get those services? How will I know about it?

Simple my friend. Communication is the key. The school will let you know in writing and in your language, it is the law!

However, you need to do your part signing consent forms and other documents, attending meetings and advocating for your child!



After disabilities and special needs are identified, an IEP is developed by school staff with input from the parents.

An IEP!
What's that?



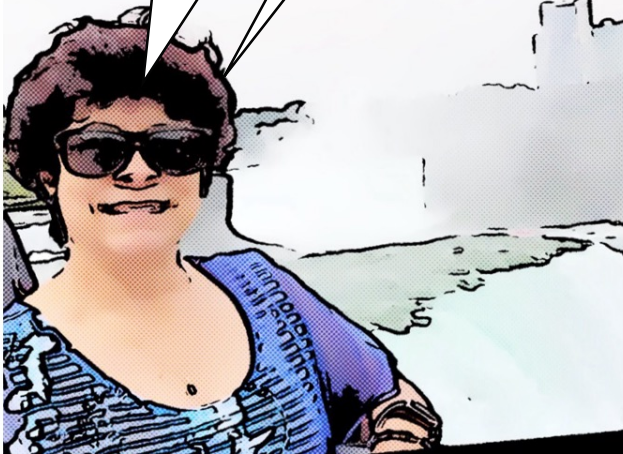
“The "IEP" or "Individualized Education Program“, is a process and a document. If an assessment says your child needs Special Education, you will have an IEP meeting at least once a year. You and the rest of the IEP team will write an IEP document that says what your child needs and what services will meet those needs. It should say:

- ✓ What [academic] level your child is at in school.
- ✓ What the long and short-term goals are for your child.
- ✓ What special education and related services your child needs.
- ✓ How much your child can be with children who aren't disabled.
- ✓ When services should start.” *(Colorín Colorado, 2018).*

It's very important that fathers and mothers, or adults caring for children are involved in their children's education. Adults need to be connected with the school, attend Parent-Teacher Conferences, special meetings, advocate for their children, read with them and help them with their homework.

My friend, just be connected with the school and be an active participant. All of this work is for our children's own good!. You are not alone!

OK... I am so glad I learned about all of this!



ADDITIONAL ADVICE

- ✓ Encourage your child to do homework and study at home.
- ✓ Have a schedule and place set up to study.



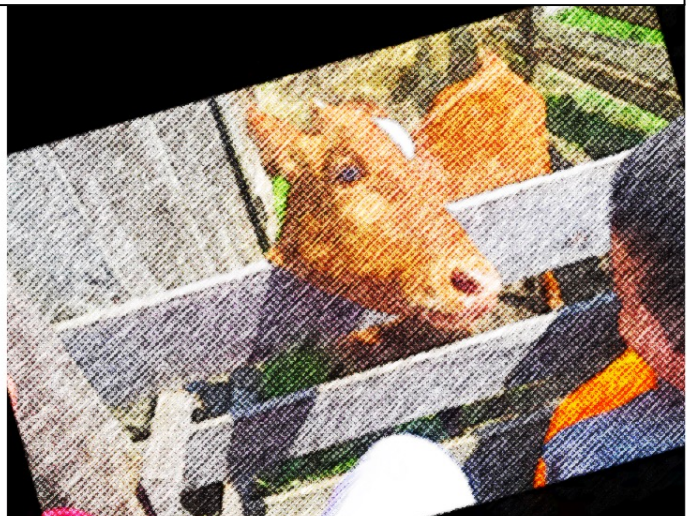
- ✓ Check the report card that the school sends home.
- ✓ Advocate for your child. S/he has the same rights as the other children in school.
- ✓ Open an account on the Parent Portal (if the school has this service) and, if possible, review it daily to see how your child is doing.



Encourage your children to be life-long learners.



Encourage him/her to study hard, to read, and do all school work.



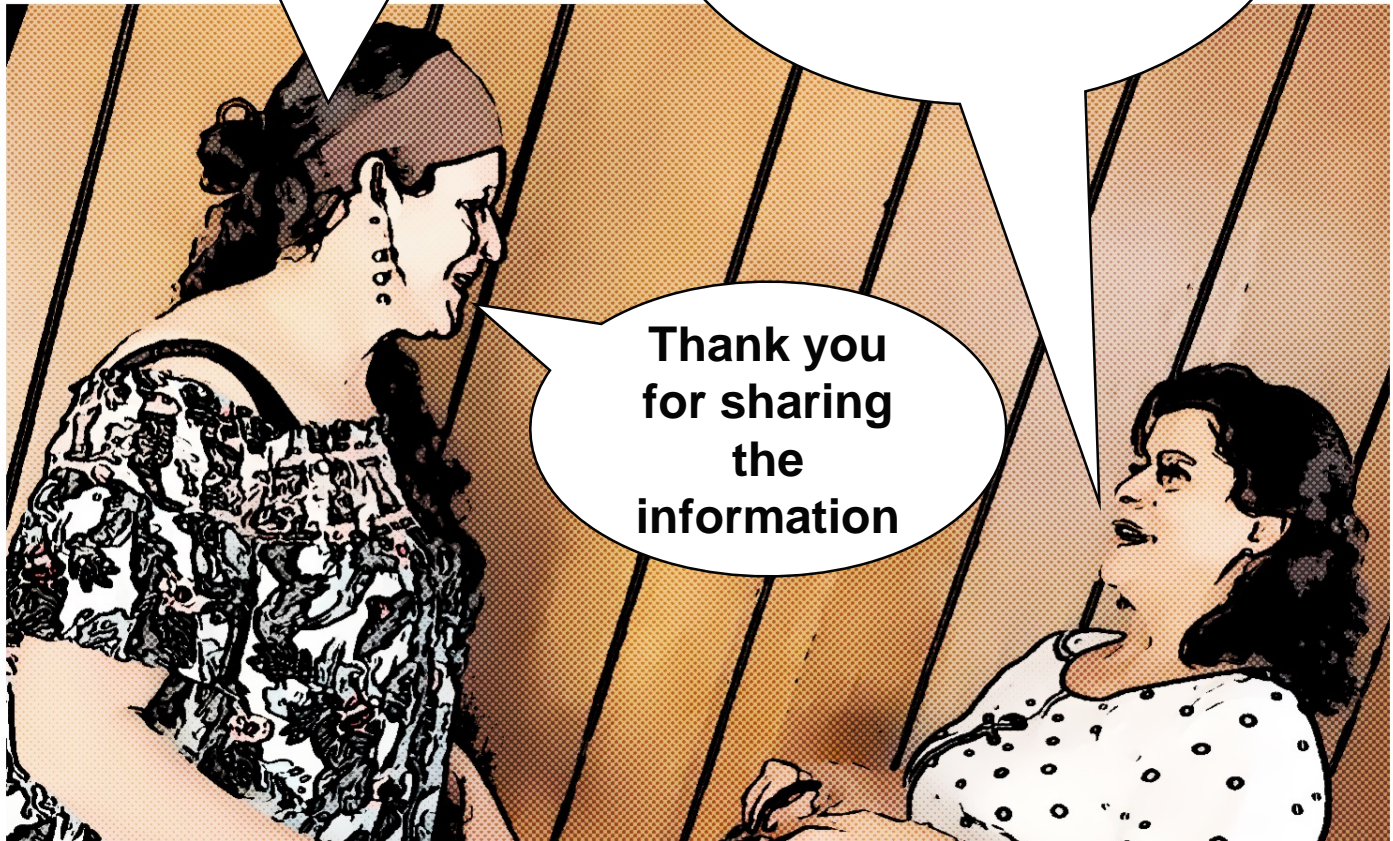
Motivate him/her to be curious.



Wow! the Educational System in my country is definitely different to the one in the United States

Yes, but as you saw, it is not complicated to help our children succeed!

Thank you for sharing the information



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Additional Advice

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<http://www.colorincolorado.org/es/articulo/20-maneras-en-que-puede-ayudar-su-hijo-triunfar-en-la-escuela>

Extra-curricular Activities

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<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/audits/swr/2016/extraclassroom/global.pdf>

High School Curriculum

<http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction>

How to help your children to succeed at school

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