

Test Day Do's

You can be a great help to your child if you will observe these DO's about testing:

- **DO encourage your kids.** Help them believe in themselves. Praise them for what they do well and don't dwell on their shortcomings. Make your child feel "smart" and amazing things will happen; they will do their best, not just on the test, but on everything they undertake. And they'll undertake many more things when they feel self-confident and loved.
- **DO practice reading and math every day.** And remember! The only way to practice reading is to read. You can read to your children, or have them read to you, as often as possible. Newspapers, magazines, and books are all handy learning tools. As for math skills, have your children help add up grocery items or calculate amounts when baking. Choose practical, real-world ways to work math problems into your daily lives.
- **DO make sure your child gets plenty of exercise in the days and weeks before the test.** Exercise makes you more alert, stronger, able to think more clearly, and increases your energy level. It also helps to relax you during stressful times. Exercise can be as simple as an afternoon walk through the neighborhood, a bicycle ride around the park, or a run up and down the staircase several times in a row. Vary the exercise but be consistent. Do it every day or every other day for best results.
- **DO make sure your child reviews for the big test in the weeks before it's given.** Using this product is one very effective way to review, but use other materials, too. Collecting your child's Math, Language Arts and Reading exams from throughout the school year and reviewing them with your student in the weeks prior to the test is another good way to help them prepare. Sometimes kids forget the things they learned earlier in the year. A vocabulary review or a refresher on a math concept (like fractions) might be just what they need to help them make the grade. Keep in mind that they are probably getting a review at school, too.
- **DO make sure that your child is well rested on all school days but especially on the day of the test!!** Children who are tired are less able to pay attention in class or to handle the demands of a test. Doctors say that most young people need 7 to 11 hours of sleep to be at their best. Plan a nutritious dinner and serve it early. Then let your child do something fun and relaxing.
- **DO use words that your child is likely to see on a test.** Make sure they're familiar with words like describe, explain, define, compare, and contrast as these words are often seen on tests. Make a game out of it—when driving in the car, ask your children to describe what they see when stopped at a traffic light or to compare two buildings along your route.

- **DO make sure your child eats a big breakfast everyday, but especially on the day(s) of their high-stakes test.** Thinking takes lots of energy! It's hard to concentrate on the test if your stomach is growling. You might even send a snack to school with your child on the day of the test. If there's a break, your child can refuel.
- **DO let your children know that the test is important to their future so that they take it seriously—just not too seriously!** Even if you don't agree with all the emphasis placed on testing, the reality is that the test is important to your child's future. Make sure you've communicated this to your child so they'll do their best.

Test Day Don'ts

You can be a great help to your child if you will observe these DON'Ts about testing:

- **DON'T be too anxious about your child's test scores.** Test scores are not a perfect measure of what your child can do. Test scores are simply one way to measure your child's performance. The chances are good that your child's school is already putting on the pressure. That means you shouldn't. Let your child know you expect them to put their best effort forward, but you love them no matter what happens. If you put too much emphasis on getting good test scores, this can unnecessarily stress your child.
- **DON'T wait 'til the night before the test to get involved with your child's education.** Using this product, you can assess your child's mastery of the curriculum throughout the school year and get them the help they need from teachers and tutors BEFORE they take their state test. Cramming the night before the big test is a sure-fire way to upset your child, make it hard for them to sleep, and undermine their success the next day.
- **DON'T let your child miss school!** Attending school regularly is extremely important for life and for test scores. Missing even one day could cause your student to miss out on valuable knowledge and skills.
- **DON'T rush on the morning(s) of the test.** Prepare as much as possible the night(s) before the test. Have your child's clothes and school supplies laid out and ready to go. Most tests require the use of #2 pencils. Be sure your child has at least two.
- **DON'T forget to reward your child after each day of testing.** Some state tests span several days and even weeks. It's a stressful time for your student. Making their favorite dinner or letting them watch their favorite movie is a great way to help them relax and let them know their efforts are valued by you.