**How to Handle a "Poor" Report Card**

***Tips for Helping Your Children When They are Struggling to Get Good Grades***

It’s that time of the school year again - report card time.  While many students will come home with good grades, many others would rather stuff their report cards deep into their backpacks than show them to their parents.  As parents, you want your child to do well in school, so what do you do when your child’s report card isn’t as good as it could be?

"Children get frustrated and upset when their report cards don’t reflect their academic potential," states Missy Tubbs, Assistant Director of the Sylvan Learning located in Jonesboro.

"Every child learns and tests differently.  And, not every child will be a straight ’A’ student," continues Tubbs. "Understanding your child’s ability and determining if your expectations are too high will allow both you and your child to set appropriate goals for each class before report cards are distributed.  It will also help establish an environment in which your child is not apprehensive about sharing his report card with you."

Sylvan Learning, the leading provider of in-center and live, online tutoring at home to students of all ages and skill levels, offers the following tips for parents on how to deal with a "poor" report card:

1. **Set expectations.**  Not every child will achieve high marks, but that doesn’t mean your child should strive for less.  Talk with your child before the school year starts and explain that you won’t be upset if he doesn’t bring home perfect grades -- but that you will be upset if he doesn’t try his hardest or doesn’t ask for help.
2. **Communicate with your child.**  Don’t wait until report cards are issued to talk with your child about school and grades.  Talk with her every night and every week about homework.  Ask how she is doing in school and what subjects she finds challenging.
3. **Discuss your child’s performance with his teacher and/or guidance counselor.**  Your child’s teacher and/or guidance counselor is the best source for information about your child’s scholastic performance.  Your child’s teacher can recommend ways to help your child or point out difficulties he is having.  His guidance counselor can provide progress reports between reports cards or help set up additional parent-teacher conferences when necessary.
4. **Set goals for improvement with your child.**  If your child is currently a "C" student -- then setting a goal of getting all "A’s" may not be reasonable.  However, creating an improvement goal for each subject will help her work towards an attainable level for each class.
5. **Establish a study plan with your child.**  Your child should keep a schedule of all classes, assignments and key dates (e.g., project deadlines, big exams, etc).  As part of that schedule, he should include specific time for studying, projects and extracurricular activities.  The more comprehensive the schedule, the more efficient your child will be in completing his homework and the better he’ll do in school.
6. **Seek outside help**.  Some children may need additional attention that can’t be provided in school.  Speak with your child’s teacher about tutoring or supplemental education providers to help your child work towards better grades in school.
7. **Praise your child’s successes.**  Praise your child for what she is doing well, whether it’s a specific academic subject or an extracurricular activity.  If your child is not doing well in English, but loves to read the latest Harry Potter book, show her the connection between the two.

**About Sylvan Learning**Sylvan Learning is the leading provider of tutoring to students of all ages, grades and skill levels. Sylvan Learning has more than 900 centers located throughout North America. In its 30 years, Sylvan’s proven process and personalized methods have inspired more than 2 million students to discover the joy of learning. Sylvan-trained and certified personal instructors provide individual instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, study skills and test-prep for college entrance and state exams. Sylvan helps transform kids into inspired learners with the skills to do better in school and the confidence to do better in everything else. Visit [www.DrRickBlog.com](http://www.drrickblog.com/) to share your personal academic experiences and comment on academic trends.  For more information, call 1-800-31-SUCCESS or visit [www.SylvanLearning.com](http://www.sylvanlearning.com/).