

Grades

Citizenship

Teacher's Comments

What  
Do I  
Do  
Now?

# Tips To Talking To Your Student About Grades

Speaking to your child about grades can be daunting and at times, dreadful. Below are some tips that may assist you when having that conversation.

## TIP 1: APPROACH THE SUBJECT WITH CONCERN, NOT ANGER



While it's important to address a bad grade when it happens, you may find yourself angry when discussing it with your child. Allow yourself time to cool off. We cannot change the past or the grades that have been given. You can only assist your child in moving forward. Discuss how you are concerned about their academic performance rather than how angry you are about it.

## TIP 2: SEPARATE YOUR CHILD FROM THE ACTUAL GRADE

It is important that your child knows you love them. While you may be upset about the grade, your child needs to know that you still love him/her. Another thing to note is that although academic performance is important, it is not the only measure of their success.



## TIP 3: LISTEN MORE THAN TALK



Ask questions...lots of them. You will begin to know more about your child and his/her strengths and challenges. Additionally, you can become your child's biggest advocate to teachers and staff. Some helpful questions to ask are: How do you feel about this grade? What did you do (or not do) to earn this grade? What could you have done differently? How could I support you more? What is one goal you'd like to make and work toward?

## TIP 4: COMMUNICATE POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS

One way to address the topic without causing harm to your child is to address your expectations of their success. If presented with a negative report card, phrases such as, "I never expected this" or "Wow, I am so surprised" are ways to address the concern while highlighting that poor achievement was not an expectation. On the flip side, phrases such as, "Well, I am not surprised by this report card given your behavior the past few weeks" or "I never see you study for tests; it's no wonder you got a bad grade" indicate that you expected them perform poorly, and can cause them to continue performing in that manner.



## TIP 5: FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS



When we dwell on a problem, it often leaves a negative mood/tension, and can trickle into different areas of our life. If we focus on fixing the problem, we feel better about the situation and often feel like we have tools to move forward. Identify strengths and challenges and begin to seek out solutions rather than finding things to blame.

