

How to Raise a PhD.

"Read to your child at least 20 minutes a day."

As a father of four sons who now possess eight college degrees, I am often asked: What did you do to accomplish this? Without much thought, I usually respond in this manner:

- 1. First, set the tone in your household that education is priority #1. Constantly remind your children that people who are without an education are usually the last hired and the first fired. Remind them daily that the future world will require an educated workforce. Finally, remind them that education is a daily & life-long process-in other words, learning never stops!**
- 2. Get to know your child's school. Make sure that your face becomes a familiar one to the school leaders, your child's teachers, the office staff, and the school's support staff. Meet with your child's teachers and learn their expectations, course goals, grading standard, class projects, etc. Also, tell the teacher if your child is making less than a "B+" to call you-give all of the telephone numbers where you can be reached. Attend all school functions. Ensure that your child participates in at least one team sports activity. And regardless of your personal circumstance attend all of the events that your child participates in. Children love seeing their parents in the audience.**
- 3. Have a designated study location for your child. For us, it was the dining room table-a table which still bears the marks and scrapes of our son's pencils and pens. Make sure that the study space is well-lighted and that all electronic devices are off. It is also helpful for the parents to sit at the table with the students as they do their homework.**
- 4. Design your weekends and vacations around your children-not you! Make frequent visits with your children to the library, museums, and places that have as their missions the intent to widen your child's world.**
- 5. Read to your child at least 20 minutes a day if he/she is a non-reader. If they are readers, have them read to you for twenty minutes a day. Additionally, let your child see you reading on a daily basis. Make reading a family affair!**
- 6. Celebrate your child's heritage and culture every day. Let them see positive images of their forebearers on the walls of your home and part of your home library. Let your child know that he/she too can follow in their footsteps. -but only if they are focused on being successful.**
- 7. Families need support in raising their children. In our case, many people contributed to our sons' development-the elderly neighbors in the neighborhood; their athletic coaches; their teachers; ministers; family members; and friends of the family. These rich support resources can help guide your child in the direction of success. Never overlook them when it comes to helping you raise your child.**

*"Take the SAT/ACT
Exam every year!"*

8. **Parents of students in grades 5 and above: Have your child take the SAT or Act exam every year until they graduate from high school. Do not wait until your child is in high school to take the SAT or ACT. The more your child takes these exams, the better chances for her/him to achieve a higher score. Unfortunately, many African American children take the SAT/ACT just one time, thereby reducing their opportunity to achieve a promising score. By the way, a friend of mine who resides in Grosse Pointe, Michigan told me about this widely practiced activity among wealthy Grosse Pointer in preparing their children for college.**
9. **Read the same books/novels, comic strips, magazines your children are reading. It helps greatly when parents and children can converse openly about the same things they are all reading. It can be a fun activity.**
10. **Ask your child what he/she did in school each day. Don't let him/her tell you the proverbial "nothing". Inspect your child's note books, journals, book bags, teachers' notes , etc., to see what is happening in the classroom. Remember, an informed parent is an active parent when it comes to educating her/his children.**