

In today's high-tech world, math and science matter. Whatever your child wants to do, whether it's joining the military, joining the workforce, or going to college, he or she will need these skills.

As a parent, your main job is to stay informed and involved. Your children listen to you more than you know. Parents have the power to make the difference. For tips on how, just look inside.



School Supplies

In middle school, your child will need a basic scientific calculator. Flash cards are helpful for studying math and science vocabulary as well as formulas and equations. You'll also need to keep basic presentation materials handy (poster board, glue, markers). A simple microscope, while not required, would be a handy thing to have at home. Hint: Just because you're a parent doesn't mean you can't shop at teacher-supply stores and websites! Ask your child's teacher for sources.

- + Basic scientific calculator
- + Flash cards (buy or make your own from index cards)
- + Presentation materials
- + Simple microscope, if possible

You can find a calculator online at math.com. Just click on "Calculators and Tools."



Parents have the power.
A guide to helping your child succeed.

MATHSCIENCESUCCESS.ORG

Georgia's Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics Initiative

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middle
school

In middle school, there are some big decisions to make.



In fact, by the end of 8th grade, you and your child will need to start thinking about plans for after high school: whether your child will be going to a four- or two-year college, technical school, or joining the workforce.

Does 8th grade seem too early to make such monumental decisions? In many ways, it is. That's why students should keep their options open by taking the challenging math and science courses in every grade. (Even if there's only a chance your child will go to a four-year college, choose those courses!)

At this stage, subjects that used to be easy (like math) may become challenging – which can be scary for your child. Middle school is also a prime time for peer pressure; be careful your child doesn't get sucked into thinking that being smart in math and science isn't cool. Keep talking to your kids about their potential and all they can do (and be) if they keep pushing themselves.

How well your child does in middle school will influence her high school curriculum. Talk to teachers several times each semester, so you know if your child is successfully making the transition and working at grade level. And remember – you have a voice in these decisions! Don't let your child get pushed in the wrong direction or lower her expectations.

- + If you hated math and science when you were in school, never admit that to your kids (because they'll think if it was okay for you, then it's okay for them).
- + Encourage the mindset that, "It's okay if it's hard." If your child isn't afraid of a challenge, then half the battle's won.

Middle school is all about study skills, time management, and responsibility.

- + At this stage, kids are expected to start thinking and doing for themselves. Make sure your child has all the organizational supplies he or she needs and a day planner to keep track of it all.
- + Create a quiet place in your home for your child to study and check to see that homework is getting done. You don't need to be an expert on the subject to look at the assignment and see that all the problems have been completed (or, at the very least, attempted).
- + Don't wait for a conference to talk with your child's teachers. When parents are involved right from the start, kids tend to do better. Whenever possible, include your child in parent/teacher conferences. That way, he or she can be part of the conversation.
- + In 9th grade, grades really start to count. Encourage your child to take school seriously and really start thinking about his or her future.
- + If you're considering technical school for your child, now is the time to start researching different programs to find out what kind of math and science courses are required for different fields.

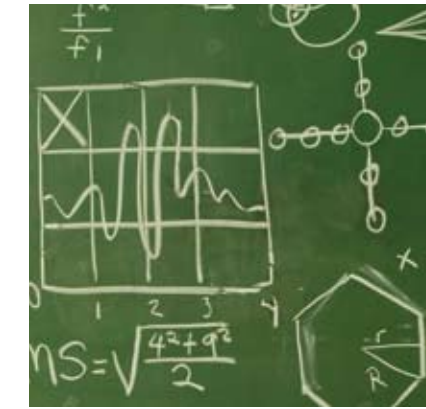
Tests

In 8th grade, students take the CRCT (Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests). Talk to teachers to make sure your child is prepared.



It's also time to start thinking about the SAT, which college-bound students start taking in 11th grade. All students should take the "practice version," the PSAT, in 10th grade. Talk to your child's teachers about what they're doing to prepare students for these tests. It's never too early to start.

Math and science resources.



There are many websites and books that can help you and your child with math and science. Some build skills through games. Others help with homework assignments. Ask your child's teachers if there are specific websites for the textbooks they use. In the meantime, here's a list to help you get started. If you don't have a computer at home, check out these sites at your public library.

www.explorellearning.com

Experience Math and Science with Gizmos. Online simulations that stimulate inquiry and understanding.

www.funbrain.com

Games for K-8th grade students.

www.sciencenewsforkids.org

Includes puzzles, games, sci-fi, science fairs, labs, and more!

www.getsmarter.org/index.cfm

An interactive site where students can compare their math and science achievement against others worldwide.

Books

"The Ten Things All Future Mathematicians and Scientists Must Know (But are Rarely Taught)" by Edward Zaccaro. More than 50 stories that show the connections between math and science and the real world.

"It's Alive: It's Math Like You've Never Known It Before... and May Never Know It Again" by Asa Kleiman. Written by two junior high students, this fun book takes the kind of gooey, slimy, disgusting science facts that kids love and turns them into hilarious math problems.

"Science Experiments You Can Eat" by Vicki Cobb. Experiments with food demonstrate scientific principles and produce edible results.

For more information, visit:

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