



READY TO LEARN EVERY DAY!



Family Action provides practical, emotional and financial support to over 45,000 vulnerable children and families every year. Registered charity in England and Wales no. 264713

www.family-action.org.uk



NAHT is a professional association and trades union with members in all phases of education. We represent 28,500 school leaders in their quest to develop great schools and improve the lives of children.

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Independence and Responsibility: A short guide for parents



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The advice in this leaflet has been compiled using the expertise of both NAHT members and Family Action staff. We hope it will encourage parents to allow their children to develop independence and a sense of responsibility so they are ready to learn every day.

Preparing for Primary School (age 4-7):

The start of independence

- Teach your child to use the toilet (and urinal) independently; this will improve their self esteem when they are at school with their peers
- Ensure they can dress themselves and put on their own coat
- Encourage them to carry their own bag to school
- Be confident when dropping them off at school; don't let them 'cling' to you at the school gate
- Encourage them to become a 'playground friend' or 'school buddy'
- Support them to hang up their school uniform ready for the next day
- Include them when completing household tasks



Preparing for Secondary School (11+):

Supporting your child to be responsible for themselves

- Ensure your child is aware of the dangers of using social media and the internet inappropriately
- Teach them to manage a small budget
- Create a tidy space at home for them to complete their homework
- Show them how to create a study timetable; encourage them to complete their homework without unnecessary help or intervention
- Explain the importance of packing the right equipment for school each day e.g. calculator, books, PE Kit
- Encourage them to travel independently by public transport, bike or foot
- Make them aware of the costs of using a mobile phone
- Teach them how to prepare a simple meal
- Ensure they change their bed regularly



Preparing for Junior School (age 7-11):

Supporting your child to organise themselves

- Take turns in finding the way to the shops, playground etc; this will give them confidence when navigating their way around the school building and playground
- Support them to make their own bed each morning
- Make them responsible for organising their own homework activities
- Ensure they pack their own school bag in plenty of time
- Encourage them to walk or cycle to school by themselves or with friends when it's safe to do so
- Make time for your child to play out with their friends in a safe area
- Encourage them to become a 'reading buddy' and to take on responsibilities at school



Hints and tips for encouraging independence:

- Set appropriate boundaries for your child but help them to try out new things
- Try to guide your child rather than tell them what to do; this will encourage them to develop their own thoughts and ideas with your support
- Give positive support when your child faces challenges
- Praise effort rather than success and help them see we all learn from mistakes
- Don't do everything for your child, even if that seems easier!
- Try to be positive when your child is demonstrating independence