

## Parental Help With Science Fair Project

Things a parent may do:

1. Give encouragement, support, and guidance. (Be positive)
2. Make sure your child feels it is his or her project. Make sure the project is primarily the work of the child.
3. Realize that the main purpose of a science fair project is to help your child use and strengthen the basic skills he or she has learned and to develop to a higher level.
4. Realize your child will need help in understanding, acquiring and using the major science process skills (researching, organizing, measuring, calculating, reporting, demonstrating, experimenting collecting, constructing and presenting).
5. Realize that your child may be using reading, writing, arithmetic and social skills for the first time in a creative way to solve a problem.
6. Help your child plan a mutually agreed upon schedule, to prevent a last minute project and a disrupted household. The following steps (you may want to add more) should be on your schedule:
  - a. Find a topic
  - b. Narrow down the topic to a specific scientific question that is appropriate to the child's ability
  - c. Research what is already known about the problem.
  - d. Develop a hypothesis (see definition sheet).
  - e. Develop a procedure/investigation to test the hypothesis.
  - f. Make observations and collect appropriate data.
  - g. Interpret the data and other observations.
  - h. State and display the results.
  - i. Draw appropriate conclusions.
  - j. Create the exhibit.
7. Help your child design a safe project that is not hazardous in any way.
8. Provide transportation to such places as libraries, nature centers, universities, museums, etc. that can help the child find project information.
9. Help the child develop the necessary technical skills and/or help the child do the technical work such as building the exhibit and doing the photography.
10. Help your child understand that science is not an isolated subject, but a "way of looking at the world around us.

11. Be sure that the child states in the exhibit the help he/she received from you or others.
12. Look over the project to check for good grammar, neatness, spelling and accuracy. Make suggestions on how it can be corrected.
13. Realize that a good project does not have to cost a lot of money. Many times a simple project that is well displayed and explained is the best.
14. Help the child to understand that a weekend chore or one or two posters, is not a project.
15. Help the child to keep a record (or log book) of all he/she does and a list of references used.
16. Find an area in the house where the child can work on the project and not have to worry about pets or brothers or sisters.
17. Have your child present his/her project to you before he/she brings it to school.
18. Help transport your child and the project to and from school.
19. Do not worry or get upset if your child does not win a prize or ribbon at the science fair. The skills your child has gained are worth all of the effort. Help your child to understand this.
20. Feel a sense of pride and satisfaction when the project and science fair are finished. Share this with your child - you both have earned it!