



# How your child's spark can ignite their learning

Tips on how you can use your child's spark to ignite their learning.



Is your child one of those kids who says they really don't like learning? When you try to talk to them about their education, do they say they're not interested and push you away? You are not alone. Many parents experience this at different times during their child's education. But there are things you can do to help your child engage with their learning. One way is to use their spark to help them build their confidence and see that learning can be fun. Here are some tips on how you can use your child's spark to ignite their learning.

## 1. Notice what makes them happy

Everyone has at least one thing that makes them tick. Have you noticed what lights up your child? Do you know what seems to give them the most energy and joy? It could be a subject at school or something creative like music or art, or a physical activity. Whatever it is, encourage them to follow their spark and see if you can create opportunities for them to nurture their passion.

## 2. Make the positives work for you

When you see your child excited by something, look for ways to channel that energy towards other pursuits. Once they've proven to themselves that they can be energised about something, keep at it, and overcome hurdles, then support them to apply that energy to their other learning. Their spark contributes to their mental health and wellbeing by bringing joy, a sense of accomplishment and connection. Once they've found a positive mindset, other things become more achievable. And while they still might say they hate school, they just might have enough positivity in the tank to open that text book or step through the gates tomorrow morning.

And remember if they've found their spark, then they are learning just by spending time doing it. The steps they take to get to the next level in whatever sparks their interest, are the same steps they can apply to succeeding at anything in life. Read more about how finding their spark can build your child's resilience.

## 3. Help them explore what drives them

Not every child has found their spark so encouraging them to think more deeply about what they enjoy can help uncover what it is that attracts them to a particular interest. For example, if your child loves listening to music, is it the meaning of the lyrics that moves them, the engineering behind the combination of sounds, the idea of people working together to create the sound, or maybe it's all of the above? Whatever it is they are into, encourage them to delve deeper and find what it is that is driving them as it may be a clue to finding their spark.

## 4. Connect their spark to other skills

No matter what ignites your child's interest, there are many ways you can use that passion to connect with learning more generally and help them experience what it feels like to be good at something. If the one thing that excites your child right now is playing sport, then look for ways to take that interest and connect it with other skills. For example, you could ask your child to write and video-present a review about their favourite sport to build their writing and analytic skills. Or to promote their reading, research and presentation skills, you could challenge them to create a presentation about someone in the sport who they admire and present it to your family. It might take a bit more effort on your part, but if you can connect what your child loves with learning other skills, they will be much more receptive to learning and your life will be just that little bit easier.

## 5. It's a marathon not a sprint

There isn't a magic cure for disengagement. There are strategies for managing it and helping your child find their path. But for many young people who become disengaged from school, it can be an uphill struggle and it can continue for some time. And when you're already exhausted, the thought of these battles continuing for years to come is daunting. But as a parent, know you are not alone, and that if you stick at it (and as their teenage brain matures) it will get easier. And ultimately, your adult child will appreciate your efforts and it may even bring you closer. It's worth it, and they're definitely worth it.

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