

Parents' Guide for 21st Century Learning and Citizenship

Tips and Strategies for Families

How You Can Help: **What can parents do to help kids thrive in the 21st century?**



As a parent, you play a critical role in preparing your children to live, work and lead in a rapidly changing world. It is critical for students to graduate ready with the right skills for the world they will enter and an understanding of what it takes to be a productive citizen in the 21st century—civically literate, globally competent and digitally literate.

Even at the youngest ages, children benefit from family engaged in their education. By reinforcing the importance of 21st Century Skills through age-appropriate activities at home and at school, you can help your child learn how to participate in your community and the world in productive ways.

Make 21st Century Citizenship a Topic of Discussion at Home

Talk about current events and news. Discuss local, national and international current issues and events with your child. Watch the news together, read a newspaper or browse online news sources for relevant articles with your child to start the conversation. www.p21.org/tips/news

Have fun in your community. Help your child expand their awareness of the world by learning and talking about and experiencing other traditions, cultures and languages represented in your community in addition to your own. www.p21.org/tips/communitynews

Make decisions about responsible digital practices together. Talk with your child about how to judge the accuracy and bias of online news and ways to behave safely and responsibly in the immense digital world. www.p21.org/tips/online

Highlight Your Own 21st Century Practices

Be active in national and local elections. Vote in local, state and national elections and talk to your child about your own decision-making process and the issues on the ballots. www.p21.org/tips/voting

Talk about your own role in the community. Share information about your own roles in the local and global community with your child. Talk about your interests and involvement in your neighborhood, city or town, religious and cultural institutions and national or international affiliation groups and organizations. Share why they are important to you. www.p21.org/tips/communityrole

Share your priorities with the community. Advocate for family-oriented cultural educational programs in your community. Let others know why they are important to you and your family. www.p21.org/tips/priorities

Set an example for collaboration and compassion. Be a strong role model and mentor to your children. Make working with others and having an open mindset a priority. www.p21.org/tips/rolemodel



Get Hands-On with At-Home and Local Activities

Explore the world through maps. Helping your child explore physical and online maps and globes at home or at your local library. Point out the countries or cities that you have been talking about or your child has been learning about in school. www.p21.org/tips/explore

Immerse your family in world cultures. Read books, try new food, watch movies and listen to music together that highlight your own culture as well as other diverse and global perspectives. www.p21.org/tips/culture

Think Globally and act locally. Work with your child to consider what you can do as a family or individually to make an impact in your community or on national and global issues through internships or volunteer positions. Take part in service-learning opportunities that provide meaningful civic and community service. www.p21.org/tips/global

Set expectations. Set and communicate clear, specific and appropriate expectations around your child's use of online media and mobile devices. www.p21.org/tips/expectations

Use your knowledge. Encourage your teens to share their knowledge as volunteers by mentoring younger students or teaching adults about technology. www.p21.org/tips/mentoring

Support 21st Century Education at Your Child's School

Get involved at school. Help your child identify and participate in school governance opportunities. Point out upcoming student council opportunities or other leadership positions. www.p21.org/tips/school

Make connections to afterschool activities. Help your child to make connections to and prioritize 21st Century Skills and citizenship when choosing their extra-curricular and out-of-school activities. Focus on these activities' ability to reinforce problem solving, communication, collaboration and creativity skills. www.p21.org/tips/afterschool

Make learning other languages a priority. Support and prioritize world language programs at your child's school. Discuss ways your child can take advantage of the foreign language classes from a young age. www.p21.org/tips/languages

Create consistent digital policies. Pay attention to the technological and online resources available at your child's school and reinforce the policies created around mobile devices and social networks at home. www.p21.org/tips/online2

Stay connected. Ask your child's teachers about upcoming projects so that you can help your child practice effective use and analysis of online resources. www.p21.org/tips/connected

About P21 and National PTA:

P21 recognizes that all learners need educational experiences in school and beyond, from cradle to career, to build knowledge and skills for success in a globally and digitally interconnected world. Representing over 5 million members of the global workforce, P21 unites business, government and education leaders from the U.S. and abroad to advance evidence-based education policy and practice and to make innovative teaching and learning a reality for all. For more information connect with us at www.p21.org and [@P21Learning](https://twitter.com/P21Learning).

National PTA served as a family engagement adviser on this project. The overall purpose of National PTA is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. www.PTA.org