



# Malden Public Schools Title I Parent Connection

## Start a New Year with Family Traditions

A new year usually means a list of personal and professional goals. Consider this year starting the new year with family traditions or habits that will promote your children's learning.

**Read with your child every night for thirty minute.** Spend thirty minutes reading every night as a family. Share a book together. Read aloud to your child. Have your child read to you. Take turns reading. Have your child read you a page and then you read the next page. Ultimately, the more children read the better they will do overall in school.

**Start a once a week family game night.** On this night, play board games as a family. Most board games require reading and some math. The games will promote lots of talk which is the foundation of all learning. Your children will learn important social skills as they learn turn taking, respect for rules, never giving up, and ultimately how to win and lose with dignity.

**Sit and have dinner with your child.** Children and teens, who are part of families who had dinner together, had better academic performance, were better adjusted, and had better nutrition. Dinner talk also promoted increased family communication.

**Talk to your children.** Ask your children about their day. Try questions like, "What was the funniest thing that happened to you today?" Start off by telling them about your day first to get the conversation going. The more children talk the better they will do in school since talk promotes learning.

**Make once a week a night with no electronic devices.** Turn off the TV, radio, iPods, computers, etc. As families have more and more electronic devices in our home, we have less time to interact with each other. Children are spending more and more time watching television. Television can lead to poor nutrition, aggressive behavior, and poorer performance in school. Make it a goal to limit your child's screen time to no more than 2 hours each day on every other day of the week.

**Cook with your children once a week.** Invite your children into the kitchen to help prepare the meal. Cooking in itself is an important life skill but also involves lots of reading and math. Children also learn how to follow directions. If your child is reading, invite them to read the recipes or find just the right recipe for the meal.

Have a wonderful new year full of time for family and learning. Through all of these simple new traditions, your children will learn the most important lesson there is, that they are loved.

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- Discovery Museums (Acton)
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*the director of science and health for the Malden Public Schools. The 'Malden Public Schools Parent Connection' is a program sponsored by Malden's Title I Office. One of the goals of Title I is to support parental involvement in schools and to support parents in helping their children. Title I is a federally funded component of No Child Left Behind that was signed to support schools with high numbers of low-income students.*