

Introduction to Raise the Bar

We are on a mission to inspire American parents to expect more for their children's education.

We will do this by:

- **Educating** parents to recognize high standards for academic and character development.
- **Empowering** parents to raise the bar for their own children and take action in their homes, schools, and communities.
- **Activating** a community of vocal parents who, through their stories, will inspire educators, policymakers, and other parents to support rigorous standards and improve education for all children.

What does it mean to expect more?

It means expecting your child to master **critical thinking**, **problem solving**, and **communicating clearly** in the core academic areas—math, reading, and writing—as well as in science, civics, the arts, and more. It also means expecting your child to build essential character traits, including **curiosity**, **grit**, and **self-control**. The brain is a muscle: the more it's challenged and stretched, the stronger it grows and the more your child is able to accomplish.

RaiseTheBarParents.org

Everything on our website is **free**, and we believe your private information is **private**. We will never sell or share your information without your consent.



As a parent, you are your children's number one champion.

When you expect more, educators and decision makers will raise the bar to meet your expectations, and your kids will be equipped to achieve more in school, work, and life. Your high expectations will inspire greatness. Learn more at RaiseTheBarParents.org.

RaiseTheBarParents.org includes:

- **Reading and Math Adventures:** your child takes a 30-minute quiz; afterward, we'll send you a detailed report on his or her results that highlights strengths and areas for growth.
- **Character Strengths Survey:** we focus you on the traits and habits that matter so you can build your child's character strengths and help them succeed in school and in life.
- **Lessons and learning games:** we send you personalized resources to help your child.
- **Tips and videos:** we help you prepare for parent-teacher conferences and more.
- **Parent-friendly information about high expectations and Common Core State Standards**, featuring parents and teachers, along with the best research on why they matter and how parents can make a difference.



Getting Started on RaiseTheBarParents.org

Parents are Powerful!

We provide FREE resources that help parents have high expectations so that their children are equipped to succeed in school, work, and life.

**Expect More.
Achieve More.**

CRITICAL THINKING

PROBLEM SOLVING

COMMUNICATING CLEARLY

GRIT

RESILIENCE

CURIOSITY

RESPONSIBILITY

INTEGRITY

PERSEVERANCE

AND MORE...

How do I get started?

Register on RaiseTheBarParents.org (all you need is your email address and zip code) and head over to your personal Parent Dashboard for free access to:

- **Reading and Math Adventures** for your child
- **Detailed reports** on your child's academic strengths and areas for growth
- The **Character Strengths survey** for you and your child to answer, and great ideas to build your child's character traits and learning habits
- **Customized academic follow up** lessons and games for your child
- Parent-teacher conference **tips and videos**
- Parent-friendly information about **high expectations** and **Common Core State Standards** featuring parents and teachers, along with the best research on **why they matter** and **how parents can make a difference**

The **math and reading adventures** are available for grades 2 through 8 and take, on average, 30 minutes to complete. Choose any grade level at any time!

- Once you are done with the adventure, **click RESULTS on your Parent Dashboard** to view your child's latest results. Follow the links to access the **customized follow-up learning activities** for your child, and **tips on how follow up with your teacher.**
- Open the **Character Strengths page from your Parent Dashboard** and answer the questions about your kids. Then have your kids answer the same questions about themselves from their own dashboards. Compare your answers side by side on the Character Strengths page.



Check us out on Facebook! www.facebook.com/RaiseTheBarParents

Everything on our website is free, and we believe your private information is private. We will never sell or share your information without your consent.

For Parents: Recommended Common Core Resources Specifically For You

We've identified some handy resources that will save you time and help you find the facts and tools you need.

Understanding Common Core

For a **QUICK INTRODUCTION**:

-  Council of Great City Schools has a great short video overview in English (<http://tinyurl.com/CGCSEnglishvideo>) or en Espanol (<http://tinyurl.com/CGCSenEspanolvideo>)

For a **GRADE-BY-GRADE GUIDE** to what you can expect your child to learn:

-  Raise the Bar has a series of short videos of kids and teachers and what to expect in the classroom (<http://tinyurl.com/RTBgradebygradevideos>)
-  Council of Great City Schools has written guides available in English or Spanish (<http://tinyurl.com/CGCSwrittenguides>)
-  The Great Kids videos show what it looks like when kids are mastering important milestones (milestones.greatkids.org)

To **GET PERSONALIZED INFORMATION** about how your own child is doing:

-  Raise the Bar has created fun adventures in Math and Reading that are aligned to Common Core. Have your child take one, and then you'll receive a report outlining their strengths and challenges and suggested resources to help. (www.raisethebarparents.org)

To help separate the **FACT** from the **FICTION** (because there's a lot of confusion out there):

-  Common Core State Standards Initiative has an FAQ about content, quality, process, and implementation that's really helpful. (<http://tinyurl.com/CCMythbusters>)
-  Education First has "assessment myth busters" specifically on the Smarter Balanced assessments (<http://tinyurl.com/SBACmythbusters>)
-  and the PARCC assessments (<http://tinyurl.com/PARCCmythbusters>)

Understanding Common Core (Continued)

To find even more great **COMMON CORE RESOURCES** for parents, all organized in one place:

-  Be a Learning Hero has set up a single site to give parents tools and resources to understand Common Core and support their children's education at home. (www.BeALearningHero.org)

Other Recommended Resources for Parents

-  To search for the **BEST SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD** or find out how your school compares, check out www.GreatSchools.org. Includes parent reviews!
-  To learn more about **YOUR CHILD'S CHARACTER STRENGTHS** and get great suggestions for how to help your child grow, go to try.raisethebarparents.org
-  To get information and advice about **MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY FOR KIDS** go to www.CommonSenseMedia.org for ratings and reviews of books, TV shows, movies, games, apps, and more to help you make the best decisions for your family.

If you have ideas for additional resources that might help families, or if you have questions, email us at: RaiseTheBarParents@americaachieves.org. We're always working to make this list better.

Dinner Table Talk

Open, unhurried conversations between parents and their children help kids to organize their thoughts, communicate clearly, and grow into effective learners. Make a habit of having daily chats with your kids.

Sometimes, the hardest thing to do is start a conversation. Here are some ideas that you can use to kick it off.



Any day, ask...

- What is one nice thing you did for someone else today?
- What are you grateful for today?
- What was the funniest thing you said or did or saw today?
- What's your top goal today? What are you going to do to make it happen?
- What's your favorite book, movie, computer game, or show? What makes it great?



After school, ask...

- What was the best thing that happened to you today?
- Was there anything that happened today that wasn't good?
- Did you learn anything that surprised you today? Did you learn anything that you think I don't know?
- Who did you spend the most time with today?

The resources here are a result of original work from the Raise the Bar team and invaluable work from the folks at www.simplesimonanhypedco.com.

Check us out at RaiseTheBarParents.org. You'll learn more about your child's character and academic strengths, and get free, personalized resources to help your child succeed.



When You're Feeling Creative...

- If you could pick your own name, what would it be and why?
- If you had a time machine, what year in history would you like to visit and why?
- Are there any problems that you noticed recently that need solving?
- What would be the opening scene in a movie about you?
- Choose a "family word of the day" and have everyone invent a sentence using it (these can be fun and funny).
- Have your kids guess the definition of a new word and use it in sentences.
- Write a family sonnet, limerick, or haiku about the day.
- Ask your kids to choose a current event to discuss. Make predictions about what will happen next in the story and about whether the issue will still be in the news tomorrow or next week.



When you're feeling goal oriented...

- Talk about your child's learning habits and goals. Use the survey at try.raisethebarparents.org to get started.
- Talk about your child's academic strengths and weaknesses and what you can do as a family to help him or her climb to the next level.