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The Importance of High Expectations

In 2009, Professor John Hattie prompted a significant movement in the educational field when he published his groundbreaking book, *Visible Learning*. After fifteen years of research that incorporated thousands of independent studies, Hattie was able to identify 138 influences that affected student learning. The number today has grown to over 250. From the most-effective to least-effective, from the home to the classroom, he quantified the impact various circumstances held on student achievement.

As both a parent and an educator, there are some valuable take-a-ways that can be gleaned from his work.

Over the last decade since its release, educators across our country have been incorporating many of the high-yield approaches identified into their daily practice. In addition, many school districts like Walla Walla have implemented targeted intervention programs when students are struggling, as well as expanded acceleration opportunities for students who have mastered the content. Both are shown by Hattie to have extraordinary impact. From home school parents to public school teachers, his research has helped shed light on what strategies are most likely to have the greatest bearing on student achievement. Similarly, his findings have forced many to call into question historical practices that, despite the best of intentions, may be negatively impacting students. For example, the data is compelling that student retention, whole language reading programs, and ability grouping, are statistically shown to be far less effective than once thought.

As a parent I found it profoundly informative as I evaluated the research related to “home” strategies. His findings offered great insight towards how I can help support my own daughters in their schooling success. For example, the relationship between television and student achievement proved to have a significant negative impact. Generally, the more tv time, the less students achieve. Although his research did not incorporate cell phone screen or gaming time, one could probably assume the results would be similar. Parents, encourage your children to unplug when possible! The research is compelling - over ten hours per week may negatively impact student outcomes.

His findings on parent involvement and support were also telling. Research revealed that parent aspirations prove to be one of the most significant positive impacts we can have on our own child’s academic achievement. In fact, demonstrating and communicating high expectations for one’s child was shown to have even greater impact than regular parent attendance at school functions. Research also called into question many of my own historical practices. It exposed that intense monitoring of homework (I suppose I have been a bit zealous from time to time around “homework hovering”), as well as extrinsic rewards for good grades (sorry kids), resulted in little or even regressive impact on long-term student success.

Hattie’s research revealed that one does not have to be “super-mom” or “super-dad” to positively impact student achievement. Quite the contrary, convincing evidence supports the instrumental role parents can play simply by promoting the critical importance of education in their child’s life. As Hattie professes, it is not about the makeup of the family, or their ability to attend every school event, but

rather the "...expectations of the adults in the home that contributes most to achievement" (Hattie, 2009, p. 71).

Hattie's research demonstrates that any parent, despite their level of education, native language, or ability to regularly volunteer at school, is still able to have incredible impact on their student's success. By maintaining high expectations for your child, encouraging them to "unplug" from the screen from time to time, and reinforcing the importance of education in their life, we can all, in fact, be "super-moms/dads."

HOME	ES
Family dynamics	
Corporal punishment in the home	● -0.33
Home environment	● 0.52
Home visiting	● 0.29
Parental autonomy support	● 0.15
Parental Involvement	● 0.50
Television	● -0.18
Family resources	
Parental employment	● 0.03
Socioeconomic status	● 0.52

SCHOOL	ES
Other school effects	
Counseling effects	● 0.35
School calendars/timetables	● 0.09
School effects	● 0.48
Suspension/ Expelling students	● -0.20
School resourcing	
Finances	● 0.21
External accountability systems	● 0.31
Types of school	
Charter Schools	● 0.09
Religious Schools	● 0.24
Single sex schools	● 0.08
Summer school	● 0.23
Summer vacation effect	● -0.02
Pre-school experiences	
Different types of early intervention	● 0.29
Early Intervention	● 0.44
Early Intervention in the home	● 0.27
Head start programs	● 0.33
Pre school programs	● 0.26
Pre school with at risk students	● 0.56
School compositional effects	
Desegregation	● 0.28
Middle schools interventions	● 0.08
Mobility	● -0.34
Out of school curricula experiences	● 0.26
School choice	● 0.12
School size	● 0.43
Leadership	
Collective teacher efficacy	● 1.57
Principals/ School leaders	● 0.32
School climate	● 0.32

Key for rating

- Potential to considerably accelerate student achievement
- Potential to accelerate student achievement
- Likely to have positive impact on student achievement
- Likely to have small positive impact on student achievement
- Likely to have a negative impact on student achievement

ES Effect size calculated using Cohen's *d*

The Visible Learning research synthesises findings from **1,400** meta-analyses of **80,000** studies involving **300** million students, into what works best in education.



A sample of 34 of Hattie's identified influences. Adapted and reproduced with permission from: <https://www.visiblelearningplus.com/content/250-influences-student-achievement>