

Parent-Family Engagement-Social Studies-History Tips

Parents-Families are in the best position to help prepare children to achieve the lifelong task of finding their place in history by helping them learn what shaped the world into which they were born. Learning information about their own history helps them to have a greater understanding of what they hear and see around them.

The following are ways to help build your child's knowledge about social studies and history at home:

- **Share your family history:** Share memories of family history and photographs with your child, particularly your own memories of the people and places of your childhood. Encourage your parents and other relatives to talk with your child about family history. Talk about traditions, customs, ancestors, and stories of importance.
- **Read:** Check out books from your library to read with your child about people, places, and events that have made a difference in the world and discuss the readings together.
- **Are historical figures real?** Help your child realize that the people who make history are "real people" just like her/him, and that they have ideas, dreams, experiences of failure and success just as we do.
- **Build knowledge of people:** Introduce your child to local community leaders in person if possible and to national and world leaders (both current and those of the past) by means of newspapers, books, TV, and the Internet. Watch programs about important historical topics with your family and encourage discussion about the program as you watch.
- **Compare:** Read books on the same topic you have seen on TV or the Internet and learn more about it. Compare to see if the books and programs agree on significant issues and discuss any differences or similarities.
- **Geography:** Make globes, maps, and encyclopedias (both print and online versions) available to your child and find ways to use them often. As you read or hear about places, take the opportunity to point out the continent or country on a globe. You can even use opportunities to talk about food you are eating. Think about where it first came from, then locate that on a map or globe and learn more about the culture by looking it up in the encyclopedia. For example, are you eating spaghetti tonight? Find Italy on a map and learn more about the country. Research questions, "Where do fortune cookies come from? Which peoples and cultures eat tacos? Where did samosa get its name from?" Foods are a favorite way for many children to build connections. It can be a starting point to learn more about other cultures' histories, customs, traditions, languages, etc.