

Many studies have looked at what characteristics are common to children who succeed in school. Sharon and Craig Ramey (1999) point out that each of the attributes listed below come up repeatedly in studies on different types of children in different parts of the country. They are confident that each of these characteristics can be positively influenced by all adults who are important in the lives of children.

## **Ten Characteristics of Children Who Succeed in School:**

- 1. They love to learn.** They are very curious and have been encouraged to explore and discover things from a very early age.
- 2. They ask questions and they ask for help.** They know they can learn from others and feel comfortable asking questions at home; therefore, they ask questions and ask for help when needed at school also.
- 3. They work hard and know that their efforts matter.** They know that doing well in school is under their own control. They see results as the outcome of the effort they make. These children have been encouraged to work hard, and have been helped by adults to succeed in their efforts.
- 4. They are well-developed socially and emotionally.** They get along well with others. Good behavior has been explained to them and they have likely had positive and constant care and attention from the adults in their lives.
- 5. They are good at assessing their skills.** They do not overestimate or underestimate their academic abilities. Honest self-appraisal is important to the learning process as it serves as a basis for self-esteem which is based on a child's actual achievement.
- 6. Their parents are role models for learning.** Children who succeed in school see the important adults in their lives reading, learning, and attempting new challenges. They hear adults say "I don't know," or "Oh, I was wrong" and then look for the answer.
- 7. The important adults in these children's lives promote learning** by "natural" teaching at home. The adults talk to the children and point out new ideas to them. They realize that they can teach their children in the course of everyday activities. They stay in touch with the school and express an interest in the child's class experiences.
- 8. Their family routines support doing well in school.** Children who succeed in school have families who provide a sense of order in their lives. Their schedule is predictable. They follow routines for daily activities include bedtime, tooth-brushing, bathing, reading together, and homework.
- 9. Their parents are effective at setting and maintaining limits.** There has been discussion within the family about what they want their children to learn and how they want their children to behave. Guidelines have been set and explained to the children.
- 10. The children's schools have high expectations** for student achievement, support professional staff development, and communicate frequently with parents about their children. Effective schools have appropriate expectations for children of each age level. The staff is well trained and is knowledgeable in regards to grade level guidelines and standards. Effective schools ensure regular two-way communication with all families.

*adapted from: 10 Hallmarks of Children Who Succeed in School.  
Ramey, S.L. & Ramey, C.T. (1999). Going to School. New York: Goddard Press. ISBN 0-9666397-3-1*