

Ali's Note:



Some adults are stressing themselves how to make a child study. Please do not keep pushing and scolding them. Look into these factors which I feel could be the real cause of a child not studying:

Many children do not perform well in their studies, and even become rebellious when forced to study.

Among those who do not study properly, the most common issues (presuming the child is not suffering from any developmental disability) are:

Environmental factors: too many distractions, TV, social media, peer pressure, addictions, does not like the school atmosphere, feels subject is of no use, bullying

Inability to comprehend: does not like teacher, sitting too far back in class, language difficulties, unable to grasp the teachers style

Home: Strict or too lenient parenting, parental expectations, comparison, competition, boredom and loss of motivation since he feels he thinks that he already knows enough or may be lagging behind in the syllabus

Emotional/physical issues: Anxiety or stress, exam fear, mood swings and anger, past failures, bad relationships, sense of isolation and loneliness, self-esteem, poor eyesight, fatigue.

If the correct cause is not identified there is no point in pushing him or scolding him. He may not only not study, but also disturb others and create problems in class, become rebellious with parents, and get into bad company. Once the cause(s) is identified we can work out who can resolve each to what extent: parents, teachers, friends, counselors, special educators, doctors. With team effort most children can be encouraged to study well and achieve success.

Studies, marks and degrees are not the end-all and be-all of a child. Look at the child holistically and gently nudge him or her to find the inner motivation to do well in life.

Enhance your Motivation to Study

Those who score best are those who look at studies positively. Learn to take genuine interest in what you are studying, and

understand its significance. There are ways you can build back or enhance your enthusiasm and motivation to study, instead of looking at it as a boring task. Prove to yourself and the world that you can be an achiever, take up challenges, and then move on to something better.

If you feel de-motivated with a subject, make a resolution and **study for at least 5 minutes**. That doesn't sound bad, does it? Review what you have read, Take a break, study for 10 min. And so on

Relaxation and Positive Affirmations.

When you just do not feel like studying, it is adding to your stress. Take up some stress reduction activity. If nothing else, sit and do some slow and deep breathing before you begin to study. Give yourself positive affirmations e.g. “I *can* do it.” Write down your positive thoughts when you sit down to study.

Set Goals. Set lofty long term goals. Dream, dream, dream about the great things you are going to do in future. Put up on the wall what you are going to be one day. Make a chart showing the path, step by step, how you will reach your eventual goal. Put down alternatives if you do not succeed by one method. At the same time, set very **realistic, practical, time bound, short term goals**. Keep monitoring the progress and time limit of your short term goals



Keep a small **diary or writing pad** handy, and keep writing your progress, with dates. Keep checking out where you succeeded and where you failed. Next time allow for the “time-wasters” and failures before you make a weekly schedule.

Compete with yourself. Never compare yourself with others. Let your benchmark be the scores you obtained in the last test. From there, ask yourself how much further you can go, and how many more marks you can get next time.

Do you like your own company? At times your elders may be bugging you too much. See how good you are to yourself. Every day, see if you can spend fifteen minutes entirely by yourself doing nothing! No TV, music, phone or reading. Just sit quietly and enjoy your company. If you cannot do it, ask yourself how others are tolerating you. ✂

Make a plan and schedule for one week at a time.

Share it with any responsible adult who will not keep criticizing you, but will discuss with you from time to time how things are going. Having someone who you have+ committed to about your schedule, helps you to keep it up

Do you read other than text books and novels? Reading – anything – is a great hobby that will help you be on the fast track always. Most of the “self improvement” books are written by adults, who have been teenagers long back. There is a wonderful book “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teenagers” written by Sean Covey, himself a teenager till recently. Very practical tips in it. Try and read it some time. ***You can do it !***

Periodically check what motivates you, what you want to achieve, and how you can reach your goals. This will ensure that whenever you are feeling down and out, you will be able to get back to studies.

Personalizing your Study Methodology

You are different from everyone else, and you should find out which study method suits you most and will help you concentrate

and remember better. Try out different techniques continuously till you narrow down on the right one:

Find out your most suitable learning style:

1. Find out the time of day when you are fresh & alert, study the most difficult or boring subjects at that time (at least for half an hour if not longer). As you get tired or bored, do revision or move on to more interesting subjects/chapters which you enjoy.
2. Try sitting in one place and reading (which is usually the best), or standing, walking around, exploring different places. Find out the most comfortable posture and seat. Keep all books, pen, pencil, drinking water ready. Keep sipping water. Don't have any other material near you, which is not connected to studies.
3. Try this and see if it helps: Write important points as you read, either in a notebook, small flip-cards, or on a black/white board that you can keep in your room.
4. Switch between reading and drawing /mapping various topics, particularly in subjects like Biology, Physics or Geography. See if making graphs or drawings helps.
5. Before you read any topic, list out what it deals with & connect to real life situations, and how the knowledge can be used practically. Discuss with someone if possible
6. Stop periodically, take a few slow and deep breaths, look out steadily at far-off objects or the sky, sip water or juice, and wash your face. Gently rubbing your forehead in a circular manner also helps. When taking this break, recall what you have read (or write it down in bullet-form if you feel like). Give yourself positive affirmation that you have learnt that topic or chapter. See that your break does not last more than 3 to 5 minutes at most.
7. Try this: Read aloud to yourself, or to a friend or parent, and check if it helps.



8. Highlight (using different colours and find one or two most suited to you – yellow is supposed to be very soothing) or underline with a pencil the important passages or definitions. Make acronyms (one alphabet to represent a key word) and then memorize the short-form e.g. VIBGYOR for rainbow colours.
9. Every now and then move to a new subject and read from brief notes prepared by you, instead of the main text book. Refer to the text book periodically. Keep listing out those topics or chapters you have learnt thoroughly, so that you feel nice and confident.
10. If you like music, play soft (only instrumental) music when you read. There should be no other distractions of sound, sight or smell around you.
11. Check if lighting is bright, falling on the book. No bright light on your face.
12. Read one subject continuously for 2-3 hours, then try shifting periodically from one subject to another every half/one hour – see which timing suits you best.
13. Try out the SQ3RT method (Survey, Question, Read, Recite/review, Revise, and Test).
14. If some distracting thoughts are continuously coming to your mind, close the book and think of those thoughts only for few minutes. If necessary write what you need to do about them, and get back to studies. Complete unfinished tasks before you start studying.

Any of the above are effective only if try out for a few days continuously. Keep a record whenever you try it out, and then check whether it is helping over a period of time.

You may even add to this list any ideas that come to your mind about modifying your method of study, and try them out. Once you have found the ways that help in learning, practice them as much as possible.
