

## Ask the Oxford Learning Expert: Report Card Stress



*Michelle Brennan-Mann from Oxford Learning Barrhaven  
answers your education questions*

**Q: Report cards are almost here and I'm worried that it might be too late to get my son on track. I don't want to get upset about his report card, but I'm worried about his future!**

A: It's natural to be stressed about reports cards—after all, report card time is recognized as one of the most stressful times for families. For parents, poor grades are a source of concern and worry—is their child facing an educational roadblock that could put dreams and plans for the future on hold? Or even worse, eliminate the future possibilities altogether?

Before you let report card stress take over, remember these five things:

1. **Make sense of what the report card is really telling you.** Read the comments written by the teacher. These comments can give you a better idea of how your child is performing overall.
2. **Attend the Parent-Teacher Conference.** The teacher has spent hours a day observing your child in the classroom. Often, they can paint a better picture of where your child is headed academically.
3. **Put it in context.** Some school years are more challenging than others. Certain grades are transition years, and are more challenging for students.
4. **Talk it over.** Have a report card chat with your child. But first, take some time to read the report card by yourself. Identify the subjects that are the biggest concern and address those concerns when you sit down together and go over the report card. Remember to remain calm—you and your child are allies in education, not enemies.
5. **Take Action Now.** A bad report card can be a serious roadblock to opportunities for the future. But it doesn't have to be. Just because the school year is out doesn't mean that you have to wait to get help. The summer is a fantastic opportunity to make impressive academic gains and get back on track.

Thanks to guest expert Michelle Brennan-Mann from Oxford Learning Barrhaven. Michelle has been working as part of the management team at the Barrhaven Oxford Learning Center in Ottawa for the past 6 years. Her background is in special education and her passion lies in helping kids see success. For more information about report cards, or about how we can help your child reach their highest potential please call 613-823-1300, or email at [barrhavenolc@oxfordlearning.com](mailto:barrhavenolc@oxfordlearning.com).