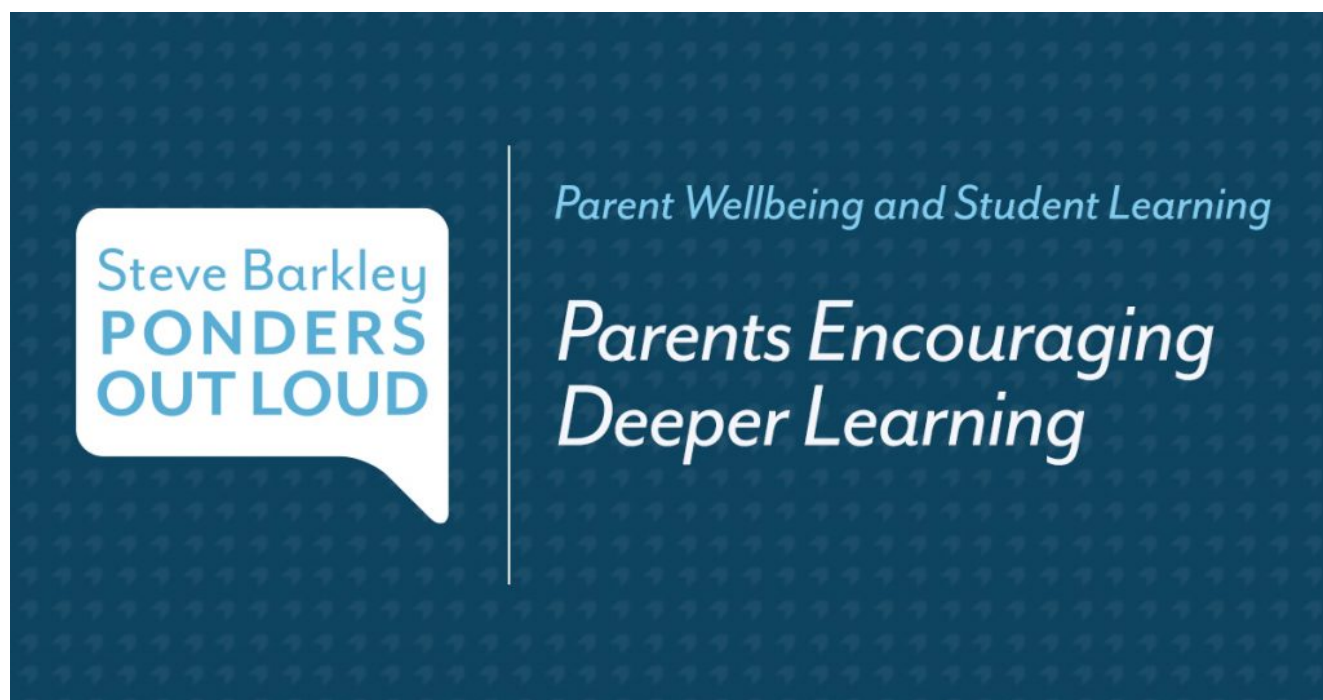


Podcast for Parents: Parents Encouraging Deeper Learning



Deeper learning increases the likelihood that learners can transfer their learning to new settings and problems. Too often, “getting schoolwork done” stops learners at surface learning. How can parents support deeper learning both in and out of school?

[Read the article, “4 Expert Strategies for Engaging Your Child in Deeper Learning” here.](#)

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PODCAST TRANSCRIPT Steve [Intro]: 00:00 Hello, and welcome to the parents as learning coaches edition of the Steve Barkley Ponders Out Loud podcast. Parents and caregivers play many different roles, at times, even somewhat conflicting roles as they support children’s development. The pandemic has shown a light on the importance of parents supporting learners. In this podcast, I’ll look to share my experiences as a teacher,

educator, parent, grandparent, and continuous learner that can support your coaching efforts.

Steve: 00:34 Parents encouraging deeper learning. Learning outcomes can be described at three different levels. The first level is often described as knowledge, sometimes called "surface knowledge." It generally is made up of facts, definitions, explanation, skills, something I can do. I can sound out a word or I can balance an equation or I can write a summary. The next level is described as comprehension or understanding. Understanding is the ability to use the knowledge. It means that the knowledge has meaning. It might be described as knowing or realizing the intended meaning or cause of something.

Steve: 01:36 The last level of learning is frequently called learning for transfer. And it means the ability to extend what is learned from one context to another context, an example would be looking for students to transfer the understanding of multiplication to do division. So schools are looking for students to transfer learning from one topic in a course to another topic in a course. We're looking for students to transfer it from one course to another course from year to year. Is a student transferring knowledge of their understanding of history to their reading of a piece of literature from that time? And we're looking for transfer between school and home and school and work or school and the greater community. I recall a time that my daughter was in middle school and we were sitting around the kitchen table for a meal and I can't remember today, the topic that came up, but my daughter's response was, "oh, wow, we studied that in school today!"

Steve: 03:00 And the concern that came out of that is that that was a rather rare occasion for her to discover that connection between the real world that she was in at home and her "school world." Transfer of learning is our goal. Transfer of learning is sometimes called deeper learning. Deeper

learning is often education that motivates, inspires challenges and empowers students. Educators and parents who are focused on deeper learning are less described as lecturers and more described as project managers. Before I outline a few considerations that parents can implement a few strategies, a few ideas, I want to encourage parents to support teachers and school leaders who work to cause deeper learning for transfer. Those classrooms and schools are often engaging students in problem-based or project-based learning. Sometimes students are outside the school, connecting with the community. These educators are at times receiving a pushback when school doesn't look like the school that parents had experienced.

Steve: 04:34 It's important that students have these opportunities and I encourage you to speak up and be supportive of your school and your teacher's efforts to make those deeper learning opportunities happen for students. If we can encourage students to differentiate homework and schoolwork and think rather about those assignments as learning tasks, it can start us on a different mindset that is needed. An assignment to gain knowledge in order to develop meaning on our way to doing something or accomplishing something, that's transfer, differs from homework that needs to get done. Consider how you research, read, take notes, in order to prepare for a renovation project that you want to tackle. The learning isn't work. The learning is part of the transfer of knowledge and understanding to achieve a task that you have in mind. A Forbes article, written by Mimi Fox, appeared last year and was titled, "Four Expert Strategies For Engaging Your Child in Deeper Learning."

Steve: 06:24 I'll put the link in the lead into this podcast. The first strategy that she identified is that it all starts with curiosity. Encouraging your child's questions, identifying that those questions are worthy of exploration rather than a quick answer, starts us on the path to deeper learning. How can a conversation about something being studied

at school or a book being read spark a further deeper exploration? Consider modeling how your curiosity sparks and leads you to further deeper learning. Fox's second suggestion was to do real things. That reinforces my earlier comment about schools doing project based learning. Projects that emerge from a driving question, connects and values creativity and moves us to deeper learning. Projects often require one to learn new knowledge and understanding that are then transferred in solving a real problem. Fox reminds us that skills are at the core of real projects. This illustrates why students often gain so much from extracurricular activities, especially when adults don't overly direct those activities. A fundraising task, working collaboratively as a team, tutoring younger students, creates opportunities for learning transfer.

Steve: 08:22 Fox's final comment is for parents to help make the learning in this process visible. I like to describe that with the terms, "brief" and "debrief." Briefing is identifying upfront skills that a project or an activity might require. It could be something like, what are some of the questions you might ask when you meet the parents of the child that you're going to babysit? Debriefing is a of reflection. It's questions after the activity has occurred, causing your youngster to reflect and look for insights. It could be something like, "how was this babysitting for this particular child, the same and different from other babysitting experiences you've had? What do you think you may have gained or learned or understand? And what are you wondering after this babysitting experience?" I encourage you to look at ways that you can promote deeper learning for your youngsters. The research suggests that deeper learning increases critical thinking, it improves effective communications and collaboration skills, it builds problem solving skills. It suggests that students who engage in deeper learning have greater school success and greater post-secondary school success. But maybe, just maybe, the most important piece from my vantage point is that deeper learning causes students to

have fun

when learning. An important payoff. Thanks for listening.

Steve [Outro]: 10:24 Thanks for listening in folks. I'd love to hear what you're pondering. You can find me on twitter @stevebarkley or send me your questions and find my videos and blogs at barkleypd.com.