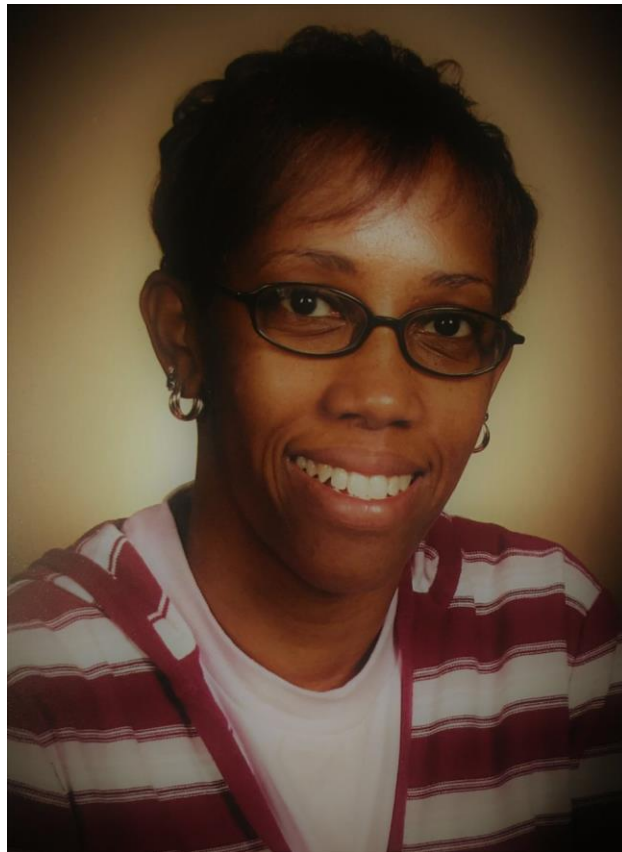


Don't Forget How Important Mothers are in Education

By Shawnta S. Barnes - May 13, 2018

Mothers play a critical role in a child's education. This is not to discount the role of fathers, but many households are led by a single parent who is female and if it is a two-parent home, when it comes to school, the mother many times does the heavy lifting.



Lisa K. Stockton, mother of Indy/Ed writer Shawnta S. Barnes

I was raised in a two-parent home with my two younger sisters. My dad worked second shift and my mom was a stay at home mom until my youngest

sister went off to kindergarten. She made sure we had our school supplies. She provided us with a hot breakfast in the morning, in addition to making us lunch to carry to school. She volunteered in our classrooms and helped with all room parties. When we came home from school, she had a routine in place to ensure we completed our homework, had dinner, went to church choir practice once a week, and had a little fun. She also made sure my dad knew the essentials such as when book fees were due or when to take off work for our programs. When there was a problem at school, she would pop up quickly to support the teacher or if the teacher was wrong, she would advocate for us. Without her constant involvement and watchful eye, we could have slipped through the cracks at school.



Lisa Stockton with her daughters Shawnta, Alice, and Sherry

What stands out to me the most is not how invested my mom was in her three daughters' education, but how invested she was in the education of other people's children. After my sister went off to kindergarten, my mom decided to work in the daycare industry. While we were doing homework, she spent hours making learning activities for the children at the daycare. She would give tips to parents and encourage them when they were having difficulties with their children. The parents appreciated her. My sisters and I were always shocked by the elaborate and expensive gifts parents would give my mom at Christmas time. Our family Christmas tree was decorated with a rotation of pictures of children she cared for and taught along with crafts they made her.

Even when she started working, she continued to be highly involved in our school, not just keeping an eye on my sisters and me, but also keeping an eye on everyone else too.

Today, she serves children by working in before and after care at different school campuses in Indianapolis. Even now, when I visit my mom, she is putting together an activity. She recently told me about a child in the aftercare program who was struggling in class. She spent part of her Sunday pulling together some resources to help him during the upcoming week.

As an adult, when I run into former classmates or kids I grew up with in my neighborhood, they always ask about my mom. Of course, they remembered the cupcakes she made, the time she came to the bus stop and let everyone know they needed to get their act together, or when she let them come over for a meal. Mostly, they remembered how she always was willing to help. This Mother's Day, I want to thank my mom and all of the mothers who are not only involved in their children's education but also look out for and mother other people's children to ensure they are successful in school.

Happy Mother's Day Mom! I love you!

