



Connecticut Invention Convention

Survival Tips for Parents

The Connecticut Invention Convention gives students an opportunity to create an invention and present it to a panel of judges. This process may be just as stressful to you as a parent, as it is for your child. Read the following tips for surviving the inventing process.

1. **Supporting Your Student**

- Set up a calendar in a visible place to keep track of assignments and deadlines, which will help keep your child on track. Try to refrain from nagging your child to finish their project.
- Allow your child to make mistakes. Making mistakes and learning from them is a very important part of the inventing process!
- Take interest in the project your child is doing and positively reinforce working on the project.

2. **Discovery!**

- If you have not participated in the CIC before or you have not had much experience with building inventions, use this as a learning opportunity for yourself.
- Do not let uncertainty or lack of experience keep you from helping your child and learning something new.

3. **Asking for Help**

- Collaboration is an important part of invention. Show your child how to look for expert advice online, connect them with your friends or colleagues who have specific skills, or ask your child's teacher for guidance.

4. **Spend Time with Your Child**

- One of the best things about making an invention together is that you are able to spend quality time with your child, develop some common interests, and share your experiences.
- Act as one of the Judging Circle Judges for your child and give them some advice on how to explain what they have done and how their invention works.

5. **Be Able to Say No**

- You will decide how much help you will give to your child, but you should set limits that are reasonable to you, your child, and the project. Make your expectations clear and say 'no' when you do not feel comfortable with a request.

6. **Let It Go! Let It Go!**

- This is your child's project; do not let the project become more important to you than it is to your child. Your child's grades and awards belong to them.
- Helping does not mean doing; your child will not learn anything if you do the project yourself, and judges can tell when that happens.

7. **Have Fun and Encourage Fun!**

- The process of inventing should be rewarding and fun for both you and your child. Relax and have fun with it! If you are calm and having fun, your child is more likely to be calm and have fun as well.
- If the project stops being fun to you and your child, take a break and come back to it later.