

# Homework Newsletter

## Homework Tips:

**Although it may be hard to believe, you can actually help your child enjoy doing homework. When you provide the necessary support and encouragement, most children will rise to the occasion and do their best on their assignments.**

### What do children need from parents?

- **Encouragement** – Praise and compliment your child when he or she puts forth good effort and completes tasks. In a supportive, uncritical manner it is appropriate and helpful to assist in pointing out and making some corrections of errors on the homework. Give your child praise for efforts and for completing assignments. Praise your children for doing well. Make praise a habit.
- **Availability** – Encourage your child to do the work independently, but be available for assistance. Don't do your children's work for them. Help them learn how to do it themselves. Ask your children if they understand their homework. If they do not, work a few examples together.
- **Scheduling** – Make homework a daily activity and help your children develop good homework habits. Establish a set time to do homework each day. You may want to use a calendar to keep track of assignments and due dates. Assume that your children will have studying to do every night. Establish a set time each day for doing homework.
- **Work a certain amount of time and then stop working on homework.** Don't force your child to spend an excessive and inappropriate amount of time on homework. If you feel your child worked enough for one night, write a note to the teacher attached to the homework.
- **Space** - If possible, set up a quiet, comfortable study area with good lighting and the school supplies that your children need. This can be almost anyplace in your home; you don't need a special room. Provide a space for homework, stocked with necessary supplies, such as pencils, pens, paper, dictionaries, a computer, and other reference materials. Allow your children to study in the way each of them learns best. For example, some children work best when they're lying on the floor with background music playing. Help older students organize their assignments by recording them on calendars or planners, along with due dates, dates turned in, etc.

- **Discipline** – Help your child focus on homework by removing distractions, such as television, radio, telephone, and interruptions from siblings and friends. Show your children that you think homework is important. If you are at work during homework time, ask to see their work when you get home. See if your children did the work correctly. If there is a good reason for incomplete work, please send a note.
- **Watch** your child for signs of failure and frustration. Let your child take a short break if she is having trouble keeping her mind on an assignment. If the frustration continues STOP, **write a note** to the teacher attached to the homework. *(Careful with this, homework is mostly review and practice), I will do my best to go over the assignment 'one on one' with your child.*
- **Assist your child in getting started on assignments** (e.g., read the directions together, do the first items together, observe as your child does the next problem/item on his or her own). Then get up and leave. **Monitor and give feedback without doing all the work together.** You want your child to attempt as much as possible independently.
- **Support** – Try not to let any of your own negative experiences keep you from supporting and encouraging your children's learning. Let them know how much you care about education by continuing your own learning both informally and formally, to impress its importance upon them. Talk to your child about difficulties with homework. Be willing to talk to your child's teacher to resolve problems in a positive manner. Don't be afraid to get in touch with the teacher if you and your child don't understand an assignment or if your child is having a great deal of trouble. Almost all parents run into these problems, and teachers are glad to help.
- **Involvement** – Make sure that you and your child understand the teacher's expectations.
  - Take an active interest in your children's schooling. Ask specific questions about what happens at school each day and how your children feel about it.
  - Send your children to school each day, well-rested, fed and with a positive outlook.
  - Ask your school about tips or guides for helping your children develop good study habits.
  - Stay in touch with your children's teachers.

**Remember, you and your child's teacher want the same thing — to help your child learn and achieve.**

**The biggest struggle is keeping on top of those dreaded long-range homework assignments** (e.g., reports, projects). This is something you will need to be vigilant about. Ask for a copy of the project requirements. Post the list at home and go over it together with your child. Write the due date on a master calendar. Then plan how to break down the project into manageable parts, scheduling steps along the way. Get started **AT ONCE** with going to the library, gathering resources, beginning the reading, and so forth.

#### **Suggested supplies for home study area:**

- pencils
- eraser
- books at student's reading level
- a stapler
- quiet place to study
- a place to store homework and materials
- pocket dictionary and thesaurus
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- scissors
- desk or table
- ruler
- glue or paste
- mini notebook to record seed ideas

#### **What happens to homework assignments?**

Regular homework assignments are expected to be finished and ready to hand in for the next class day.

Research tells us that parents can **best** help their child by knowing what the homework assignment is and by providing a good environment for the child to do the work.

#### **\*\*Note for Students,**

**YOU** are expected to assume **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY** for your actions and make choices. If you choose not to turn in your homework, then that is your choice. You will have to live with the consequences of that choice

#### **A Checklist for Helping Your Child with Homework**

##### **Be Sure Your Child has:**

- his or her homework
- an appropriate work place, free of distractions.
- a regular time each day for doing homework.
- basic supplies, such as paper, glue, pencils, pens, markers, and ruler.
- a clock to monitor use of time.
- a completed homework planner.

##### **Questions to Ask Your Child:**

- What's your assignment today? Let me see your homework planner.
- Is the assignment clear? (If not, consider calling a classmate.)
- Is this a project or regular nightly homework?
- When is it due?
- Do you need special resources (e.g. a trip to the library or access to a computer)?
- Do you need special supplies (e.g. graph paper or poster board)?
- Have you started today's assignment? Finished it?
- Is it a long-term assignment (e.g. essay, research project or science project)?
- For a major project, would it help to write out the steps or make a schedule?
- Would a practice test be useful?
- Have you caught up on any missed assignments/notes when you were absent?

\*\*\*I ask that all missing assignments from an absence, be made up in a timely fashion when your child is feeling better. I will put together a take home packet for them if you choose to pick it up. Otherwise, please have them complete their missed work, so as not to fall behind.

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