

## **Help your Student get the Most out of Homework**

Homework. Many students try to avoid it, but teaching and learning research indicates that children who spend more time on regularly assigned, meaningful homework, on average, do better in school, and that the academic benefits of homework increase as children move into the upper grades.

Parents and families play an important role in the process. Together, families and teachers can help children develop good study habits and attitudes to become lifelong learners.

As our president stated in his speech to the joint session of Congress, "I speak to you not just as a president, but as a father when I say that responsibility for our children's education must begin at home."

On this page you'll find answers to questions many people have about homework, as well as specific advice for helping your children.

### **Why do teachers give homework?**

Teachers use homework:

- To help students understand and review the work that has been covered in class
- To see whether students understand the lesson
- To help students learn how to find and use more information on a subject.

Homework is also the link between school and home that shows what children are studying.

### **How much time should my children spend each night on homework?**

Most educators agree that:

- For children in grades k-2, homework is more effective when it does not exceed 10-20 minutes each school day
- Older children, in grades 3-6, can handle 30-60 minutes a day

## **How can I help with homework?**

There are several ways in which you can help:

- If possible, set up a quiet, comfortable study area with good lighting and the school supplies that your children need. This can be almost any place in your home; you don't need a special room.
- Set a family “quiet time” where you and your children can work together on homework, reading, letter writing and playing games.
- Send your children to school each day, well-rested, fed and with a positive outlook.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

**Make homework a daily activity and help your children develop good homework habits.**

## **How much help should I give?**

This depends on each child's grade level and study habits. Younger students often need extra homework help. First, make sure the child understands the directions. Do a few problems together, then watch your child do a few. When your child is finished, check the work. Praise right answers and show how to correct mistakes.

Avoid doing your children's homework for them. Teachers need to see where your children are having trouble.

One of the most helpful things you can do is show your children that you think homework is important. Many children today do their homework while their parents are at work. When you are at home, ask to see your children's homework and discuss it with them. Ask questions and be supportive.

## **What if I don't understand my child's assignment?**

Today's students may have subjects that you never had or that you didn't like when you were in school. You can still help your children by praising their progress, getting help from a public library or homework hot line and talking with their teachers.

### **Do teachers really want me to ask them questions about homework?**

Teachers want children to learn and want parents and families to be involved in their children's education. When you stay in touch with your children's teachers, they can ease your worries and offer their own homework tips and ideas on how you can help your children learn. Meet each of your children's teachers and ask what kind of homework will be given. This is very important, even if you have children in junior or senior high school.

### **When I ask my children if they have homework, they say that it's finished or that they don't have any. How do I make sure they're really doing their work?**

Make studying, not just homework, a daily habit. Students can always review lessons, read a book or work on practice exercises during quiet time, even if they don't have homework. Ask younger children to show you their homework so that you can check it, sign it and date it. Teachers like to see that adults have checked children's homework. If your children's school has a homework hotline, call it to check for the day's assignments. If your children often have no homework to do, you should let their teachers know.

Don't ask your children if they have homework each night – assume that they always have homework or studying to do.

### **What if my child still isn't turning homework in?**

State clearly and assertively to your child that you expect homework to be done and turned in to the teacher. Let your child know you will not tolerate irresponsible behavior about homework.

Don't wait until grades come out to find out if the problem has been solved. You may need weekly contact with the teacher until the student develops new habits.

### **Should I reward my children for doing homework or for getting good grades?**

Children like to know when they've done a good job. Your approval means a lot. Praise your children's work often. Show pride when your children do their best, no matter what grades they get.

Be careful about giving money or gifts as rewards. Most teachers want parents to reward students' work in other ways. The next time your child does a good job on a school project, plan a special family activity as a reward.

## **Homework Hints**

- Assume that your children will have studying to do every night.
- Ask your children if they understand their homework. If they do not, work a few examples together.
- Ask your children to show you their homework after the teacher returns it, to learn where they're having trouble and where they're doing well. See if your children did the work correctly.
- Stay in touch with your children's teachers. Ask about their classes and what they are studying. Ask their teachers how you can support what they are studying (flash cards, spelling, etc.).
- Remember, you and their teachers want the same thing – to help your children learn.
- 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.
- Don't do your children's work for them. Help them learn how to do it themselves.
- 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.
- Praise your children for doing well. Make praise a habit.
- Maintain a portfolio of “best pieces”.
- Ask your school about tips or guides for helping your children develop good study habits.
- Help older students organize their assignments by recording them on calendars or planners, along with due dates, dates turned in, etc.

# OOOPS. I forgot my .....

## Try one of these:

- Visit the library. All textbooks and workbooks are on reserve at the Woodridge, Downers Grove and Indian Prairie Public Libraries
- Call a friend...did they remember the assignment?
- Come back to school...but only during office hours! The office is open Monday through Thursday until 4:00 p.m., and Friday until 3:30 p.m. Be aware that your teacher may be in a meeting or having a conference, and you may not be able to get into your classroom.

## What if you keep forgetting?

- We will have to set up a plan with your teacher and maybe Mrs. Schultz to help you get on the right “homework” track.

## Why can't I come back anytime?

### BACC Security

There are many valuable items in our school, including:

Computers	Art Materials
TVs	Student Information
Textbooks	Teachers' personal belongings
Children	Students' personal belongings

***Sorry, we do not know every parent. We need to keep the building safe & secure.***