

HELP WITH HOMEWORK



Homework is an important way to provide extra learning opportunities for children. Families can do several things to help children with homework, and make learning more meaningful. The list below provides suggestions that have proven helpful for many parents.

1. Develop a Homework Schedule

- ◆ Designate a special place at home for doing homework. This should be a space that minimizes distractions such as television, radio, telephone, toys, etc. It should also be a place where you can directly monitor your child's work, and provide help and feedback as needed.
- ◆ Designate a special time just for doing homework. Disagreements about homework can be reduced by making a regularly scheduled time. Ask your child's teacher how long your child should spend doing homework each evening. Length of homework time will vary, depending upon your child's age, grade level, time of school year, and other factors.
- ◆ Provide models of learning behavior. Seeing other family members involved in learning activities can be a powerful learning and motivational tool. It may be helpful if your whole family designates a block of time to do "home work." If children are working on school work, and adults are engaged in some form of learning activity, it provides positive role models for lifelong learning.

2. Monitor Your Child's Homework

- ◆ Know what homework has been assigned for your child. An assignment notebook that lists homework assignments and due dates, can be a very useful organizational tool.
- ◆ Frequently monitor completion and accuracy of your child's homework. Good communication and collaboration between home and school teaches your child that everyone views homework as important, and has been shown to improve academic performance and attitudes towards school.

3. Encourage and Celebrate

- ◆ Encourage your child to attempt to do their homework before asking for help.
- ◆ Encourage your child to ask for help after they have tried to do their work, but have not been successful. It is important to help your child do the work, rather than do it for them.
- ◆ Celebrate your child's accomplishments. From attempting difficult problems to earning good grades, it is important to acknowledge your child's efforts. Praise specific behaviors that you value (e.g., "I really like how you *tried* to do that tough word problem before asking for help." or "You did every problem in that section without making a single mistake – Nice work!").

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