

Tip Sheet

MAKING HOMEWORK A HABIT

Excuses! Excuses!

"I don't have any homework... I did it all at school... Can I play with my friends or watch TV?... You're always making me do homework!" Sound familiar? Now listen to this. "My social studies project is due tomorrow. I just found out about it, and I need a show board for my project... I left my book at school and I have a test tomorrow." Excuses! Excuses! It's enough to make any parent want to get rid of homework from the face of the earth just so they won't have to listen to their child's reasons why they can't, didn't, or wouldn't do their homework.

In The Line Of Fire

For many parents and children, homework is a daily battle. Don't give up! There are things you can do to help your kids get into the homework habit.



Beat The Clock

Does your child sit for long periods of time concentrating on homework, or is she constantly getting up for a snack, a drink, or to see what's going on with other family members? Challenge your child to beat the clock! Set a timer for a reasonable length of time to complete an assignment. Then challenge your child to complete the assignment before the timer goes off. It's a fun game that encourages children to focus and complete assignments within a reasonable time limit. Even if your child does not have a school assignment, she can still spend some time with some type of learning activity.

Talk To The Teacher

If you have tried different strategies with your child to get homework completed, and you are still having difficulties, then it's time to talk to your child's teacher. Explain your homework concerns to your child's teacher. Ask for specific ideas and find ways to work together so that your child will be successful completing homework. When parents and teachers communicate, the results will be positive for the child's academic success.

Be Consistent

Talk with your child about a homework schedule. Both you and your child need to agree on a time that homework should be completed. Find out if your child wants to tackle homework when he first gets home from school or if he would rather have some playtime before beginning homework. One mom wanted her son to complete his homework immediately after school, but her son wanted some down time before taking on homework. She was afraid he would not do his homework if he waited until after dinner. Because of the conflict between mom and son, there was a fight almost daily. Once she decided to give her son some playtime as he requested, the fighting stopped and his homework was completed on time.

Tick Tock

We each have our own biological clock, and we learn to listen to it. Each person prefers to do certain tasks at certain times of the day. Children also have their own biological clocks, and as parents, we need to pay attention. The choice about when to do homework can be made by your child as long as the choice is reasonable and the homework is completed.



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Homework Policy

Take note of the teacher's homework policy as you determine the schedule. For example, if the teacher assigns all the homework for the week, your child may be able to break the sessions into daily blocks.

Making Homework A Habit

Help your child make homework a habit by completing assignments at a regular time and regular place every day! When the daily homework has been completed, let your child pick a surprise from a treat jar as a reward. It could be a trip to the park, a piece of candy, a toy from a dollar store, a coupon for going to dinner, or any other thing your child will enjoy. After three weeks, you may not even need the treats, but you might want to keep them around to keep your child motivated and on track for doing homework.