

How to Help Your Child With Homework and Study Skills

Homework is an important home-school connection. Parents play a vital role in establishing and maintaining a routine that can help children be successful students. The strategies listed here may give you some helpful ideas in working with your child. For more ideas and information, please contact your child's teacher or school counselor.

Schedule a regular "brain time" for academic activities. Involve your child in scheduling this time. Some children work best after they have been able to play or socialize at home, while other children prefer to get it done right after school. Some children prefer to "chunk" study time (15 minutes right after school, 15 minutes after dinner, 10 minutes before bedtime). When your child has no homework, this time could be used to read for pleasure, practice spelling words, study future tests, etc. You may want to schedule "brain time" every day.

"Brain time" can be fun! Many types of activities can be incorporated into this time. Playing games, going to the library, cooking together, planning meals, going to museums and theaters, etc. are all ways to positively impact your child's learning.

Be creative in how you study with your child. Some examples include:

- Use time in the car for orally studying spelling words, telling stories, practicing math facts, reviewing science and social studies concepts, oral book reports, etc.
- Let your child quiz you over concepts.
- Have your child make a game to review for tests. Jeopardy and 20 questions work well as models.
- Let your child teach concepts to a younger sibling.
- Use playing cards or dice for practicing

Your child's study environment will impact the success of utilizing this "brain time". Some children need a quiet area in which to work while others prefer companionship and background noise. You and your child can determine where he/she will perform best.

Having the proper supplies handy will also help your child to get the most out of his/her brain time. Paper, pencils, pens, crayons, ruler, eraser, tape, scissors, glue, stapler and staples, a dictionary, etc. need to be easily accessible to your child.

Have your child work on his/her more difficult assignments first, and then proceed to the easier ones. Be sure that your child knows that you will check over his or her assignments. Let him/her know that you value his/her best effort.

If your child is spending more than 45 - 60 minutes per night on homework in the intermediate grades, or more than 15-30 minutes per night in the primary grades, please contact your child's teacher for suggestions.

Communicate the value of learning through encouragement and example. Goal setting can be an effective way of increasing student achievement. Examples of goal setting may include turning all work in on time, improving specific grades, reading more books, etc