Homework and Lifelong Learning

Family Tip Sheet | Primary and Elementary School

Introduction

Do you remember doing homework as a youngster? Remember the assignments you most enjoyed and the other ones that weren't as much fun? There's some debate right now about just how much time an elementary school student should spend on homework at night, but there's at least one thing on which every parent and teacher probably agrees: To help instill a lifelong love of learning in a child is a wonderful thing. How can you, as a parent, use homework to instill in your child a love of learning? Continue reading for some ideas that might help answer that question.

Table Talk

It's never too early to discover where your child's interests and talents lie, and to encourage your child to develop those talents. It's also never too early to learn which subjects your child struggles to understand. Ask your child:

1. What subjects are you most enjoying? Why?
2. What would you like to learn more about? How can I help you?
3. What subjects are the most difficult for you?

Tips & Tricks

Create an environment conducive to homework and a lifelong love of learning.

- **Create a homework space.** Find a place in your home, such as a corner in your own office, where your child can do homework without distractions.
- **Provide the supplies needed.** Ensure your child has everything needed to get homework done so there won't be any need to fetch things once he or she gets going. Organize the following supplies: paper, pencils, erasers, and pencil sharpener.
- **Read.** Share time reading books together. Let your child see you reading for your own enjoyment and learning, too. This will help your child develop a positive attitude towards reading. A love for reading plays a huge part in a positive homework experience.

Plan & Practice

Prepare for your child's homework by providing study time. Model what it looks like to be a lifelong learner.

- Set aside time at night for your child to focus on learning. For older children this might be 30 to 40 minutes, and for the younger ones it might be as little as 15 or 20 minutes.
- If there are no assignments from school, your child can still use the time set aside for homework to study. If your youngster is learning how to read, let your child practice reading to you from the book he or she enjoys most. If your child is learning how to multiply and divide at school, bring out a pack of flashcards and help her or him learn multiplication facts.
- Show your child that you, too, have "homework." Read a book or newspaper. Watch a documentary. Start writing that novel you have always wanted to write. Work on your car. Paint a picture. Model what it means to be a lifelong learner.

Learn More

For more information on how to help your grade school student with homework, check out the sites below:

- ***Kidshealth***
  http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/learning/help_gradeschooler_homework.html
  Suggestions for helping your grade-schooler with homework.
- ***Newsworks***
  http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/local/nw-philly-parents/60239-how-much-time-should-your-child-spend-on-homework-each-night
  Discusses how much time a student should spend on homework.
- ***Scholastic***
  http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/motivate-school-success/love-learning
  Suggestions for bringing curiosity, creative thinking, and joy in your child's learning.
- ***Today***
  http://www.today.com/id/5818616/ns/today-today_hidden/t/how-much-should-you-help-homework/#.UxKnavldX00
  The right way and wrong way to help your children with homework.

Copyright © 2014 School Specialty, Inc. All rights reserved.
3593_ON3P-DT-14

PREMIER