



After the Conference: Helping with Homework

Setting aside some time to help your child with homework will teach him or her to develop self-discipline and time management, learn to work independently, and gain a sense of personal fulfillment and responsibility. You can help your child with his or her homework by:

- **Making sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.** Make homework a priority before playtime and television, and eliminate distractions. Many families serve a small, healthy snack right after school and then start on homework immediately afterward.
- **Making sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils, and crayons, are available.** Ask your child's teacher if he or she will need special materials, and get them in advance.
- **Helping your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.** Have your child do the hard work first so that he or she will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go faster when fatigue begins to set in.
- **Being positive about homework.** The attitude you express about homework will help to shape the attitude your child acquires. Let your child take a short break if he or she is having trouble focusing on an assignment. If your child has been successful in homework completion and is working hard, celebrate that success with a special event (such as going to a movie, on a walk, or to the park).
- **Providing guidance when your child asks for help, rather than answers.** Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Receiving too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone else will do the work.

SOURCE: Excerpted from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Intergovernmental and Interagency Affairs, Educational Partnerships and Family Involvement Unit, *Homework Tips for Parents*, Washington, D.C., 2003.



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