

Homework Helps

A Place to Study

Help your child find a place to study. Ideally this might be a desk in a quiet spot, such as the student's bedroom or a study. In a pinch, it can be the kitchen table, at a time when other family members agree to stay out of the room. The place needs to be relatively quiet, to have a good light, a comfortable chair, and a place nearby to store basic study materials such as a dictionary, pencils, pens, and paper. During study time, there should be no TV or stereo or constant interruptions. Discourage lengthy phone calls during study time also.

A Time to Study

Set aside a definite study schedule. This not only assures that the time is available, but it also limits that time and makes the task seem more manageable. A schedule will also help students keep up with work throughout the semester instead of letting things slide and then catching up in ineffective marathon study sessions.

Remember, each child is different. Some do best completing all their studying and homework in a single session. Others do better if they study for 20 minutes, take a break, and then come back to finish.

Look at your child's homework. Point out the mistakes, but expect your child to find the right answers himself or herself. On major projects, teach your child to break large tasks into smaller ones. Schedule research for one weekend and writing for the next weekend. Instead of cramming the night before, encourage your child to study for a big test over two or three days.

Tips for Working with Teacher

- Be sure you personally meet with your child's teacher early in the school year. Know what is expected of your child. Ask questions like:
 - What books will be read?
 - How much homework will be assigned?
 - Is my child showing improvement and growth?
 - How can I enrich my child's learning at home?
- Children learn best from someone they respect, so if you have criticism, discuss it with the teacher (don't voice your criticism to your child). If that doesn't clear up your concerns, discuss them with the principal.
- If you think there is a problem, don't wait for the next scheduled conference; get in touch with the teacher and make an appointment.

- Use data from progress reports, report cards, parent-teacher conferences, Stanford 9 scores, and A.I.M.S. results to become familiar with your child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Every child should experience some success every day. Pay attention to what your child does well; notice the smallest improvements and be generous with praise. Children learn best when they feel good about themselves.