



Helping with Homework

What role do parents play in homework?

A national survey of school district policies showed that schools most often say that parents should play a supportive role, not a teaching role. You can still support your child without always knowing how to do the assignments.

Helping Children Form a Homework Habit

Children need to be organized and have the resources to be able to do their homework.

Space

Help your child find a quiet, comfortable place with few distractions to do his homework. It doesn't have to be a desk; it could be the kitchen table.

- Turn off the TV, radio, and video games.
- Limit phone calls and instant messaging until after homework time.

Time

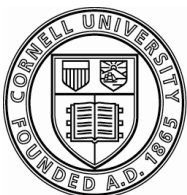
- Start a homework routine by setting aside time every day at the same time to do homework. Choose a time that works well for your family. It does not have to be right after school.
- The length of time depends on the child's age and the amount of homework they have.
- Have children use this time everyday. They can use it for studying or reading if they do not have a specific assignment to do.
- Help your child plan for time to do big projects or time to study for tests.

Materials

Have pencils and other materials your child may need to do her homework ready for her to easily find and use. Have a spot where these materials are always kept.

Why is homework important?

- Homework helps children practice skills they learned in school.
- Homework helps schools and families connect.
- Homework helps to develop good study habits.
- Homework helps children learn responsibility.
- Homework helps children learn organization and time management skills.



Homework Tips

- Have your child work alone. Try to be available to answer questions or provide guidance, but **never do your child's homework for her.**
- Help children see their own mistakes and make their own corrections.
- Provide information without doing the assignment.
- Know when assignments are due by checking your child's planner, reading notes that come home from the teacher, or looking on the school website.
- If your child is struggling, try to find out why. Is he having trouble staying organized? Is she having reading difficulties? Does he not understand the topic?
- Children need to know that they are responsible for doing their homework and for studying. Parents should give their children the responsibility, and let them experience the consequences.
- Give **specific feedback** for what your child does well. Tell her exactly what you saw that you liked: "I really like how you worked hard on your homework tonight! You did it all by yourself! I am very proud of you!"
- **Encourage** your child to always do his best without putting too much pressure on him.
- Focus on the **strengths** of your child.
- Don't expect everything to be perfect. Homework is for learning.

Home/School Connections

Consider talking to the teacher if you notice any of the following:

- Your child has very little homework—is the teacher not assigning it, or is your child not bringing it home?
- Your child keeps forgetting to bring home assignments, books, and materials.
- Your child does not know how to do the homework assignments.
- Your child is spending too much time on homework.

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