

General Homework Tips for Parents:

Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.

Avoid having your child do homework with the television on or in places with other distractions, such as people coming and going.

Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available.

Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.

Help your child with time management.

Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.

Be positive about homework.

Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.

When your child does homework, you do homework.

Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too. If your child is doing math, balance your checkbook.

When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.

Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.

When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, do it.

Cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that the school and home are a team. Follow the directions given by the teacher.

If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away.

Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects.

Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.

Stay informed.

Talk with your child's teacher. Make sure you know the purpose of homework and what your child's class rules are.

Help your child figure out what is hard homework and what is easy homework.

Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean he will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.

Watch your child for signs of failure and frustration.

Let your child take a short break if she is having trouble keeping her mind on an assignment.

Reward progress in homework.

If your child has been successful in homework completion and is working hard, celebrate that success with a special event to reinforce the positive effort.

Excerpt from "Homework Tips for Parents" from U.S. Department of Education