

Learning in Your Home

How can I make our home a good place for my child to learn?

-  Have high expectations for your child's learning and behavior, both at home and at school.
-  Praise and encourage your child.
-  Emphasize effort and achievement, and be a role model for getting work done before play.
-  Establish rules and routines in the home.
-  Monitor television viewing.
-  Read to your young child or have him/her read to you every night. Encourage older children to read by reading yourself - when kids see you sit down and enjoy a good book, they will be more likely to pick up a book themselves. Make sure there are interesting reading materials in the home.
-  Provide a special place for school notes, finished assignments, and school supplies.



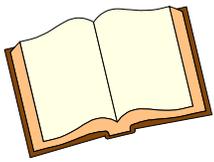
Most teachers assign **homework** on a regular basis because practice is needed before children fully understand new skills or concepts. Homework also increases the amount of learning time available and allows students to do more in-depth learning.

Guidelines for helping with homework:

-  Reward progress; use lots of praise; display good work.
-  Find out about the homework: how much, how to prepare it and turn it in, and what to do when your children don't understand something.
-  Help your child develop a homework schedule that he or she can stick to.
-  Talk to your child each day about homework assignments; go over work; see if it is complete; ask questions about it - but don't do your child's homework yourself!
-  Provide a suitable place for study (if possible, make it quiet and away from the distractions of TV, phone, and loud music).
-  Avoid making homework a punishment.



Children whose parents are involved in their education have better grades, a better attitude towards school, and more appropriate school behavior. Don't underestimate what YOU as a parent, can contribute to your child's learning experiences, no matter how much education you yourself have. Getting involved in your child's education will make a difference!



Promoting Reading

You are your child's first and most important teacher. Here are eight ways you can help your child become a reader.

1 Read yourself. When your kids see you reading the newspaper or curling up with a book, they will want to follow your example.

2 Make sure your children read or you (or someone else) reads to them daily. Reading, like shooting baskets and playing the piano, is a skill. Children who spend at least 30 minutes a day reading for fun develop the skills to be better readers at school.

3 Get into the library habit. Make sure everyone in your family has a library card. Schedule regular trips to the library.

4 Read aloud to your children. This is the most important thing a parent can do to help their children become better readers. Tips for reading:

- *Start reading to them when they are young;
- *Don't stop reading to them as they grow up;
- *Set aside some time each day for reading (bedtime, breakfast, or just after dinner);
- *Read books you enjoy - your kids will know.

5 Use your newspaper to encourage reading: a scavenger hunt. Give your child a list of things to find in today's newspaper. Here are some ideas:

- *A map of the United States;
- *A picture of an athlete;
- *Three words beginning with *w*.



6 Give books as gifts. Then find a special place for your children to keep their own library.



7 Make reading a privilege. Say, "You can stay up 15 minutes later tonight if you read in bed." Or you might say, "Because you helped with the dishes, I have time to read you an *extra* story."

8 If you don't feel confident in your reading abilities, as your children learn to read, ask them to read to you. Talk about the books your children have read. Ask a friend or relative to read aloud to your children.

This reproducible tip sheet was adapted from "8 ways Parents Can Promote Reading at Home" (Caregiver News) by the Florida Partnership for Parent Involvement, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, and Florida's Children's Forum (1999) and reprinted by the Title I Dissemination Project, 2001. For more information, visit www.fmhi.usf.edu/institute/pubs/pdf/cfs/fcpi/parentsupport.htm.