

HOMWORK HINTS For BUSY FAMILIES

Homework can be tough for families in this busy day and age. Everyone is tired after a long day, and the activities schedule is packed. However, homework provides a time to review learning, prepare for the next day and to develop responsibility. Here are some thoughts to help you approach homework in a way that will have long-term value.

Prioritize!

- Schedule time each night (or morning). It can vary day to day.
- Put this on a calendar so it is visible and valued.
- Make it quiet time for everyone whether there is homework or not.

Organize!

- Have a plastic tub or basket filled with sharp pencils, paper, glue, etc.
- Turn off the media - all of it! If a child needs a computer to complete
- homework, make sure it is right under your nose.
- Use a kitchen timer to limit the dawdlers or to help kids set goals

Encourage!

- Notice and praise the effort your child puts in. This will increase
- motivation and confidence.
- Use language that assumes success: When you finish your.... (not if).
- Talk about the learning as opposed to completion of the work. This will
- engage children in the importance of the work they are doing.
- Model homework behavior by doing work yourself (checkbook, reading articles in the paper, write a book, whatever you can manage)

Resist! (This is the hardest one)

- Do not sit down with your child if you can help it. Hover instead. Otherwise, you will be there all night and no one else will get any attention (or dinner).
- If a child is frustrated, help break the work into chunks. Ask questions such as, "What part of this DO you understand?" "If you DID know how to do it, what would you do?" (yes, this works!)
- Do not correct the work after the child leaves the room! This undermines confidence and erodes any sense of responsibility. Send a note to the teacher if you are concerned.

Read Aloud!

Use reading aloud (you to them) as a wonderful part of homework and a great reward for everyone. Reading aloud is highly correlated with academic success. Continue reading aloud even after your child knows how to read. Find books that go along with the homework topics you see. Talk about motivation!!