



# TIPS for Helping Your Children with Homework

*Homework is an opportunity to reinforce learning and for parents to become involved in their children's education, but it can sometimes become a frustrating experience for both parents and students. To help ensure that homework time sparks enthusiasm for learning, try employing the following tips:*

## **Set a Routine**

Whether your child is in grade school, middle school or high school, it is important to establish a homework routine that works for your child and your family. For instance, your youngster may work best in the afternoon after an hour of play or may be more efficient after dinner. Some children might do better completing homework as soon as they get home from school.

If your child has a number of extracurricular activities on different days and at varying times, it may help to develop a schedule with your child that can be hung on the refrigerator door. This not only creates a map to a routine, but also teaches your child time-management skills.

## **An Environment for Success**

In addition to establishing a time, you may also want to think about the best spot for your child to be able to concentrate and be near necessary supplies. It may be a desk set up in their bedroom or in the kitchen so you can assist while making dinner. But, whichever location is chosen, always make sure the space is distraction-free, meaning no TV, video games or siblings playing nearby.

## **Help, Not Do**

Homework teaches children to work independently and encourages self-discipline and responsibility. It is important for parents not to do their child's homework for them. Instead, parents should think of themselves as coaches and guide their children by asking questions, not giving answers. For example, ask "What do you think?" or "How do you think you can come to the answer?"

Parents should also keep in mind that homework doesn't end when your child closes his/her books. Parents should always strive to extend the skills and strategies that their children are working on to other activities.

## **Recognize When Your Child Needs Help**

On average, students in kindergarten through second grade should generally spend between 10 to 20 minutes on homework. In grades three and four, homework should take about 30-40 minutes each night. As they move into higher grades, homework will take most students an hour or more. If you find your child is spending more time on homework than is necessary, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or a member of the guidance department.