

[en Español](#)

The hours in a school day and the amount of time a teacher can spend individually with students are limited. As a result, teachers need the understanding and help of parents and families in supporting classroom instruction and learning outside school hours. Parents can lend this support by taking an interest in the homework that their children bring home and finding the most effective ways to help them with assignments.

Homework has been part of students' lives since the beginning of formal schooling in the United States. It is important because it can improve children's thinking and memory. It can help them develop positive study habits and skills that will serve them well throughout their lives. Homework also can encourage children to use time well, learn independently, and take responsibility for their work.

Helping children with homework has benefits for parents and families as well. It can, for example, provide opportunities for parents to see what their children are learning in school and help families communicate with their children and school staff.

All parents, regardless of their own challenges, want their children to do well in school and receive a quality education. The No Child Left Behind Act, the national effort to improve education, aims to make this desire a reality by holding schools accountable for children's learning. This brochure is based on the larger Helping Your Child series of publications for parents and families, which is designed to provide parents with the latest research and practical information to help them support their children and ensure their children's success in school and in life.

If you expect your child to be well educated, you have the responsibility of making sure your child gets educated, starting at home, with some basic fundamentals.
— President George W. Bush

why is homework important?

In the early grades, homework can help children develop strong study habits and positive attitudes. From third through sixth grades, small amounts of homework, gradually increased each year, may support improved academic achievement. In seventh grade and beyond, students who complete more homework score better on standardized tests and earn better grades, on average, than students who do less homework.

Homework helps students to:

- **Review and practice** what they have covered in class;
- **Prepare** for class the next day;

- **Learn to use resources**, such as libraries, reference materials, and Web sites;
- **Explore** subjects more fully than classroom time permits;
- **Extend learning** by applying skills they already have to new situations;
- **Integrate** their learning by applying many different skills to a single task, such as book reports or science projects; and
- **Learn to manage time** and meet deadlines.

tips for parents

You can do many things at home to show your child that you value education and homework, such as:

- Set a regular time and place for homework;
- Remove distractions;
- Provide supplies and identify resources; and
- Be interested in what your child is learning.

Communication with teachers is very important for helping your child with homework. Here are some important things to remember:

- **Talk with each of your child's teachers early in the school year.** Let teachers know that you want to be kept informed about what goes on at school.
- **Contact teachers as soon as you suspect your child has a homework problem.** Schools have a responsibility to keep you informed about your child's performance and behavior. Or, you may realize a problem exists before the teacher discovers it. Together, you can solve a problem in its early stages.
- **Request a meeting with teachers to discuss homework problems.** Tell teachers briefly why you want to meet, and make the arrangements.
- **Let teachers know whether your child finds the assignments too hard or too easy.**

A parent is a child's first and most important teacher, which is why the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 recognizes parents' vital role in education.
— Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings

resources

This brochure was drawn from the larger booklet in the Helping Your Child series, "Helping Your Child With Homework," which helps parents of elementary and junior high school students understand why homework is important and makes suggestions for helping children complete assignments successfully. For more information on how you can help your child with homework—along with a wide range of other subjects—visit the Helping Your Child series Web site at www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/hyc.html.


For more information on how you can help your child with homework, take a look at the following resources from the U.S. Department of Education and other organizations:

- **U.S. Department of Education:** www.ed.gov or 1-800-USA-LEARN
- **The Parents Portal:** www.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml
- **Federal Resources for Educational Excellence (FREE):** www.ed.gov/free/index.html

- **Parental Information and Resource Centers:** www.ed.gov/programs/pirc/index.html
- **Homework Tips for Parents:** <http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/homework/index.html>

Note: This document contains information about and from public and private entities and organizations for the reader's information. Inclusion does not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any entity, organization, or the products or services offered or views expressed. This publication also contains hyperlinks and URLs created and maintained by outside organizations and are provided for the reader's convenience. The Department is not responsible for the accuracy of this information.

 Print

 Close
Window

Last Modified: 09/15/2008