

Strategies for Parents Dealing with Common Homework Problems

1. Child Doesn't Do Best Work (not working up to potential):

- Help your child get started on their homework.
- Check in periodically with your child.
- Check their homework at the end of their study time.
- Advise your child but do not do their homework.
- If your child doesn't have any homework, make some up.
- Read with your child every night. For high school age students, you should read by yourself during study time.
- Get to the root of the problem.

2. Child Refuses to Do Homework:

- Make a contract with your child.
- Set consequences or rewards.
- Praise your child for what he does well.
- Say to your child "when you are ready to work, let me know and I'll help".
- Give your child a jump start by helping him organize his work space.
- Deal with your child's concerns about school and teachers. Do not place blame on them.

3. Child Forgets to Bring Homework Home:

- Check the planner daily (turn it into a homework monitoring sheet if necessary).
- Develop consequences.
- Take your child back to school to get the missing work.
- Develop a reward system.
- Be careful; when the parent does too much work it usually backfires.
- Discuss a strategy that will work for you, your child, and the teacher.

4. Child Takes All Night to Do the Homework:

- Use a weekly planner to map out a plan for work time.
- Avoid distractions (phone, TV, computer, siblings, etc.)
- Reward for completed work
- Work in the presence of an adult.
- Develop intervals with a break.
- Work at the kitchen table, not in the bedroom or living room.
- Time will not make up for missing skills; working efficiently is a skill that needs practice.
- Set a beginning time and an ending time.

5. Child Will Not Work Without Assistance:

- Do work in small pieces.
- Stay nearby but do not hover.
- Start them out on the first one or two questions.
- Do not wait until they have done all the problems incorrectly. Check in.
- Give praise for completing work.
- Check in every 5 minutes, then every 6 or 7 minutes as they catch on.
- Set short goals with your child ahead of time.
- Have your child read all of the directions out loud.
- Guide your child, do not tell your child.

6. Child Waits Until the Last Minute to Do the Homework:

- Plan for long range projects as well as weekly work.
- Set a time and a place with your child to do the homework.
- If your child procrastinates, do not allow any other activity until the homework is done.
- Use a wall calendar for the family to use and refer to.
- Reward your child for meeting the goals.

7. Child Will Not Do Homework if the Parent is Not Home:

- Set a time and a place with your child to do the homework.
- Make a contract agreement with your child.
- Set up a point system for rewards to be given at the end of the week.
- Create consequences during the evening if homework is not started before the parent returns.