

My child doesn't mind doing his homework...but it hasn't always been that way!

"I don't mind doing my homework...but it hasn't always been that way. I used to get distracted and homework took forever. I didn't plan how to get big projects done and my parents always got mad and frustrated with me. But then, they learned some simple things from Triple P to help me get focused and now my homework doesn't make anyone mad. " Triple P Child

It's never too early to get on the right track when it comes to education. Teaching your child good study habits and routines will help keep homework manageable and fairly stress free. Homework however is a common issue in many families. Problems can take place when there is poor planning (such as leaving things to the last minute); when children do not understand the homework; or when children do their work quickly without much attention because they would rather be doing something else. Parents' beliefs that their child is 'lazy or irresponsible' can contribute to making the problem worse.

If you are experiencing resistance to homework by your child, you are not alone! There are several steps that parents can take to prepare and encourage their child to do their homework. **Here are some things you can try right away.**

A relaxed and nourished mind can focus much better on tasks than one that is still 'wound up' from the day's events. Give your child some time to relax after school. Offer a snack and let your child have some free time.

Ask your child about their homework for the day...what it is, when it is due, if there are any special materials required. Help your child prepare by gathering materials and by understanding the assignment.

Set a regular time for homework that works for your family. Setting a study routine will give the message to your child that this is a high priority.

Setting a specific study area will help your child focus on the work. This doesn't need to be in a separate room but in an area of the house that offers cleared table space, is well lit, and where distractions are fairly minimal.

There are several ways you can encourage your child as he is completing his homework tasks. Help him get started on his work by asking him to take his work out. You may need to start out sitting at the table with them. Praise your child for the work that has already been accomplished with specific comments on school work that interests him.

It is important to wait for your child to ask for help before offering it and help your child problem solve before offering the answers. For instance "How do *you* think garden is spelled? Take out a piece of paper and try to spell it and I will come back and check it". If he gets the word right, offer praise and if it is miss spelled, point out letters that have been spelled correctly and help him finish spelling the word. Make sure it is the child's work and not yours!

Your child needs encouragement when the homework has been completed. Show an interest and acknowledge the correct work that was done, and refrain from criticizing their mistakes. You do not have to make sure your child's work is perfect before it is handed in.

It is common for homework problems to persist even when parents have tried these techniques. This may be because your child is having difficulties understanding certain subjects and needs extra assistance. Discussing the problem with your child's teacher can be informative and helpful. Additionally, there are several other techniques to encourage and motivate your child to do their homework. Local accredited practitioners can assist in finding the best approach for your family. For more information on Triple P services please visit www.first5scc.org or contact Stephanie Bluford at sbluford@first5scc.org (831) 465-2217.

Focus on your child's accomplishments and successes. If they feel successful, they will want to continue to learn.

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