

THE RIGHT WAY TO HELP WITH HOMEWORK

Increasing competitiveness and assignment overload are causing some parents to do their children's homework for them. Here, advice from experts about what parental input truly helps kids—and what doesn't.

DO	DON'T
provide your child with a space in the house that is clean, well lit and set aside especially for doing homework	let your child watch TV, take phone calls or make pits stops at the refrigerator during homework time
help your child get started on tasks and brainstorm ideas for projects. Ask what topics are of interest to him.	tell your child the answers. This sends the message that someone will bail him out when faced with a challenge.
praise your child. Educators say that effort is more important than success. Be sure to applaud small milestones.	nag or bully your child into getting homework done. Pestering most often breeds resentment, not motivation.
acknowledge homework that is well done. But instead of gifts, let her pick an activity, such as choosing a place for dinner.	bribe your child to do homework by offering money or gifts. This teaches kids to work only for compensation.

What Can Parents Do?

- Get Involved - Listen, Gather Facts!
- Admit there is a problem and begin gathering facts.
- Establish a safe environment that promotes clear, open communication and sharing.
- Learn to recognize the symptoms of victimization by a bully.
- Encourage children to express their feelings and respect their feelings.
- Model and discuss strategies used to settle conflicts by talking out the problem without using bullying behaviors.
- Expect your child to accept consequences for their actions.
- Model honesty, respect, and healthy temperament.
- Teach your child to speak up on behalf of children being victimized.
- Congratulate use of positive social skills when solving problems.

(National Resource Center for Safe Schools, 1999)