

# Helping Your Children in School

You can help your children succeed in school by helping them follow these 10 tips.

**Tip #1: Focus on Homework.** For each subject, whether your children have been given homework or not, make sure they review their notes. This will mean that when a big test or an end of unit test comes up, they will be prepared to study for it. Focusing on homework will also help your children be ready for the next lesson, and ready to ask any questions that might have come up.

**Tip #2: Keep your notes neat and clear.** While your children are applying Tip # 1, they can "kill two birds with one stone" by improving the quality of their notes. Make sure your children's notes contain all the information they need to know. Have them highlight or underline the most important points. Notes full of crossed out words and messy ink patches need to be rewritten altogether.

**Tip #3: Keep your schoolbag neat.** At least once a week have your children empty their schoolbags to make them neater. You will be amazed by what they might find! Often, some "lost" notes or homework will show up just in time. For this reason, it is best to have your children do this in the middle of the week, Wednesday night is best. After a little while, your children will become naturally neater.

**Tip #4: Use your time efficiently.** If your children get stuck on a particular piece of homework, have them leave it and move on to the next piece. Otherwise, their frustration will rise and make matters worse. Have your children go back to the piece they left after a while. Things might be clearer then.

**Tip #5: Always look ahead.** Your children should use their school planners or their own schedules to anticipate what they will need to be doing soon. Encourage them to do a little bit extra, even when they seem to be finished with the homework for that day. If a test is coming up, make sure your children don't leave studying to the last minute.

**Tip #6: Do research wisely.** If research is involved in a project, be careful about how your children use the Internet. The Internet is a valuable resource, but it can be very distracting. Your children might get sidetracked and waste time going from topic to topic. Every now and then, take your children to the library to do their research. They will find valuable information and learn many useful research skills.

**Tip #7: Use technology.** Help your children learn to use a computer effectively to apply to their schoolwork. Let them experiment with PowerPoint, Publisher, Front Page, and other programs. Help your children learn to type efficiently and use Word correctly. Install appropriate audio books on their iPods and watch the Discovery Channel and other educational television programs with them.

**Tip #8: Find your way.** This is going to be trial and error at the beginning, but for any subject and homework assignment, your children will have to find what works best for them. If positive results are not occurring, there is something they are not doing right. Some children may have to rewrite their notes to remember facts, others might have to read them aloud, while still others might need to act them out or build something. Once the right way is found, learning will improve.

**Tip #9: Prioritize what must be done.** Your children must learn to prioritize the things they need to do. Schoolwork and extracurricular activities must come first. Make this very clear to your children and help them stick to this priority.

**Tip #10: Communicate with teachers.** This applies to you as parents as well as to your children. If there is any doubt about an assignment, contact the teacher. Encourage your children to ask the teacher if they find something to be unclear. Your children can do this after class or the next day. Doing this will also help your children develop important communication skills and build their self-confidence.

*This article was contributed by Florence Bernard, Parental Consultant.*

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