

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## HOMework

Children who spend time doing homework do better in school, become better readers, and learn to be self-disciplined and responsible. Parents play a crucial role in the successful completion of homework. The following suggestions will help parents understand their role in becoming involved in homework.

**SET A GOOD EXAMPLE** Emphasize the value of homework by supporting and encouraging your child. Be available to provide assistance during study time, and spend that time reading or doing paperwork yourself.

**ESTABLISH A TIME FOR STUDY** Set aside a specific time each day for homework. Even when a child does not have homework, a "quiet time" can be utilized for reading, reviewing, or writing. Be flexible enough in this time schedule to allow for special activities or sports.

**ALLOW CHILDREN TO CHOOSE THE PLACE TO STUDY** Although it may be ideal for a child to study at a desk in a quiet room, some children prefer to do homework at the kitchen table or lounging on the livingroom floor. The best place to study is whatever works for your child, as long as it is not in front of the television.

**HELP WHEN ASKED** Most homework should be completed without parent assistance. However, your child may have questions about directions, specific problems, or the meaning of a word. It is okay to help and spot check assignments as long as the child is doing the work.

**KEEP A HOMEWORK LOG** Ask your child to record each day's assignments and show you the work when it is completed. This helps your child become organized and accountable for completing work.

## CHILDREN AND RESPONSIBILITY

One of the most important tasks facing parents is to teach children responsibility. It is essential that children develop the self-discipline and judgement necessary to make appropriate decisions. Although some of the self-confidence required to make these decisions comes with age, the majority of it is derived from how situations have been taught in the home.

Is your 9-year-old child old enough to stay home alone for one hour after school? Is your 11-year-old old enough to stay home alone for three hours after dark? Is your 8-year-old child old enough to walk to the store alone? Is your 10-year-old child old enough to go to the mall with a group of friends?

There is no correct answer to any of these questions. Generally the answer will depend upon the situation, the child's level of responsibility, and the child's ability to handle problems. In order for children to be ready for various situations, they must be taught emergency procedures, learn to follow rules, follow safety precautions, and be confident of their own abilities. The best way to accomplish this is to teach children in the home.

1. Discuss various emergency situations, i.e., power failure, threatening phone calls, a stranger at the door, who to call in an emergency, people asking for directions, and peer pressure.
2. Assign children household chores so they may learn responsibility and a sense of accomplishment.
3. Allow children to help establish house rules.
4. Encourage children to make productive use of time when they are home alone.
5. Teach children basic first aid and fire safety procedures.
6. Develop open communication so children feel comfortable talking about problems.

---

*"The old believe everything: the middle-aged suspect everything: the young know everything."*  
Oscar Wilde