



# BABLER FAMILY MATTERS

ROCKWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
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## HOMWORK HELP IS ON THE WAY!

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Homework can be challenging for children and adults alike. For some families homework time may even be a dreaded struggle. Don't let homework stress you or your family out! Read on....because help is on the way!

### Begin with the Basics

**WHO:** Homework is your *child's* responsibility. Sometimes it may seem that the focus is on parents and their role. For example, a child may be quick to blame a parent for an incomplete homework assignment by saying, "My mom forgot to sign my test." Similarly, parents may try to "rescue" their child by remarking, "It was my fault. I forgot to sign her homework book." While it is important for parents to support and guide a child through the homework process, it is ultimately a child's responsibility.

**WHAT:** Homework, of course!

**WHERE:** Help your child create an "office." Your child's office should be his/her own special place where he/she can do homework everyday. Make sure your child chooses a place with a desk or table and few distractions. Have your child set up his/her office the way he/she desires. If your child selects an area that cannot remain set up, such as the kitchen table, have him/her use a box to store school supplies. Be creative and have fun by having your child make a "do not disturb" sign, or a desk name plate.

**WHEN:** Develop an after school schedule. Decide whether your child will benefit from a short amount of playtime after school or if he/she is more productive getting to work immediately. Set a designated "homework time" and make it known to all family members. This may help decrease daily arguments over when homework is to be done. Enforce your after school routine consistently.

Avoid having your child tackle homework tasks late in the evening (when he/she is tired) or in the morning before school (when he/she is rushed).

**WHY:** There really are good reasons for homework! Despite what students may think, homework was not created to torture them.

Discuss the following benefits of homework:

- It encourages students to practice what they learn in school so that they can master skills.
- It reinforces skills that may otherwise be forgotten.
- It enriches a student's knowledge and curiosity to learn. A student may learn facts or concepts that are not directly taught in class.
- It teaches responsibility and self-discipline.
- It provides an opportunity to finish tasks/projects that are too lengthy to be completed in class.

### Ready? Let's Go!

After a long day of school, getting a child to sit down and start his/her homework can be difficult. The following are a few tips to help homework time begin smoothly at your house :

- ✏ Make sure your child has the necessary supplies in his/her office so that he/she is not constantly getting up and roaming around looking for what they need.
- ✏ Require your child to sit in an upright position. Prohibit your child from laying on the floor or bed or lounging on the couch. Being too comfortable makes focusing difficult!
- ✏ Create a "drop spot" within your child's office area. Have your child put his/her backpack in the same spot every day to avoid spreading items throughout the house.
- ✏ Allow your child to have a snack if he/she is hungry. We all need brain food!
- ✏ Go to your child's "office" when he/she needs help with homework or papers and tests signed. This eliminates your child wandering around the house and misplacing items.
- ✏ Have your child start with the hardest subject first, while they have the most energy. Save the easiest task for last.



## Keep it Up! You're Doing Great!

Once a child gets moving on his/her homework it is important to keep the momentum going!

- ✓ Give your child short breaks in between subjects.
- ✓ Play a two minute game of "Simon Says," or sing a quick song. Discourage your child from leaving their office because it will be difficult to get them to return.
- ✓ If you sense that your child is becoming "antsy," encourage him/her to find a stopping point to take a quick 2-3 minute break.
- ✓ If your child is frustrated during homework time, teach them to stay calm by taking some deep breaths. Encourage your child to use their words to ask for help, this is an important life skill!
- ✓ Refuse to argue with your child about his/her homework.
- ✓ Encourage independence. If your child can do it, let him/her do it! If your child says he/she needs help, encourage him/her to try first before jumping in. Model the task and encourage your child to try again under your supervision.
- ✓ Don't hover. Tend to your own task and let your child know that you will return to check on him/her in 5 minutes. Stay close by so that you can be aware if your child is off task, but let your child work independently.
- ✓ If you are concerned that your child is rushing, require your child to sit and stay busy for the designated homework time. Remind him/her to check his/her work. If your child still finishes with time to spare, suggest reading for the few remaining minutes.

### Parents' Role in Homework

All parents want their child to succeed and achieve with ease. It's important to consistently model a positive attitude toward school, learning, and homework. However, the line between providing support and doing too much can sometimes be unclear. Keep in mind that the homework is your child's, not yours! Helping your child with homework should not be confused with doing it for him/her. Your responsibility is to be available for questions

and to review your child's homework to make sure that it is completed to the best of your child's ability. *Be sure to learn about your child's teacher's homework philosophy.* Some teachers like to see where students make mistakes on their homework in order to help determine a child's strengths and needs. A perfect parent corrected paper can be misleading for teachers and may hinder a child from receiving additional help.

### When looking over your child's homework:

- 🍎 Balance criticism with compliments. Don't just point out the errors. Acknowledge the positives!
- 🍎 Model appropriate ways of handling mistakes. (Point out your own mistakes to help your child understand that everyone makes mistakes and that mistakes are okay because they create opportunities to learn.)
- 🍎 Try not to show disappointment if your child is not performing as well as you would like. A child who performs poorly is well aware of his/her struggles. Reassure your child that you value him/her regardless of performance.
- 🍎 Focus on effort, not just outcome. When your child works hard on a task, praise/reward him/ her. Verbalize improvements you notice.
- 🍎 Demonstrate excitement and interest in your child's assignments; kids often look for cues from home to decide how they feel about school and school work!

Talk to your child about school and homework daily.

Do not hesitate to communicate with your child's teacher about homework or any other issues. If you have continual concerns or if you would like support or further information about how to help your child during homework time, contact the school right away.

### Counselor Highlights...



**New Bulldog** groups are in full swing, we are so happy to be learning more about our new friends! **Banana Splits** forms have gone home to those students' whose teacher or parent(s) has contacted us about a need for this support. We hope to have signed permission forms returned by February 21<sup>st</sup>. Once these are all returned groups will be formed and we will start running them shortly thereafter. If you have questions about this group or need more information please feel free to contact us!



\*retrieved <http://www.methacton.org>