

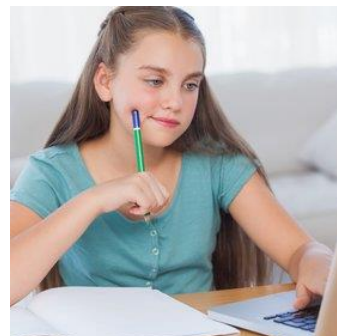
Studying effectively at home

Home Learning

<http://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/secondary/learning-school/homework/>

With all the pressure of school work, puberty, social life and other commitments playing their part, it's understandable that your child might sometimes feel a little overwhelmed by the additional work that they bring home from time to time.

There are many ways to help ease some of this by supporting and guiding them. They might not tell you they want help, but by showing your support your child will pick up on your positive attitude and this can help encourage them to do the same when it comes to their education.



The benefits of helping your child are endless. First and foremost, you will find that you end up spending more quality time with them by listening and talking, and you will also be able to gauge a sense of what their strengths and weaknesses are.

How much home learning should my child be getting?

Different governments will set different guidelines. Currently, in the UK, the following guidelines are used for secondary school children:

- Years 7 and 8: 45: up to 90 minutes per day
- Year 9: up to 1 to 2 hours per day
- Years 10 and 11: up to 1.5 to 2.5 hours per day

Top tips for secondary school home learning

- *Keep a designated home learning area at home;*

Somewhere preferably where you have a flat surface, paper and pens readily available. Make sure any distractions are avoided e.g. turn off the television, mobile phones are switched off or moved away from temptation!

- *Help keep a routine for your child when it comes to home learning;*

You might find your child wants to complete their work as soon as they come home from school or they might want to relax and then start working later in the evening. Let your child decide when they want to do their homework but try and keep a regular time. It is important to recognise apathy and not let your child leave it until just before bed time.

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Time	Friday	Saturday
3-4pm	Home	Home	Home	Home	Home	9am-12pm	Reward!	Reward!
4-5:30pm	Work	Play	Family Time	Work	Play	12-9pm	Family Time! No work	Exercise
5:30-7pm	Play	Work		Play	Work			Work
7-8pm	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	9:30pm	Later night?	Dinner
8:30pm	Bedtime	Bedtime	Bedtime	Bedtime	Later night?			Bedtime
6-6:30am	Breakfast							

- *Praise and encourage your child to help boost their confidence;*

Try to pick up on how they have completed certain tasks for example, "I like the way you worked that out..." as opposed to "Well done".

- *Get involved. Ask your child to give you a bit of background on the work;*

Show some interest and find out why they have been set the piece and how it relates to what they were doing in class. This will open up discussion and help their enthusiasm. You will find it helpful too as it will develop a deeper understanding of how your child learns

- *No matter how tempting it may be, refrain from completing your child's work for them;*

Home learning is set to help teachers understand how much your child has understood about the subject and what they can complete independently. It is also a tool for helping a child develop independent learning skills such as resilience, self-determination and problem solving. Doing their work for them will set unrealistic expectations in the future and could lead to problems further down the line.

- *Stay calm;*

It might become frustrating if you are trying to teach your child something and they do not seem to be grasping the concept but you absolutely must remain calm. Remember, losing your patience will knock their self-esteem and could also prevent them coming to you for help in the future. You need to develop a strong working bond, so always be patient and calm. Modelling positive behaviours to your child will help them develop the same skills.

- *Allow yourself enough time to help your child with their homework;*

Constantly looking at the clock could discourage them and rushing to complete work against the clock will not result in your child's best piece of work. Again, this will be viewed negatively by your child and they may not seek your support in future.

- *Research together;*

There is a wealth of opportunity when it comes to researching information. Just about everything can be found online so it is a great idea to help your child develop healthy research habits. Make it fun, or a game, by looking for things together and comparing your research to see which one will help more. The winner (always your child!) could get a reward.

- *Encourage your child by offering a small reward;*

There is nothing wrong with offering an extrinsic reward for doing well. It doesn't have to be money or sweets - maybe the promise of a trip to the movies, or offering to play a game or do something with them that they always enjoy. Aim, if possible, for them to have at least one or two home learning-free days a week.

- *The amount of work gradually increases as they get older;*

As a child goes through primary school the amount of home learning will increase in order to help prepare them for the rigours of secondary school life. Irrespective, the amount of

work set in secondary, from Year 7 onwards, can come as a shock. Help your child adapt by helping them plan their homework for the first few weeks using a homework diary.

- *Don't get stressed out by work your child brings home;*

If you find that you are getting overly stressed, your child will be too. Remember to talk to the school if you feel your child has too much work, or it's not clear, or if it is taking them too long. Asking for feedback on how they feel your child is doing is also helpful and will help to develop a positive working relationship with the school.