

Homing in on homework help

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(HealthDay)—It can be the most dreaded task of the day for parents and kids alike.

Homework.

But sticking to a schedule and helping your child—not doing it yourself—can lead to a truce in the battle over this age-old rite of passage.

First, don't dive into division as soon as your child walks in the door. Help your kids decompress by arranging for them to do something fun and active after school. This could be working on a creative hobby or playing outside to help reach the 60-minute daily goal for child exercise.

Early in the evening, hit the books. Try to stick to an established homework period that's free of distractions like [electronic devices](#). Create a set area that's well stocked with any school supplies kids might need, suggest the experts at KidsHealth. Be available to answer questions, but don't hover.

Build in some break time—you don't want homework to feel like punishment. Consider letting your child briefly play with the dog or have a snack after finishing math and before starting reading. That can help with pacing, especially when there are many subjects to cover.

Also set time limits. Letting homework drag on late into the night only leads to more frustration, not to mention cutting into [time](#) for much needed sleep. Close the books and write a note to the teacher if your child couldn't finish in a timely manner. If you think your child's homework load is too heavy, call the teacher.

If your child consistently struggles, he or she may have an attention problem or learning disability. Getting your child evaluated and placed in the appropriate classroom can maximize learning, ease [homework](#) stress and add to your [child](#)'s confidence level.

More information: The Nemours Foundation has specifics on these and other steps for streamlining [homework](#), along with links to advice for specific age groups.

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