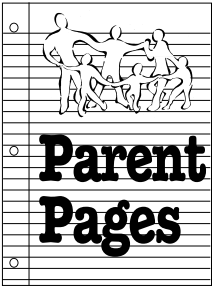


The Three R's at Home



Parents can help their school-age children succeed with the three R's in school by developing the three R's at home.

Establish good ROUTINES.

Children perform best in an organized and predictable environment. Two routines are critical to school success: the morning routine and the homework routine.

Children should wake up the same time every day and have enough time to complete all their morning tasks. These tasks include showering or washing, getting dressed, eating breakfast, brushing teeth and making beds (or other simple chores). For best results, follow the same routine every morning.

To make the morning routine go more smoothly, help children prepare the night before by choosing clothes, packing school bags and making lunch. Set up a "launching pad" where children's school bags, coats, hats, shoes, etc., can be placed, ready to go the next morning.

Don't let children skimp on or skip breakfast. Research has shown that children who eat a nutritious breakfast are more alert in school and have more energy for schoolwork.

Homework should be completed sometime after school, but before dinner. As the evening wears on, children become tired, inattentive and less efficient. Some children may want to play, relax or eat a snack after school, but should start their homework at least an hour before dinnertime.

Set up a space where children can work on school assignments without distractions and interruptions. Make sure they have all the resources they will need: paper, pencils, dictionary, calculator, etc.

Students should tackle the most difficult assignments first. It's OK to do some easy assignments in order to get



jump started, or to get them out of the way, but students usually spend too much time on easy work and not enough on challenging projects.

Build RESPONSIBILITY.

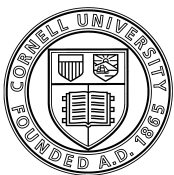
Homework is the child's responsibility. In fact, school is children's work, their job. They must do well to succeed in life.

Make children responsible for their homework. Don't let them become dependent on you to get organized, interpret assignments or solve problems. And don't do their homework for them. Instead, teach them study and time management skills, and encourage them to make their own decisions.

Parents should check homework every night for neatness, completeness and accuracy. If homework doesn't meet your expectations, chances are it doesn't meet the teacher's expectations either. If it isn't neat, tell your child to do it over. If it contains errors, tell her something is wrong and let her find the mistake and correct it.

Praise your child for his efforts, but avoid rewarding them for doing homework. School achievement is its own

~ *Continued* ~



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reward. On the other hand, when your child has accomplished something special or mastered a very difficult task, you may want to recognize her achievements with some treat.

Show RESPECT for education.

Let your children hear you speak positively about education. Let them know you believe that education is important.

Get to know your child's teacher and support him or her. Don't let your children hear you bad-mouthing teachers, administrators, the school board or anything else related to education. If you have a legitimate gripe, take it to the source.

Show interest in your child's school activities. Ask them about school every day and listen attentively when they want to talk about their experiences.

Try to get involved in some way. Ask your child's teacher how you can help. Join and become active in the PTA. If possible, serve as a volunteer for classroom or school activities.

Source: Tim Jabn, Human Development Specialist, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. Parent Pages was developed by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County.