

Toquam Magnet
School
Stamford, CT

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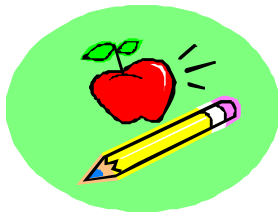
-inspired by the parents and teachers of our Toquam community

Homework Tips - Workshop Series #3

"Collective wisdom strengthens the child, the parent, the teacher, and therefore the school."

Homework is meant to...

- Establish routines
- Set up good study habits
- Reinforce learning in the classroom
- Generate thinkers, not create "robots"
- Help children become independent and self-directed



THIRD & FOURTH GRADE...

- Set a time schedule for homework to be done based on your family's activities
- Create a consistent place for homework space, make a cubby workspace out of a cardboard box
- Organize materials in one area – use a portable homework caddy
- Allow the use of calculators for checking work only!
- Encourage your child's independence by giving him/her responsibility for homework assignments and items needed for school the next day!
- Discourage distraction by playing soft background music - "Brain Wave Symphony" - and using earphones

KINDERGARTEN...

- Connect homework assignments to experiences (i.e. museums, parks, beaches)
- Read to your children – allow them a chance to try their hand at reading back to you, too!
- Communicate concerns with the teacher if homework time seems longer than appropriate
- Get other siblings involved in quiet activities during homework time to cut down on distraction
- Stay calm and create a soothing, pleasant atmosphere!

FIRST & SECOND GRADE...

- Establish a homework routine that works best with your family's schedule
- Talk and learn more about your child's classroom by asking questions about the day
- Improve concentration by redirecting your child's attention to the environment and what is happening around them; go outside or discuss homework assignments while your child is doing a physical activity as a way to "decompress" from the day
- Foster love of nightly reading and provide high interest reading materials

**Enforce and keep an early
bedtime routine so that your
child gets enough rest!**



FIFTH GRADE...

- Encourage having a "homework buddy", someone your child can call on for help
- Help your child keep a calendar/planner to map out long-term assignments
- Give gentle reminders, but don't nag - let your child feel the consequences of choices
- Provide strategies as a parent, but don't do the work!
- Encourage the "work first, TV second" routine
- Establish steps for test studying – teach your child to read and take notes on important points, anticipate test questions, teach learned information to another person, quiz themselves using flashcards, buddy, or parent/sibling
- Stress the importance of self-advocating with teachers



Communicate!

- Keep communication open between home and school, between parent and teacher
- Share expectations with all adults involved on homework routine and expectations
- Check homework every night with your child, regardless of where it was completed – i.e. with a buddy, at QUAMCO or another after school program

Reminder to Parents...

Myth: Children respond better to teacher expectation than to parent expectation.

Fact: An elementary child is tied into his/her PARENTS' expectation. You, as a parent are the stability in your child's life – teachers change from year to year. Establish routines and schedules with your child – all will benefit from the reward!

Increase your child's self esteem and encourage pride in his/her schoolwork...

- Encourage questions to help uncover exactly what they don't understand
- Break homework into segments for completion - tackle what your child knows best, ease into harder assignments
- Use a timer to keep your child focused
- Always offer positive praise/encouragement – both directly and indirectly to your child
- Challenge your child to evaluate his/her own work
- Encourage your child to find mistakes and fine tune
- Comment on the quality of your child's efforts in completing his/her homework

Upcoming Events...

Please join us November 15 @ 7 PM for our next PTO meeting to learn important information about the NEW REPORT CARD!

We would love to hear from you! If you are interested in helping to plan upcoming workshops or be a part of our Toquam Talks team, please contact Marialisa Valendra or Lisa Nunziante through the PTO mailbox in the main office.

Thank you Parents, Teachers and Administrators!

Special thanks to all who participated in our third workshop series. We hope that our experiences help to strengthen the bond that we have with our children and within our school community.