



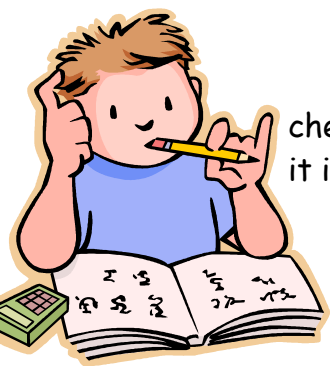
New Year's Greetings from the School Psychologist and School Counselor

'Getting Back into a Homework Routine'

As we get settled into January after our winter break, re-establishing the homework routine can be a challenge for your child and family members. While sticking to a regular homework routine day to day is not always possible, having a general plan to follow can be helpful. The following are suggestions that may assist with setting up and following a routine:



- Help your child decide on a place and time to do homework. Some children need a separate, quiet area, while others may need some background noise such as a radio to help them focus.
- Keep a box or plastic bin with necessary homework supplies and teach your child to repack his/her backpack after homework is done before allowing the child to move on to another activity.
- Assist your child in reviewing and prioritizing homework tasks. Sometimes children have a hard time getting started, so a little 'hurdle help' with the adult providing structure and direction can be useful.
- Schedule breaks for your child. For example, when one task is done, a snack or a little exercise can help to break up the work load. Additional incentives can also be built into the process. If your child can look forward to doing something that he/she likes such as a favorite TV or computer game, he/she may feel more motivated to complete the work.



While helping your child establish a routine, get started and then checking afterwards to ensure that all the work was done well is important, it is also vital that the parent not become the homework 'supervisor' which

encourages the child to become dependent on the adult. Rather, the goal is for the child to work independently with help as needed. Teachers generally give homework that is practice work as opposed to new learning. Homework tells the teacher if the child has learned the material that was taught that day.

If your child is struggling excessively with the difficulty of the work, and you are finding yourself teaching the skills to your child, then a conference with the teacher so that he/she is aware of the difficulties is needed. Lastly, it is a good idea to ask the teacher what amount of time the homework should take your child to complete. If your child is spending an excessive amount of time on homework, then again a conference with the teacher is essential.

While homework can offer its challenges, a positive homework experience for your child can serve as one more way for parents and guardians to gain an appreciation for and understanding of what the child is learning at school.

Suzanne Raffel, School Counselor Ext 3307

Stephanie Gilbert, School Psychologist Ext 3301

