

How To Prevent Our Children From Saying "What Homework"?!

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Let us imagine coming home from a stressful day at work, looking forward to receiving words of encouragement and support from our spouse in order that we can recharge our batteries and feel strong enough to go back tomorrow and face another working day. However, when we come home we are greeted with, "Hi, Honey. How was it today? Where are your papers? I want to see how you did all day." "It was OK," we reply. "I really don't want to talk about it. I'm really beat." "Well, no wonder you don't want to talk about it. Look at these papers. You can do a lot better than this. Where was your mind today? You sit down right now and we'll go over these proposals you wrote and get the spelling straightened out. And look at these paragraphs. You'll never get promoted at this rate. I don't understand this. You have so much more potential than this."

How long would it be before we find a more comfortable place to go after work? "Who needs this?" we'll say. "I can find someone who can show me a little more appreciation for my hard work!"

Many school-age children face this same situation daily. They are greeted after school with, "What did you learn today?" and "Where is your homework? You get on it right now!"

The problem faced by students is that they can't choose to go somewhere else after school. They can't avoid facing a replay of their daily failures. They must return home and listen to whatever their parents have to say. It is very difficult for a child

to say, "Mom! Do you realize you are training me to keep my school progress a secret from you?" Soon they quit bringing home papers. They make excuses and blame it on their teachers. "She never gives me my papers to bring home."

The real problem is that the child has learned that it is unsafe to discuss school with his or her parents. Rather than developing a reporting plan, it is much wiser to work on the real problem—helping children and parents learn to talk to each other in safe and supportive ways. This solution works, and it lasts a lifetime.

We can teach our child to discuss school with us. While we are doing this, we can also lay the foundation blocks that will build a true winner out of our child.

STEP ONE: We should not take on the role as the teacher's agent and an extension of the school, by extending the feeling of persecution from the school into the home. Rather than putting our child through a cross-examination the second he steps foot into the house asking "What did the teacher say"; what did what you learned today"; and especially "what's for homework"; a ***parent can make statements that convey an understanding of the trials and tribulations at school. Some helpful questions include:*** "You look as though you had a hard day"; "You seem glad to be home"; What were some things you enjoyed during the day"; what were some difficult parts of the day"; and "what can I do for you". In most situations making statements is preferable to asking questions.

STEP TWO: Have them point out the positive things that they have done in school.

STEP THREE: We should have the child describe to us the reasons for his or her success. As they put these reasons into words, the process for their success will be imprinted on their brain, never to be erased. They will start to believe they are in control of their success.

STEP FOUR: Work with the child on their mistakes only when they ask for help. We can give the child the option by stating “if you want me to show you how to do these problems all you need to do is ask.” Let the school work on deficiencies. Teachers have training to help with the deficiencies in effective ways.

STEP FIVE: The parent’s greeting when the child or parent comes home is vital in the emotional support for the child, and vital for their enjoyment and tolerance for school. If the mother outpours the child with love that she needs when she comes home, the child will associate the entire experience with love, and when she wakes up in the morning the next day, she will have forgotten the hardships she endured, and will remember only the joy of coming home.

STEP SIX: It is not the amount of time we give our child each night, rather it is the attitude and spirit it is given. The moment the child is with the parent, the child needs to feel that in the parent’s eyes at that moment she is the most important person in the world, and indeed she should be. If a child feels secure and understood in your love, she will not have to worry that she is not perfect, and that she is loved despite her imperfections,

something that may get lost during the struggles of the day. She will always feel secure through all the tribulations of the day, knowing that she has a safe haven, a house of refuge She can always run to and the end of the day.