

Homework Hassles

Helping Your Child Succeed In
School



Michael Cortina MS., LCPC

Disclaimers

- This program was intended, strictly, to educate and encourage parental intervention, when and where its needed.
- *Homework Hassles* was not designed to fix all of your child's homework issues.
- Accept **NOTHING** in this presentation as a personal attack of your parenting skills.
- There is no money-back guarantee ☺

Do Any of These Situations Occur?

- “*I don’t have any!*”
- “*I’ll do it later*” (and later...and later...)
- 10 Minutes later... “*I’m Done!*”
- “*Oh Gee...I forgot to bring it home.*”
- “**Help me! This HUGE project is due TOMORROW!!!**”
- Homework was completed but never turned in.

Importance of doing homework- Why do it?

- So students will not fail classes
- Homework shapes how well one does academically (over time), and promotes healthy brain development (*Learning how to learn*).
- Helps with being more responsible and successful in the future
- Important link between home and school
- Improves overall satisfaction with school and increases a sense of self-worth (when engaged)

I didn’t do my homework because...

- Video Games
- Disorganization & Time Management
- Learning Disabilities, Emotional and Behavioral Problems
- Social Issues
- Fibbing
- Drugs/Alcohol
- Power Struggles

Video Game Overuse

- Excessive Game Play
- Failure to do homework
- Missing School
- Social Isolation

Disorganization

- Inconsistent use of the school planner
- Messy Binder/Locker/Desk
- Losing important homework assignments or misplacing completed homework
- Time Management

Learning Disabilities, Emotional & Behavioral Problems

- Reading
- Math
- Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder and Memory Deficits
- Fine Motor Skills (Poor Handwriting)
- Depression and/or Anxiety
- Behavioral problems at home/school

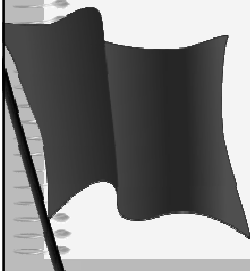
Social Issues

- Few friends
- Teased, harassed or bullied
- Hanging with the wrong crowd
- Poor respect for authority
- Lack of social skills

Fibbing

- *My grades are good; everything is handed in.*
- *My grades are good...the last time I checked.*
- *I can get it done before class.*

Drugs and Alcohol



Look for the RED flags

- Attitude
- Appearance
- Friends
- Grades

Goals of Misbehavior

- Attention
- Power
- Revenge
- Displaying lack of ability

Dinkmeyer; McKay, Dinkmeyer, 1998

Attention Getting "Look at ME!"


- **Active** negative attention seeking
- **Passive** negative attention seeking

CAUTION

Parents: you may feel annoyed


The Power Play "I'm going to win!"

- "I'll do it when I AM ready!"
- "You can't make me...it's my life!"

 Parents: you may feel angry or challenged

The Revenge Factor "I'll teach you!"

- "Fine, then I won't do anything else you ask me to do...I'll show you!"
- "I'll just sit here then...I'll fail anyway!"

 Parents: you may feel hurt/guilty

Display of Inadequacy "I can't do anything right"

- "Mom...Dad, you know I've always struggled with math; you know I don't get it; I'll never get it! I can't do it!! I can't... I can't... I just can't!"
- "Mom...Dad, it's the teacher! I'm telling ya, she hates me! Shes always mean to me and grades me harder than anyone else. I hate being in that class and no matter what I do, I fail! ☹️"

Parents: you may feel frustration and want to give up

What Do We Do Now? THE PLAN



Remember...
You are the Boss!



Kids do not always learn by what you say...but they DO learn by what you do!

- If you follow through, so will your children!
- Being consistent and persistent with children and teens can help develop good study and life skills.

Always *Work With Your Child*

- Get involved... before any problems begin
- Become familiar with their teachers and classes
- Ask about the class...not just about the homework
- Keep in mind: every child has a unique way of studying and learning
- Develop a homework contract and have a positive reward in place

Find a place in the home and designate it.

- Ask your child where *they* would feel comfortable doing homework
- Have a back-up plan (let them know your plan)
- Homework with the TV or radio on...What do you think?

Figure out homework nights and Establish Time Frames

- Sunday – Thursday
- Monday – Friday
- 1.5 hours (+/- 30 min) is reasonable (Middle School)
- Approx 10 minutes per class (Grade school)
- Choose a time frame that works
- Break-time after school
- Several breaks



Every Night Same Place...Same Time

- Even if there is no “homework” to be completed
- Study Ahead
- Reading Logs
- Read and Report to you



Study Groups

- Once or twice a week
- Two to Three Other Classmates
- Work with other parents
- After-school study groups

Keep in contact with your child's teachers

- Teachers are your best allies ☺
- Let your child know, from the start, that you will contact the teacher from time to time (or as often as needed).
- Check with teachers regularly about homework assignments/performance
- Encourage use of *Planners*
- Home – School communication
- Homework Hotlines/Team Websites/On-line Progress Report/Email
- Go to Parent-Teacher Conferences

Find Outside Professional Help

Private Tutors

Private Learning Centers

Private Therapists

What Not To Do



Avoid These Situations

- **HELP** does **NOT** mean **DO!**
 - DO NOT RESCUE!
- Do not let them off (or promise) for finishing homework early.
- Monetary Rewards (Too external)*
- Do not make excuses for them.
- Avoid letting them get behind in classes (or in understanding the material).
- DO NOT GIVE UP!

I Can't!

Really means...

I Won't!

Suggested Readings

- ***Homework Without Tears*** (1987). Written by Lee Canter and Lee Hausner Ph.D
- ***Improving Your Child's Schoolwork*** (1996). Written by Lawrence J. Greene
- ***The Parent's Handbook*** (2007). Don Dinkmeyer; Gary and Joyce McKay and Don Dinkmeyer Jr.

Contact Information

Michael Cortina MS., LCPC
Conventions Psychiatry and Counseling
(630) 416-8289
Email: psy1001@gmail.com