Homework Checklist for Parents

Dragging children away from the television to do homework can be a trying experience. But with a little creativity you can help your child overcome homework anxiety. Here are seven ways to help your child focus on homework:

− **Designate a location for doing homework.** Find a quiet area of your house, perhaps a desk in his room or a corner in the family room. Ensure that the area is well lit and far from distractions such as a television, computer or phone.

− **Put together a homework kit.** Make sure you keep homework supplies near your child’s desk or homework space. Get a range of supplies such as pencils, a dictionary, a thesaurus, glue, scissors, construction paper and colored pencils. Being organized helps a child begin homework immediately instead of searching for supplies.

− **Find appropriate background music.** Studies show that listening to soft classical music can actually help a child concentrate better. Help your child choose instrumental music to listen to while doing homework.

− **Establish a routine.** Talk to your child about her daily activities and make a schedule with allotted time for homework, time for extracurricular activities and time for fun. Involving your child in making a schedule helps her manage her time instead of procrastinating.

− **Think about multimedia alternatives.** Consider buying audio textbooks where children can listen instead of reading. Another possible resource is online textbooks. These alternatives may make homework more interesting for your child.

− **Show your child homework is important.** Discuss the importance of homework as a family. Ask your children not to distract each other while they are doing homework. Help younger children make a "do not disturb" sign. They can decorate the sign and put it up when they begin their homework. This demonstrates that homework is a serious task.

− **Encourage taking breaks.** Children are likely to be more productive if they take a break after about 20 minutes. Children should not feel overwhelmed while doing homework. Allow children to take breaks, and eventually they will develop their own pace of study.