

For Immediate Release:

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Homework helps parents stay involved in educational process

ARDMORE, Okla. – Just the mere mention of the word “homework” may cause some Oklahoma school children to cringe. While homework may not always be a fun activity, it plays a vital role in the educational process.

Having parents involved in homework activities is one way to help keep parents involved in their child’s education, said Sandy Lackey, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension family and consumer science educator.

“Although Oklahoma school children spend about seven hours per day in a learning environment at school, parents also play a vital role in the educational process,” Lackey said. “The value of homework extends beyond the classroom. Homework assignments help parents learn about their child’s education and provide an opportunity for parents to be involved in the educational process. It’s important for parents to show enthusiasm for learning in an effort to spark that same enthusiasm in their child. Children need to know that their parents believe homework is important.”

Lackey said it is helpful to determine a schedule to complete homework assignments. This should include a regular time to begin and a place free of distraction. Supplies and other resources should be readily available so that time is not wasted searching for pencils, notebook paper, a dictionary, glue, markers or other necessities. Turn off the television.

“I encourage parents to monitor their child’s homework assignments, but be careful about actually doing the assignment for the child,” she said. “Make yourself available to answer

questions about the assignment. If a parent does the work for the child, the child won't become confident in his or her own abilities. Sometimes there is a fine line between supporting and doing. I also encourage parents to check over assignments as your child finishes them.”

Something else parents need to consider is their child's learning style. Some children are visual learners. In this situation, drawing a picture or a chart can help the child better understand the lesson. For example, if a child is learning about the different bones in the body, he or she may have difficulty simply remembering the difference between the tibia and the fibula. However, drawing a picture and labeling the bones can help the child retain the information.

Children who are more auditory learners may need to listen to a story or have directions read to them. Make up silly rhymes or songs to help children learn material. Too much written material may cause confusion.

“Homework is an essential part of the learning process and it's very important for parents to be involved. It may take a while to help your child develop good study habits, but the effort is worthwhile,” Lackey said. “Working with both the teacher and your child can help prevent homework hassles and will encourage a positive learning environment.”

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