



## Avoiding the Drama of Completing Homework



### The Problem:

**Y**our daughter is having problems getting her homework done. She promises to complete it after she “takes a break.”

This usually includes having a snack, watching TV, playing outside and calling a friend. However, once her break is over, she refuses to do the homework. Your daughter’s daily homework routine is turning into a huge drama, one that is similarly being played out in homes across America.

### The Solution:



**Here are a few tips to make your child’s homework routine more effective and manageable:**

1. First, establish a rule of “we work before we play.” This means your child needs to do homework before using electronics, playing outside and enjoying other fun activities.
2. Homework should be done in a quiet location that is free of distractions. This means no access to electronics, especially phones. The kitchen table is usually NOT the best place to do homework. But if your child needs close supervision for homework, then the kitchen table may be your best option.
3. Set a specific time for homework to be done, preferably as soon after school as possible. Give your child 10 or 15 minutes to take a break, eat a snack and talk about his or her day. Then it is time to get down to business.
4. If your child has after-school activities, then set a homework time as soon as possible after those activities, ideally before dinner. If that is not possible, have him or her complete homework right after dinner. Avoid pushing homework time too far into the evening because your child will get tired, completing homework will get more challenging and his or her bedtime will get later. This might adversely affect the quantity and quality of your child’s sleep.
5. Children in kindergarten and first grade often do not have homework. Regardless, establish a

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homework routine as soon as your child begins school. This might include taking 5 or 10 minutes after school to read a story, color, practice letters and so forth. Establishing a routine at an early age will make it easier for your child to follow that routine once he or she actually has homework.

6. Think “large to small” to avoid a last-minute rush to get bigger assignments done. By teaching your child to break down larger, long-term assignments like book reports into smaller parts and make them part of the daily homework routine, you will help your child learn to manage time more effectively and complete projects on time, reducing everyone’s frustration.
7. If your child seems to consistently be spending long periods of time doing homework, check with your child’s teacher(s) to see if this matches the teacher’s expectations. Your child may be receiving an inordinate amount of homework and may be struggling to complete it in a timely manner. For certain children, homework assignments may need to be modified to make them more manageable.



Establishing a routine at an early age will make it easier for your child to follow that routine once he or she actually has homework.

## Additional Resources

- [parent-institute.com](https://parent-institute.com)
- [reducehomeworkstress.com](https://reducehomeworkstress.com)
- *Getting Organized for Schoolwork and Homework: Homework Time Made Easier* by Neil McNerney, M.Ed., LPC
- *More Effective Homework: A Parent’s Guide to Helping Out without Freaking Out* by Neil McNerney, M.Ed., LPC
- *How to Help Your Child with Homework: The Complete Guide to Encouraging Good Study Habits and Ending the Homework Wars* by J.S. Schumm, Ph.D.

➡ **For more information** or to make an appointment at the Boys Town Center for Behavioral Health, call **531-355-3358**.

Visit **BoysTown.org/Parenting** for more information from the parenting experts at Boys Town.