

# Parents Make the Difference!



## Help kids take responsibility by predicting & preventing

Often, the behaviors that drive parents crazy are also the things they can see coming. Your child walks in from school and switches on the TV before he starts homework. Or your child goes to bed without packing his backpack and leaves something behind in the morning.

In both these cases, you probably knew what was coming. So one of the best ways to help your child take responsibility is by predicting and then preventing.

First, make sure your child understands the rule. "We aren't going to turn on the TV before your homework is complete and I have looked it over." Second, agree on a consequence. "If you turn the TV on before your homework is done, I will turn it off and we'll keep it off after dinner that day."

The next day, meet your child as he comes in the door. "Remember our rule about TV. We aren't going to turn it on until after homework. Should you switch it on, we'll have to keep it turned off after dinner."

He may test your limits at least once. In that case, stay calm, but enforce the consequence you have agreed on. In this case, when your child follows the rules, you both win.

He does what you've expected him to. If he doesn't follow the rules and you keep the TV turned off after dinner, you have still both won. He has learned that you mean what you say. The next time you lay out a rule, he will be much more likely to pay attention.

### Follow seven steps to help your child prepare for math tests

Studying for a math test can be challenging for students. But there are ways to help your child do her best. Here seven steps to take before your child's next math test:

1. Review what will be covered on the test with your child.
2. Look through homework and quizzes and make sure your child can work the problems.
3. Have your child work the problems at the end of the chapter.
4. Have your child tell you the steps she is following to solve a problem. Often, this will help her see a step she may have missed.
5. Suggest she use different colors when working a problem with many steps.
6. Play "Beat the Clock" once your child understands how to work the problems. Working quickly and accurately is important in math.
7. Help your child get in the habit of checking her work before she hands it in.

### Make homework time easier for your child with motivation!

Sometimes getting kids to do homework is tougher than the homework itself! To increase your child's motivation:

- Develop organization skills. Help your child devise a system that works for her. She might use a homework folder and make daily to-do lists.
- Replace "homework time" with "study time." If your child doesn't have assignments, she can read or review.
- Stick to a routine. Kids resist less when they're used to studying at the same time every day. Let your child choose a quiet, comfortable place to work.
- Help without taking over. Encourage and guide your child through tough problems. But don't ever do the work.
- Be a role model. While your child studies, finish important tasks yourself, such as paying bills or straightening up.
- Offer praise, not prizes. This helps your child become self-motivated--not motivated by things. You might say, "Wow! You kept trying and it paid off!"