

How to Set up a Home Study Center

Deciding where a child should do homework is as important as deciding when it should be done. Here are some features to consider when setting up the perfect home study center:

- **Make sure the area is well lit.** If there isn't a good overhead light, use a desk lamp.
- **Opt for a straight-backed chair at a table.** Good posture helps concentration, so studying on a bed or bean bag may not be the best option.
- **Stock the study center with all the materials they need.** A lot of study time is wasted while the child is looking for materials. Having pencils, rulers, erasers, paper, and other supplies that always stay in the study center is a huge time saver.
- **Put the study center in a quiet, distraction-free area.** TVs, video games, cell phones, toys, etc. should be removed from the study center area so that it is a place where the student can focus and where other family members won't be "hanging out". Some students study better with music on, but it should stay at a reasonable volume.

Fun extras for your Home Study Center

- A dry erase board for student to use instead of scratch paper
- A bulletin board for posting calendars, important notices, project directions, checklists, organization plans, etc.
- A "Do Not Disturb" sign to let other family members know when the child is studying
- A computer
- Having reference materials - such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and thesauruses - available for when needed

Some Other Homework Tips for Parents

- **Don't give your child a choice of when homework gets done.** Set a regular time each day that your child will work on homework. If possible, schedule it for a time when someone will be home to answer questions, should he/she have any.
- **Praise the student.** Use direct and specific statements such as, "You did 5 out of 6 of those word problems right! I'm so proud of you!" If your child works really hard over time or on a challenging assignment, it may be worth celebrating with a tangible reward.
- **Be an active participant.** This does not mean that you do the homework for your child! But do show them that you're interested in what they're learning and that you want to help. For example, you can offer to check their work or read aloud with them.