



THE PARENTING CENTER

School District of
South Orange & Maplewood
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PRESS

Read to your
child every
day!

The Parenting Center

The Parenting
Center is proud to
sponsor speaker
presentations,
workshops and
support groups
throughout the
school year. Call the
center for upcoming
events.

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Manageable Mornings

A few ideas to make mornings a little easier.

Get ready for school at night. Pack backpacks and place by door. Check the weather report. Pick out clothes. Pre-pack lunches. Set the breakfast table. Sign permission slips. Shower.

Establish bedtimes. Kids **need** 10-11 hours of sleep each night. Bedtime routines that include stories, and songs will help children relax. Relaxed children will sleep well. Well-rested children will succeed.

Set a leave-the-house time. Decide what time your kids need to leave to get to school on time. Plan your morning accordingly.

Get up earlier. Get up at least 1/2 hour before the kids. Take time to get dressed, use the bathroom, finish packing lunches, make breakfast, and even relax for a few minutes.

Use alarm clocks. Show your children how to use an alarm clock. Let them be responsible for getting themselves up at a specified time.

Streamline morning chores. Things will go smoothly if children focus only on morning-related chores. Chores such as cleaning and homework should be done after school, not before school.

Ask kids to use a morning checklist. The list can include getting dressed, eating breakfast, brushing teeth and hair, washing face, putting on shoes, etc. Don't allow kids to play until they have completed the list.

Play 'Beat the Clock'. To motivate slow-movers, set a kitchen timer for 5-10 minutes and ask children to get ready before the timer goes off.

Be kind to sleepy heads. Some kids have a harder time waking up than others. Help them by smiling, speaking softly, using a soft touch, and playing or singing a favorite song.

Keep track of morning-related problems. Make a list of commonly occurring problems. Hold a family meeting to come up with solutions.

Make mornings enjoyable. Start each day on a positive note and your kids will be off to a great start.

HELPING YOUR CHILD ADJUST TO SCHOOL

Research shows that children vary tremendously in the ways in which they adapt to new situations. Some children are naturally slow to adapt. It might take a slow-to-adapt child weeks, or even longer, to feel comfortable in a new school or class. Instead of jumping into activities, a child might prefer to stand back and observe at first. This is normal, and does not predict future success.

Be patient. Don't push a child who's slow to adapt. Instead, listen to your child's fears and concerns. Tell your child about a time when you were in a similar situation, and how you felt. Share with your child your successes in dealing with similar situations. Remind her of her past successes. Talk about strategies she can use to solve problems. Encourage her to make a new friend.

Talk with your child's teacher. Tell the teacher about your child's specific concerns. Find out what is happening in the classroom. Ask what you can do to help your child feel more comfortable.

Stay up-beat about your child's teacher and school. If you're confident and enthusiastic, it will be easier for your child.

Homework Basics

- ◆ **Set a time each day for homework.** Be sure children have time to snack and relax before starting. Younger children will find it easiest to work at the same time each day. Older children will need to schedule homework time around activities.
- ◆ **Create a homework calendar.** A weekly homework calendar works well for children who have a variety of afterschool activities. Sit down with your child to write in activities and homework times. Post the calendar in child's homework area.
- ◆ **Pick a place for homework.** Study area should be quiet, well- lit, and have a clean workspace and comfortable chair.
- ◆ **Organize homework supplies in a special box or basket.** Supplies should include sharpened pencils, eraser, pencil sharpener, paper, ruler, scissors, etc. Use these supplies for homework projects only. If possible, supply separate supplies for each child. Contact your school if you need help obtaining supplies.
- ◆ **Eliminate distractions.** Turn off the t.v. Remove toys or other distractions from study area.
- ◆ **Ask children about homework assignments.** Younger children may need help checking backpacks for assignments. Older children should use assignment books to keep track of homework and due dates.
- ◆ **Understand homework policies and supply requirements.** Make sure that your children know exactly what teachers expect of them. Consult your child's teacher if you have any questions.
- ◆ **Monitor homework.** See that homework is properly completed, and instructions are followed. Offer help if needed, but don't do the homework. Encourage children to work independently.

Homework Help

If your child can't sit still. Regular 10-minute breaks will make homework easier to complete, especially for kids with short attention spans

If your child races through his homework. Ask him to break down his homework into manageable parts, for example reading, writing, and math. Next, help him allot a specific amount of time that he will spend on each — 20 minutes on reading, for example. Let your child take breaks in between each part of homework, providing that he has completed it successfully. Help your child develop a "quality" checklist that will help him determine if he has successfully completed his work.

If your child forgets to bring home his homework. Help your child create a checklist of things he needs to bring home each day. Attach the checklist to his folder or desk.