

# CREATING GREAT STUDY HABITS

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When my children were at school we had to constantly encourage one child to do homework while we rarely had to even mention it to the other. I have to admit that when I was at school, homework and study were not my favorite things to do either. There are a number of ways to encourage our kids to study effectively and to willingly do their homework. It all starts before they ever go to school.

Point one is to show them that learning is fun, exciting and it develops their imagination. As early as one to two years old we can encourage an appreciation for books by reading to them regularly. This should be not just at bedtime to help nod them off to sleep, but also during the day when they are alert. As you tell them stories, the pictures on the pages jump out and stimulate their imaginations. By comparison, when watching kids animated TV programs, the storyline, figures, colors, movement and sound are thrown at them without them having to use their imaginations at all.

Point two is to create a stimulating environment at home. This may include arts and craft materials, building blocks, play instruments, dress up clothes, boxes and old sheets and blankets. If you can find a space where they can leave things set up for a while it's even better. However, not everybody has this luxury.

Point three is that during the process of encouraging their imagination and learning, we spend precious time with our kids. They desperately want our attention and there is nothing better than for them to hear a parent saying, "Good one! Way to go! Look what you just created!"

Point four is that we are actively participating in their learning process. We observe their strengths, interests and needs and are able to respond appropriately to assist them to develop in a timely manner. As they become more dexterous we can extend their skills by giving them stuff to create on their own. Through experimentation they develop good perception skills such as how to balance and counter-balance structures, how to draw realistic shapes and how to mix color. With our encouragement they feel good about what they are creating and become increasingly more exploratory. Their own limitations begin to disappear as they discover and develop their knowledge and skills.

Point five is to ensure they have ample opportunity to apply what they learn at school. This requires us to create a daily routine that allows time and a quiet space for homework to be done as well as time to experiment just for fun. We would do well to keep up with our child's teacher to see if we can provide some enrichment opportunities and to reinforce what the teacher has taught that day.

Point six is to give your child some study tips so that they are able to turn their learning experiences into good grades in an assignment or test. The Internet has numerous sites where you can gain these tips. Just Google 'Study Tips' or 'Study Habits'. We will follow this story up with sets of habits and tips that we can summarize from experience and from research.

Point seven is to increase your child's ability to memorize. It seems today that in our education system we require very little memorization, but it still is an important part of being an educated person. Children can learn songs easily enough when they like the song, so they can still learn poems, spelling words and math tables. While many modern 'ivory tower' professors would say it isn't cool to do that any longer, they will return to it years ahead just as they have done with phonetics...because it works!

The goal is to give your child the greatest educational opportunities available so their futures will be bright and productive. Scripture tells us to study to show ourselves approved. Also, Solomon was very adamant that we acquire knowledge and wisdom. Out of this comes the ability to help others and to trust and fear God. What more could we want than to know our purpose and equip ourselves to fulfill this with all the potential God has endowed us with!

If you have any comments or questions on this subject, please do not hesitate to contact us at [sally@forefrontfamilies.org](mailto:sally@forefrontfamilies.org). We invite you to also check out our website at [www.forefrontfamilies.org](http://www.forefrontfamilies.org) and our blog site at [www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com](http://www.forefrontfamilies.blogspot.com) for further assistance.