

The Homework Wars:
How to *not* fight them and Win!



Introduction

- **Schools are increasingly presented with both unique challenges and unique opportunities for students with disabilities and special needs.**
- **Where appropriate, schools offer an important beginning point for students with disabilities to profit from positive interactions with their nondisabled peers.**



Inclusion

As inclusion opportunities increase, so will the likelihood that many students with disabilities will receive a significant portion, or all, of their instruction in the general education classroom.



Homework

With increased regular education instruction, comes an increased demand with homework.



How do Students Sometimes Feel About Homework?

- ➔ Nervous
- ➔ Afraid
- ➔ Frustrated
- ➔ Confused



Homework is scary because:



- ➔ It is time specific
- ➔ It is seen
- ➔ It requires immediate actions or responses
- ➔ It is peer competitive
- ➔ It is self-reflective
- ➔ It is judged



Is it **task avoidance** or a **deficit** in skills?

A child with task avoidance will:

- ➔ Be angry
- ➔ Have attention-getting behaviors
- ➔ Talk back
- ➔ May be sarcastic
- ➔ “Dawdles”
- ➔ Argumentative
- ➔ Denies he/she has any part of why something isn’t done
- ➔ Blames others
- ➔ May make “fun” of others

A child with a deficit in skills will:

- ➔ Appear frightened
- ➔ Negative about self
- ➔ Fear of Failure
- ➔ Feels dumb
- ➔ Feels incompetent
- ➔ Doesn’t know how to ask to help
- ➔ Cannot create/think of alternative responses
- ➔ Appears “frozen”
- ➔ Chooses to be “invisible”

But....*Both* are not feeling good about themselves

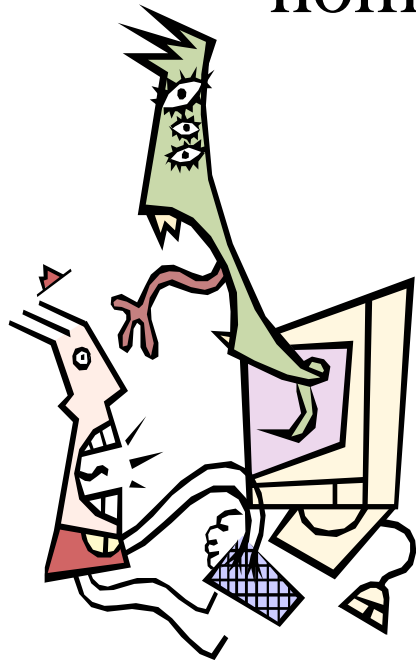




AND NO MATTER WHAT...

*Everyone in
school is
expected to
do
homework!!*

It is not the task they do not want to do; but rather the fear of failure, low self-esteem, frustration, confusion, feelings of being overwhelmed, and more that they do not want to confront!!~and all that yucky stuff is crammed into their book bags along with the homework assignments!





Examples of Support Homework-Classroom

- ➔ Accommodate
- ➔ Modify
- ➔ Clear Expectations/Assignments
- ➔ Copies of Assignments Available
- ➔ Teacher sign off Assignment Sheet
- ➔ “Homework Hotline”



Distinction Between Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations refer to changes in input and output processes in teaching and assessment.

Modifications refer to changes in content and/or standards.



SCHOOL

Creating the
Homework
Survival
Kit



Step 1

You will need 3 large boxes

(or bags)

➔ Box #1

Supply Box

All of the supplies that you will need to do the homework. (Tape, glue sticks, etc.)

➔ Box #2

Snack Box

(you *need* to eat!!)

➔ Box #3

Dump Box

(Empty)



Step 2

Decorate (if desired)

- ➔ Get contact paper and cover each box
- ➔ This will be something you will see at least 6 days a week, so make sure you like the design of the paper.



Step 3

In Box #1 put supplies (such as)

- Scotch tape
- Stapler
- Electric pencil sharpener
- Paper: plain-----lined-----
--graph
- Rulers-one 6" one 12"
- Children's dictionary
- Alpha Speller™ (or something similar)
- Reinforcements
- Tag board for table (to make a smooth writing surface)
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Pencils
- Pens
- Colored Pencils
- Crayons
- Markers
- Hole punch
- Folders
- Large (5" x 8") envelopes
- Small expandable file
- Calculator



Step 4

Box #2~ Snacks

You can also use
a Tupperware™-type
container, but you must
in some way decorate
it!!

This has to be distinctively
YOURS!

Some ideas for the box:

- Something salty (chips, pretzels, etc.)
- Something sweet (candy, dried fruit, etc)
- Something chewy (gum, Twizzlers, etc.)
- Something to drink (juice, or a water bottle, etc.)
- Napkins



Box #3
Empty



Homework Box Procedures

- ➔ Come home WITH your book bag
- ➔ Get out your three boxes
- ➔ Dump your entire book bag contents into the Dump Box
- ➔ Go have a snack/chill/whatever 20 minutes maximum
- ➔ Open up Dump Box; lay out all of the contents
- ➔ Put back in the book bag all of the non-essentials
- ➔ Leave out notes, etc that have to be signed
- ➔ Take out your Agenda or other form of homework assignments
- ➔ Put the books and workbooks in order that you choose to do them in the Dump box
- ➔ Do them 1 at a time.
- ➔ When finished put the books, etc back into your book bag
- ➔ Keep doing this until the Dump Box is empty
- ➔ Put all 3 boxes away until the next day, preferably in a closet where they are not seen until needed



Other essentials

- ➔ Homework place should be near but not in the “thick” of family “chaos”.
- ➔ Child should have someone available to ask for help (clarification)-remember that asking for help appropriately is part of this process.
- ➔ No phone, no cell phone, no pager, no radio, no TV.
- ➔ If your child needs “white” noise, think about static machines or soft classical music that he/she cannot hum to.
- ➔ Homework time needs to be time specific, use a time card system if needed.





The Route to Success

- ➔ Is not a straight line
- ➔ Is fraught with “bumps” and detours
- ➔ Is about learning from mistakes
- ➔ Is really only traveled alone
- ➔ Is a personal journey
- ➔ And the destination may turn out to be different from the original selected end-point



The “Take Home” Messages

- ➔ Homework is an emotional activity
- ➔ **Homework** patterns are habituated-it is about getting good habits
- ➔ Practice does not make perfect-it makes permanent-therefore homework must be practiced in the right way