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Family Newsletter

www.tutoringcenter.com

The Tutoring Center wants to make sure your child is responsible for completing homework and classwork

Dear Parents,

Now that we are in the second semester and school is getting more difficult, your child may have difficulty completing homework and classwork assignments. Some students may even improve dramatically at THE TUTORING CENTER but continue to receive poor grades because they fail to turn in completed assignments on a regular basis.

I can tell you from past experience that most teachers dislike incomplete assignments. They associate the practice with irresponsibility and usually express their disapproval with poor grades.

You have a legitimate cause for concern, as do we, if your child has acquired the habit of submitting incomplete work (*or not turning in work at all*). The behavior has serious long-term implications. Your child must one day compete in a society that rewards effort, diligence, and responsibility with better higher education, career advancement and higher compensation.

We have a strong system in place at our centers to help your child become more accountable for completing homework and classwork assignments. Each week, your child will pick up a "Weekly Performance Form" at the center and turn the form into his teacher. We have included your first form with this newsletter. This form must be initialed by the teacher and parent and the child will turn in the form at the center and collect the appropriate reward for his or her effort. We will keep track of your child's points as the prizes get larger and larger as your child turns in these forms.

We will keep extra forms in the front office and in the classroom. And remember, your child is responsible for picking up and turning in the forms in order to be paid. A pattern of submitting incomplete work is often caused by Academic Deficits and:

- Poor assignment recording skills
- Lack of awareness or concern about consequences
- Difficulty following or remembering instructions
- Poor planning or organizational skills
- Inadequate motivation
- Poor time management skills
- Laziness and irresponsibility
- Procrastination
- Frustration and demoralization
- Confusion about family standards, performance guidelines, values and expectations
- Family problems
- Negative peer influences

Poor academic skills and learning problems are the two most plausible explanations for incomplete assignments. As your child is "catching" up to grade level at THE TUTORING CENTER, completing assignments may be difficult. We will need your help making sure your child turns in his "Weekly Performance Form" each week.

In addition, children may often protect themselves from frustration by not completing their work because they do not recognize, or choose to deny, an obvious irony: their self-sabotaging behavior calls attention to the very learning deficits they are trying to hide.

When parents recognize that their child has acquired a pattern of chronic counterproductive behaviors, their natural instinct is to intervene and protect the child from the mistakes, defeats, and pain that usually result. Intervention in the form of threats, lectures, punishment, and showdowns is often ineffectual and typically triggers denial, defensiveness, resentment, anger, and active or passive resistance (Continue on Page 2).

WE COULD USE YOUR HELP!

In fairness to all families who need makeup times, if you can't make it to your session, please call or e-mail your center by 12:00 to cancel. If you need to schedule a makeup session please call the center after 2:00 to see what times are available for your makeup.



The following logical 8-step plan offers a far more effective alternative to a frontal assault on the problem of incomplete assignments or not turning in work.

1. Talk with your Center Director at THE TUTORING CENTER. We need to look carefully at your child's current level of academic skills. We will perform another Diagnostic Assessment if necessary.

2. Gear your expectations to a realistic assessment of your child's current skill level. If the work demands abilities your child does not yet possess, show the teacher our test results, and ask about adjusting the assignments so that they are congruent with his current skill level. As your tutoring sessions continue, and your child starts to significantly improve, the academic demands can be increased incrementally.

3. Provide your child with a carefully controlled amount of help and supervision. The Weekly Performance Form will really help you here.

4. If your child does not know how to study, you may have to help him acquire practical study skills or consider adding the Study Skills Program to your child's current program.

5. Develop reasonable and consistent homework and performance guidelines and clearly assert the family's position on effort, commitment, and follow-through.

6. Help your child establish specific academic goals for each subject. (for example, a B in history) and help him develop a practical, systematic strategy for attaining these goals.

7. Confirm that your child is using an effective system for recording assignments and deadlines. (this is so important that this will be the main topic in a future newsletter)

8. Lastly, help your child develop an effective study schedule that incorporates pragmatic planning and time management principles.

If you conclude you haven't clearly communicated your position on diligence and responsibility, you may be tempted to assert aggressively a new set of demanding rules. Bring forward a new and radically different standard without first explaining calmly, and in understandable terms, the reason for the new guidelines could overwhelm your child and trigger confusion, resistance or resentment.

It is far more strategic to explain why you are establishing new rules and to implement the guidelines in increments your child can more easily assimilate. Spell out the rewards for compliance and the consequences for noncompliance. And always remember that positive reinforcement is generally more effective than criticism or punishment.

Your Weekly Performance Form will also reward your child each week as he gets more and more responsible for turning in homework and classwork.

Generally, a child's work ethic is directly linked to academic skills and self-confidence. If a child is floundering hopelessly and requires academic help, please let us do our job by keeping your child enrolled, even during difficult periods in school. Long term enrollment and support is usually required to help your child overcome these obstacles.

Our assistance over a long period of time must be provided before you can realistically expect any changes in attitude, motivation, and diligence.

Once your child begins to receive better grades, as a direct result on our intensive one-to-one tutoring system, and starts to enjoy his success in school, he'll be far less likely to submit incomplete work.

Best regards,

Edward S. Thalheimer, Ph.D., Founder
The Tutoring Centers



GET YOUR CHILD ON THE RIGHT TRACK THIS YEAR WITH OUR "HOMEWORK/STUDY SKILLS" PROGRAM!

Why would you consider a Study Skills Program for your child? Because you want your child to be successful in school. You are sure your child has the basic academic skills-but you also wonder if your child needs more. You wonder, has my child been taught the most important skill- how to learn? Just as your child needs excellent skills in reading, math, and writing, he or she must also be taught the skills for efficient and effective studying, as well as getting caught up on their current assignments and homework with the help of one of our tutors.

Who is the Study Skills Program designed for? Is your child disorganized, can't get work completed or turned in, doesn't appear to understand what a teacher expects of him, cannot pick out important points in school lectures or from textbooks, can't take notes, or is not successful on tests. Is your child struggling to pass his or her subjects but has pretty good academic skills? Or is your child a good student taking challenging subjects and working too many hours to maintain top grades? Your child may work too hard, stress too much, and try to burn the candle at both ends. For all of these students the answer to easing stress and improving grades is to learn how to learn efficiently. This is what *Study Skills Made Easy* is all about. *Study Skills Made Easy* is divided into the following skill areas:

1. Organization Strategies
2. Communication Strategies
3. Reading Comprehension Strategies
4. Note-Taking Strategies
5. Memorization Strategies
6. Test-Taking Strategies
7. Homework Strategies
8. Stress Management Strategies

The best gift you can give your children is the gift of learning the tools to help them become independent. Set up an appointment now to discuss one of our most important programs.

Is your child having difficulty with homework writing assignments?

Would you like your child to do improve in homework writing assignments this school year? Would you like your child to write stories and reports with more confidence and motivation?

THE TUTORING CENTER'S FAST-PACED READING & WRITING PROGRAM addresses all of these needs.

Step by step, using THE TUTORING CENTER'S unique "Rotational Approach To Learning" and our exclusive one-to-one format, your child will complete writing assignments with a smile, and best of all, will begin to enjoy writing!

Writing Program:(each 60 minute session)

- 30 minutes Reading Comprehension
- 15 minutes Test Preparation Skills
- 15 minutes Writing Composition

If you feel that your child needs help in writing, come on in to see our Reading/ Writing Program in more detail.

Check out

THE TUTORING CENTER'S
Web Site for more information.
www.tutoringcenter.com

THE TUTORING CENTER Office Corner

•**Canceling your session times:** Please understand that we can not offer you a makeup session if you cancel your session after 2:00. Please call or e-mail us in advance so that we can offer your time to another family to schedule their makeup.

•**When is a good time to drop off your child at his 3:30 session?** Please do not drop your child off more than 10 minutes before your session time. Often the doors are locked or we are in meetings preparing for the children and we do not have adequate supervision in the reception room until 3:20 p.m.. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

•**Picking up your child late:** If you are going to be more than 15 minutes late in picking up your child from the center, please contact us to let your child know. We don't want unsupervised children waiting by the door or outside for too long.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

How do I cope with chronic homework problems?

When your child consistently fails to complete homework assignments, you need to step in. Can your child usually complete assignments with extra assistance and encouragement? On most evenings, children should be able to complete assignments independently. If they seem to require more help from you than you think is reasonable, it's time to schedule an appointment with their teacher.

Explain your concerns to the teacher. Ask if your child is able to complete similar assignments in class. Keep in mind that if your child attends THE TUTORING CENTER because of week academic skills, you should anticipate that homework will continue to be a problem until your child catches up. Even if your child is behind grade level, you may need to set up a plan with the teacher to get your child back on track with homework, possibly modifying the amount of homework until your child catches up to grade level.

A plan for improvement

While your children's specific plan for improvement must accommodate their unique circumstances, there are several key principles to follow in setting up that plan.

* **Your children's homework is their responsibility.** Your child needs to know what the assignments are, when they are due, and how much time to plan to complete them. **HAVE YOUR CHILD TURN IN HIS "WEEKLY PERFORMANCE FORM".**

* **Establish clear expectations.** What do you and the teacher expect your child to do? Make these expectations clear, and make sure your child understands that you and the teacher are working together to define them. Often a meeting involving you, your child, and the teacher is the best setting to establish expectations.

* **Establish clear consequences.** Determine what will happen if your child fails to meet the expectations you and the teacher have established, and let your child know what consequences to expect. Identify several activities or privileges your children enjoy every day. When they meet the established expectations, they continue to enjoy their activities or privileges. When they don't, some or all may be suspended. When you must suspend privileges, do so matter-of-factly, without anger or emotion. Be consistent.

* **Stay connected with your child's teacher.** A simple "note home" system is an easy and effective way to know whether your child is meeting established expectations. Your child's teacher just sends home a short note each day telling you whether your child has completed and turned in assignments. THE TUTORING CENTER also can supply your child with a Weekly Performance Form to take to his/her teacher each week. They are located in your Reception Room.

It's never too late to start

The earlier in your child's school years that you can implement effective homework practices, the more likely you are to shape homework as a positive learning experience. But it's never too late to start. Even if your child has reached the grumbling and complaining stage, you can still turn things around. Sit down with your child at a time and in a place where there are no distractions, and explain what you plan to do and what you expect to accomplish. Involve children in your plans as much as possible.

Does your child have a favorite place or time to study? When practical, incorporate those preferences into your approach. In reality, your child doesn't like fighting about homework any more than you do. Though you may hear complaints and even encounter resistance at first, stick to your plan. Remember, stay calm and keep it positive. In the end, both you and your child will appreciate having homework as just another routine in the day.

Check out
THE TUTORING CENTER'S
web site
for more information and franchise
opportunities.

www.tutoringcenter.com

We grow through reputation and parent referrals

**GIVE A GIFT TO YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS
THIS SCHOOL YEAR
AND RECEIVE \$\$\$ ONE MONTH'S FREE TUITION.
(at participating locations)**



When we started **THE TUTORING CENTER'S** in 1994, we must have had the right idea because, each year, the demand for our personalized tutoring programs has increased dramatically. **THE TUTORING CENTER'S** commitment to personal attention, quality, and service have always set us apart.

As families benefit from our unique approach, they refer **THE TUTORING CENTER** to their friends and neighbors.

These referrals are at the heart of our growth as we quietly expand without a flashy advertising campaign. Families recognizing the clear benefit of a "personal coach," are choosing our unique approach. We know our system works and we want to reach out to as many children as we can.

*If you know of a friend or neighbor that could benefit from our services, please tell them about our **READING, MATH AND WRITING PROGRAMS**. This will get them in the door so that they can get started with the testing process.*

For helping us spread the word, you and your child will be awarded for each referral that enrolls in our programs. For each referral you will receive **ONE FREE MONTH'S TUITION!** (at participating locations) In addition, your child will receive 20 "grab bags" to use at THE TUTORING CENTER toy store.

Thank you very much for your help.



**PICK UP A FLYER AND
GUEST PASS IN YOUR
RECEPTION ROOM
TODAY.**

**PLEASE WRITE YOUR
NAME ON THE FLYER OR
GUEST PASS SO YOU AND
YOUR CHILD WILL
RECEIVE A REFERRAL
CREDIT WHEN THE
FAMILY ENROLLS.**

**THANK YOU IN ADVANCE
FOR SPREADING THE
WORD**

