

The Seven Hidden Values of Homework

Adapted from "Ending the Homework Hassle" by John Rosemond

RESPONSIBILITY: the ability to own what belongs to you, to be accountable for your own actions/mistakes. Homework belongs to the child. When parents get too involved or do the work for the child, it changes the nature of the activity. Work may get done, but the child isn't learning from it.

AUTONOMY: the idea of being self-sufficient and self-governing. Classwork/schoolwork are the first occasions when the child is asked to perform tasks by someone other than his/her parents on a regular basis. This means that the child is now accountable for his/her own actions outside the governance of the parents.

PERSEVERANCE: the idea of completing what you set out to do, the ability to confront difficulties and overcome them. It also includes the idea of pressing one's own limits to advance to a higher level. It's a sad fact that many parents shield their child from frustration in the misguided notion that allowing the child to struggle is neglectful, abusive, or will lead to a child feeling unloved. The fact is that parents are putting off the inevitable until a later time when the process will be harder and immeasurably more painful for the child.

TIME MANAGEMENT: the ability to organize materials, thoughts, and performance so as to meet a schedule or deadline. Homework time should not become protracted. In not learning how to manage time, the child learns how to waste it.

INITIATIVE: the idea of taking responsible action on something that needs to be done that falls within the child's range of capability. If children are never given the chance to experience this, they may never develop the strength to try to start things on their own.

SELF-RELIANCE: the idea that you trust and believe in your abilities. The child who does his/her own work increases his/her sense of independent and confidence, while the child who asks for and receives help feels doubtful and actually feels less able to perform.

RESOURCEFULNESS: the ability to figure out or invent a method to problem-solve. This is a skill that breeds self-confidence and self-esteem. Children who develop this skill will show a willingness to participate fully in classroom activities and discussions.