Supporting Children's LEARNING

As parents and carers, it is hard to see children struggle with their learning, especially when they are frustrated or upset. Sometimes, and often before you know it, you become caught up in trying to help them and you wind up doing their schoolwork for them. How do you find the right balance between telling them "You just have to do it!", and giving them all the answers? And what if you don't even have the answers?

Helping children with schoolwork

(e.g., homework assignments or projects) is sometimes a challenge for families as well as for children. However, it can also be an opportunity for parents and carers to get to know what children are learning at school and to support their learning. Children learn better when they have opportunities to share and practise at home what they are learning at school.

It is not necessary for parents or carers to have all the answers when children have difficulties with their schoolwork. If adults simply provide children with the answers, children miss out on the chance to learn and think for themselves. Parents and carers can help children by guiding their learning and thinking and supporting them to try for themselves.

Parents and Carers can…

Scaffold children's learning by leading and coaching them towards coming up with their own answers. This shows children how to learn, and makes it more likely that they will succeed. The next time your child asks for help, you might try some of the following ways to scaffold thinking and learning.

Prompt children to extend their thinking
- Ask them to think about something relevant: *"Why do you think…?"*
- Ask them to think through alternatives: *"That would be one way, what's another way we could try?"*
- Provide support for thinking through difficult tasks: *"Let's have a think about this together."*

Ask them to explain the steps
- Help children to plan their approach: *"What is it that we need to do?"*
- Ask them to review their steps so far: *"Tell me more about what you have already tried?"*

Demonstrate
- Show an example and talk it through: *"First, I will …, and then I will …, and then I can… "*

Break it into steps
- Help children who are stuck by breaking the task into smaller steps.
- It's a good idea to ensure the first step involves something that children can already do. This way they will experience success early which helps their confidence.
- Be sure to provide praise for completing each step as they work through a task.
- Guide children step-by-step to build their skills so they can eventually complete the whole task on their own.

A reminder on sleep now that we are back at school...

A Guide to Average Sleep Needs

Age	Hours
Newborns (0-2 months)	12 - 18
Infants (3 months to 1 year)	14 - 15
Toddlers (1 to 3 years)	12 - 14
Preschoolers (3 to 5 years)	11 - 13
School-aged children (5 to 12 years)	10 - 11
Teens and preteens (12 to 18 years)	8.5 - 10
Adults (18+)	7.5 - 9

Middle Primary… Bloggers at Work!

Year 3/4 Chadbourne have found a new way of sharing our ideas and learning experiences – through a blog! Blogs are like online journals. They are great because we can share things with a wide audience. Instead of just the teacher seeing the students' work, all of the parents can view the work and leave comments. Having a blog helps to strengthen home-school partnerships and build a sense of classroom community. Everyone is welcome to view our blog. You can even leave a comment and we guarantee we'll reply to you!

Visit it at http://chadbourne.edublogs.org

Middle Primary… Relationship Skills

Each class is engaging in fun learning opportunities that build on the students' ability to communicate, negotiate and sustain positive healthy friendship.

Each day the children participate in a sharing circle where each child is given the opportunity to talk about how they are feeling and how things are going at school for them. Additionally, they are invited to answer a focus question or give an appreciation to another class member.

Setting aside time for children to share their ideas and communicate their feelings in a safe supportive environment gives all children the chance to know themselves and others a little better - helping to create a healthy and happy environment for all students to learn in!

Darwin Playgroups & Events

http://www.playgroupaustralia.com.au/nt/

http://www.darwin.nt.gov.au/ (Fun Bus locations and dates)

http://www.darwin.nt.gov.au/libraries/library-programs-and-events/babesnbooks