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# Visit With the Utays

September 2005

*School Psychology and Education Specialists*

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## Creating a Team with Your Child's Teachers:

### *10 Great Questions to Ask Now*

**"I don't want to wait and end up later crying 'should've known back in September my child was having problems.' Besides the basic, 'How's my child doing?' what should I ask the teacher now early in the school year, to this time PREVENT problems, especially with homework?"**

You are clearly an intelligent, caring, insightful, previously frustrated-to-tears parent! Your goal is the same as the teacher's: to help your child learn. Teachers are the main source of formal education for your child. While tutors and learning centers can supplement and add powerful support to the teacher's curriculum, you are in the best position to coordinate or tie together the threads that make up the fabric of your child's world of education. So, you are quite wise to 1) meet with the teacher, 2) meet now, and 3) come ready to ask meaningful, team-building questions, such as the following.

1. What is most difficult area for my child so far this year? *Listen carefully. If the answer is reading, that could be the reason for current or future homework problems. Good reading is needed for all subject areas.*
2. What problems might cause my child to struggle with homework this year? *Carefully take notes, prioritize, and commit to work on those areas.*
3. What special help can the school offer my child to get back on track with homework as quickly as possible, if needed? *If available, consider a center with a homework supervisor either at the school or a private learning center.*

The following are more questions about homework that are straightforward and easy to answer yet too often are not asked until after frustration sets in, if then. Ask them NOW.

1. When and how are you available to answer questions about homework? *(Teachers often find email most convenient.)*
2. How do you check that homework is completed to your expectations? Some children say it's finished or that they don't have any. How do I make sure they're really doing what you want?
3. Would you give me a head's up if homework is not completed or turned in?
4. How often do you give homework?
5. How much time is expected to spend on homework?
6. What type of involvement do you expect from parents?
7. What happens if they do not understand the homework?

Making sure you have a solid understanding of what is expected of your child is the best place to start gauging their efforts. Also, remember to include your child's perspective when talking with the teacher; education is truly a team effort. Joining with your teacher early in the school year is one more way to help your child prepare today for success tomorrow.

For more ways to successfully manage homework hassles, call Total Learning Centers for a copy of the free guide, *Winning the Homework Battle*.

**Read more ideas for children at**  
**[www.TotalLearningCenter.com](http://www.TotalLearningCenter.com)** or call (724) 940-  
**1090 for a free copy of the TLC report: *How to***  
***Choose a Tutor or Learning Center.***

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