

SOME ADVICE TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN WITH THEIR STUDIES

Studying is an activity that will not be very attractive if its use is unknown and if it is not carried out in a continuous and coherent way. With this in mind, we in the Department of Orientation have looked at the need to help families to supervise the pupils with this activity, so that, between all of us, we can understand and transmit the need to create an appropriate study routine that makes this task easier.

In the style of a “recipe”, we hope to draw your attention to some of the points which need greater emphasis, to stress their importance:

- 1. Stimulate interest in studying, motivate them.** To achieve this it is necessary to bear in mind the following ideas:
 - a) Transmitting the idea that studying is more than just passing exams. It is much more important to study to learn because it means that it enables us to understand what is happening around us and helps us to better develop our lives.
 - b) Creating a favourable atmosphere for study, meaning to positively value study and the effort as a form of self-achievement.
 - c) Setting “attainable” goals, neither unreasonable which could lead to discouragement on not attaining them, nor too easy which could lead to an absence of effort.
 - d) Encouragement during the learning process, reinforcing the goals reached to maintain interest in the studies. It is important that they know that we believe in their possibilities to achieve self-esteem and a positive self perception, without being results centred (the marks).
 - e) Using “prizes” as a way to improve work: this should mean a real personal effort to achieve them. This way appreciation of the prize because of monetary cost is avoided.

- 2. To develop personal responsibility.** It is necessary to have the following points clear:
 - a) It must be known that everyone has their obligations: while parents must fulfil their respective duties (whether inside or outside the home), he or she has their own which is studying. Each of us must deal with our own work because it is ours.
 - b) To encourage continuity and personal effort as way of acquiring an appropriate work habit.
 - c) Make them consider successes and failures, without constantly reproaching them for bad results, so that these can be understood to be the results of personal effort. If there is an understanding of why something was failed, it can be improved, and why something was passed then it can be repeated. In this way, also, there will be more and more personal satisfaction, because it has been he/she who has been able to change the situation.

- 3. Creating the necessary conditions.** This refers to the ideal conditions that should exist in the family environment:
 - a) A calm family atmosphere, in which relationships of trust, understanding, appreciation and communication among the family members exist.
 - b) A positive attitude of the family toward the educational centre, one of collaboration and exchange of information. The involvement of the

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parents does not mean interfering with the teaching work nor should it be questioned in favour of the pupil’s interests.

- c) An appropriate place of study, always the same one if possible, where concentration and silence (without TV, music, other distractions...) is catered for. Where within reach are all the necessary materials (dictionaries, encyclopaedias, consultation material, books...) to avoid him/her constantly getting up.
- d) A specific time to study, always the same time if possible. In the tutorial the pupils make their own homework timetable which they can be asked for to be supervised.
- e) Sleep and food. This means ensuring that necessary sleep routines and correct eating habits are maintained.

4. Supervising his own work. Besides the supervision of the study schedule, already mentioned, we are referring to the following aspects:

- a) To know what has been done every day and what should be done at home ("homework"). The school has given each student a school diary whose use has been explained in the tutorial. In this they note their "homework" and write down their daily classes. It is important to discuss with them what they have done every day and what they should do at home as a starting point.
- b) It is important that they know that before beginning to do their homework, they understand the areas that are to be done. So it is important that they review what they have done in class first.
- c) It is necessary to insist on the use of the study techniques and learning strategies that we work with at the centre, whether in the tutorial, or in the different subjects. Parents may be interested in requesting them through the class teacher or subject teachers at the school.

5. Know their interests. Speak to them to know what they would like to do more or less in the near future (after CSE), valuing and respecting their decisions, without trying to compensate for personal failures and avoiding mentioning personally unfulfilled aspirations. In one idea, guide them and do not control them in the options that they choose during their academic life.