

St. George School

Helping Parents “Make Wise Choices”

Your Kid's Homework

Oh yes, it's a familiar scene: your little one at the kitchen table, frustrated and unfocused on their math assignment that they just can't figure out, Mom; or their reading project that is SO BORING, Dad. It's all too easy as parents to want to jump in, give the answers, finish things on your kid's behalf because let's be honest - it's quick. It's easy enough for you. It's a way to stop the complaining, and then your kid will get a good grade, right? This year, I encourage you to stop doing your kid's homework. What will happen if you don't? Maybe they won't finish it, and they get to learn a lesson in responsibility when their teacher confronts them. Maybe they'll figure it out on their own, and that's exactly what they should be doing. Or maybe they'll get the answers wrong and have a little learning to do. **Lend a helping hand to encourage them in the right direction, but put the pencil down, parents!** You've already been through school.

Over-enrolling in Sports/Activities

Got a little dude who loves baseball and soccer? Great, sign him up for both if he's truly dedicated and interested in both sports. But I urge you not to fill up your kids' schedules with every activity and sport available just for the sake of enriching their lives. It's good to get them interested in a variety of things, but kids can also be overwhelmed with a full calendar of things to do with little downtime to just BE. Besides, all of that running around after school can be really stressful for you too as a parent. Stick with a couple of activities your kids truly love and devote your time to those, and don't collect guilt from other parents because little Susie isn't in gymnastics AND Tae Kwon Do AND the math club AND drama AND ballet like little Jessica next door. Jessica sounds like she needs a break or at least a nap.

Obsessively Emailing the Teacher

These days, it's way too easy to shoot off a quick email to your kid's teacher about this or that. Is Jack doing ok today with his social skills? Can he be seated further away from Bobby because they just talk all day and you KNOW Jack just isn't paying attention, and it's not his fault. Did he finish his lunch today or did he trade it for a Twinkie? I get it. But step away from the laptop, keyboard crusaders! Your kid is fine and their fully capable teacher will let you know if there's anything he/she feels you should be aware of in class that day. Remember back when we were kids? No email. How often do you think our parents were sending hand-written notes to the teacher? This is not meant for the important communications. Let's let the teachers do their jobs and focus on the kids, not their email inbox.

Comparing Your Kid to Other Kids

This starts EARLY. Even as young as Jr. Kindergarten, we drop off our kids and chat with the other parents while we hang up backpacks in cubbies. You find out that little 5-year-old Isabel can read already and is learning Latin and also apparently teaching a cooking class down at the local vocational college in her spare time. I mean...it's unbelievable how early we begin comparing our kiddos to one another and how badly it feels when you think your little kid might not be achieving as much as the other kids. Let them be KIDS. They grow at different paces and in different ways. Your little guy might not be the best reader, but he's so introspective and he's got a wild imagination! Try not to measure your kids' success against others. Some kids just learn differently and excel outside of the classroom in ways others don't. It's ALL good, proud moms and dads.

Comparing Yourself to Other Parents

So you've conquered the whole not-comparing-your-kid-to-other-kids thing, but what about yourself? Are you feeling guilty because you're not the Little League coach this year? You don't make your kid read for 30 minutes every night? You only brought a container of strawberries for the class party when the other moms made Pinterest-worthy tie-dyed cupcakes frosted with rainbow fondant, which they hand-rolled themselves? So what?! Give yourselves a break! Do your best, love your kids, let them know you're there and that you care. Do those things. You're great. Stop feeling so guilty. So this year, be a little easier on yourself and on your kiddos. Enjoy the school year, parents...your kids and your spirit will benefit!