



ROSEVILLE AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Raider's Den

THE HEARTBEAT OF 623

News for the week of April 3rd - 7th.

5 Healthy Homework Habits

Teachers know that the best time to develop healthy homework habits for your family is *before* homework becomes a problem. Parents who approach their children's homework without a clear strategy are asking for problems down the road when school gets hard. You see, students who haven't developed effective homework habits tend to lack the motivation to study, misunderstand how to study, and fail to see the long-term benefits of putting forth an effort at home and at school. The good news is that it's never too late to develop healthy homework habits; your family can start these five teacher-recommended steps now.

Keep track of important due dates together

It's true that sometimes life gets in the way of finishing every homework assignment on time. But when missing and incomplete homework becomes a regular occurrence, your child is missing out on the opportunity to get important feedback from his or her teacher before the class moves on to the next, more challenging learning activity. The best way to stay on top of important due dates is to write them together on a family calendar in your kitchen or living room. Refer to the calendar together each day to see what needs to be finished soon, and to make a plan to get it finished on time.

Schedule time for homework every night

Different schools have different homework expectations. One major school board recommends five to fifteen minutes of reviewing schoolwork per day for students in grades one to three, up to thirty minutes per night of review and assignments for students in grades four to six, thirty to sixty minutes of homework per night for students in grades seven to nine, and two hours per night for students in grades ten to twelve. Work together as a family to schedule this work time into your afternoons and evenings, and to create a schedule that works around your children's extra-curricular activities. Generally, if a student in grade nine is busy with dance or baseball on Wednesday night, it's okay to skip homework that night as long as you then make two hours available on either Tuesday or Thursday.

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Set up a study station

In the world of smartphones, tablets, laptop computers and social media, even the most well-intentioned young person can easily be distracted from their homework. Moving your child's study space to a common area, like the kitchen table or a desk in the living room, can help you ensure that your child is using their time effectively. Make sure the homework space is equipped with everything your child needs, like pencils, erasers, pens, a calculator and a dictionary. Periodically stop by your child as they're working to see if they need any help with their homework and to ensure they're on the right track.

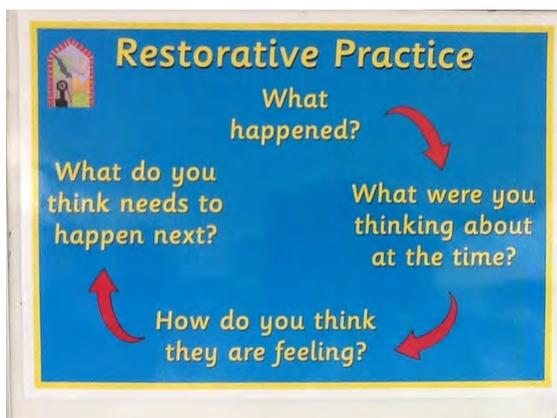
Make connections to your family's real life

Homework is much more meaningful when students can see a connection between what they're doing and their own lives. Look for opportunities to incorporate the topics that you see them exploring into your family's daily life. If your daughter is learning fractions, hand her the pizza cutter! If your son is studying Spanish verbs, take him to an authentic Mexican restaurant and ask him to order in Spanish for the entire family! You can also talk to your children about the relationship between what they're learning and what you do in your own job so that they can see concrete evidence of the value of their studies.

Find a healthy balance

Homework is important, but it isn't everything. Don't let the pursuit of academic excellence take away from your child's other interests, like athletics, music, art or community service. Children and teenagers also need unstructured time with their friends in order to develop important social skills, and for older teenagers balancing homework with a part-time job can help them develop independence and financial management skills that will be essential in the future. Give your child the best start possible by finding a balance between homework and all of the other things that will allow them to grow into happy, healthy, well-rounded adults.

This excerpt is taken from the Child Development Institute (2/2017).



There are many ways that Restorative Practices can be used in schools. Circles is one of those ways. Circles can be used to: learn academic content, build community, improve a class atmosphere, or repair relationships. Regardless of the purpose, Circles have certain elements that encourage respect and build understanding. In the book *Circle Forward* Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay Pranis describe these elements.

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Agreements (if the Circle is making decisions)

“Decisions in the Circle are made by consensus. The standard of consensus in a Circle requires the decision to be one that every participant can live with. Agreements are typically recorded for clarity and for future reference. All Circle members are responsible for the successful implementation of the agreement.”

At RAMS, we use agreements when 2 or more people have done some kind of harm to each other. Harm can be verbal (in person, in writing, online) or physical. After each person has a chance to tell their side of the story and consider whether they want to participate in a Circle, a Circle keeper will bring them together to share how the situation has made them feel and to take responsibility for their part in the conflict or harm. This then leads to making an agreement. Everyone in the Circle contributes ideas for how they can move forward, leaving the harmful behaviors in the past and committing to more positive behaviors in the future. Sometimes, “positive” just means avoiding each other. Other times it can be the renewal of a friendship.

Upcoming Events

Monday, April 3rd	7:00 - 8:30	AVID Parent Meeting
Monday, April 3rd	7:00 - 8:30	PTA Meeting
Friday, April 14th	All day	No School - Good Friday
Tuesday, April 18,19 Wednesday, April 25,	Mornings: Periods 1 -3	MCA Test

For more information about Roseville Area Middle School and the Raider's Den, contact Dr. Brookins, Principal at tyrone.brookins@isd623.org or 651.482.5280.

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