

## Words of comfort to parents about homework

Almost two-thirds of Canadians feel parents don't have enough knowledge to help their children with homework. Although parents may not be able to cope with the homework themselves, 93 per cent of Canadians believe that homework "is an important part of schooling," according to a national survey on learning released by the Canadian Council on Learning.

But is parents' inability to provide homework assistance a serious problem? The short answer is no, according to Dr. Paul Cappon, President and CEO of the CCL.

Homework is designed to be done without the assistance of the teacher or parents. It should help students practice and solidify newly acquired concepts and skills, or apply ones that are already well-honed. Students shouldn't be practicing something independently if they haven't mastered the skill or concept well enough to avoid making mistakes again and again. When homework is too hard, it becomes counter-productive and its value for the student is lost.

But, Dr. Cappon says, parents should take heart. They can make a contribution to their children's schoolwork, even without expertise in specific subjects.



Here are four ways to help:

- Watch for signs that your children are experiencing unusual degrees of difficulty. If a child needs help understanding or completing the work assigned by the teacher, it may mean the concepts haven't been mastered in class. The best way a parent can assist a struggling student is to talk to the teacher. Ideally, all three parties—the student, the parent and the teacher—will be involved in finding solutions to a student's challenges.
- Take an interest in your children's schoolwork and acknowledge the effort they have devoted to complete their assignments, at home and in school.
- Ensure that homework time is established and respected within the family schedule.
- Help your children develop good work habits, manage their time and set priorities, so they can address homework assignments in a disciplined manner and avoid last-minute panics.

*This article is excerpted from an article by Dr. Paul Cappon, President of the CCL. The report can be found at [http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Newsroom/Articles/20061025parents\\_about homework.htm](http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Newsroom/Articles/20061025parents_about homework.htm)*

Contact us at: 416-534-0100

Or by email [info@peopleforeducation.com](mailto:info@peopleforeducation.com)