

## **A Homework Bill of Rights for Families**

By  
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*“It’s a most wonderful time of the year”* Christmas music plays in the commercial’s background as parents shop for school supplies, secretly joyful that summer is over and it’s back-to-school. Tired of the brigade of summer camps, family trips, and the patched-together daycare in between, parents welcome the routine of school—until they remember what comes with it—the stress of homework.

Every year about this time, the internet, television, and bookstores are crowded with advice for parents on how to get children to do homework—yet no one seems to question the amount of homework children are assigned or the value of the tasks themselves.

For many parents homework means teary battles at the kitchen table, and a fear they will be deemed bad parents if their children don’t complete their homework. According to one poll, 22% of parents admit to doing their child’s homework for them, just to get it done.

I propose a Homework Bill of Rights to stop the madness and restore sanity to the homework process:

1. Children shall not be required to work more than 40 hours a week. Class time plus homework time shall equal less than 40 hours a week.
2. Children shall have the right to homework they can complete without help. If they cannot complete homework without help, children shall be entitled to re-teaching or modified assignments.

3. Children shall be free from unreasonable penalties for incomplete homework. A child's academic grade shall not be put in jeopardy due to incomplete homework. Children shall be entitled to an in-school or after school homework support program if they are unwilling or unable to complete homework at home.
4. A child's right to playtime, downtime, and adequate sleep shall not be infringed upon by homework.
5. Parents shall not be required to morph into tutors by night.
6. Parents shall have the right to peaceful evenings. Parents shall be entitled to excuse their child from homework that their child does not understand, or is too tired to finish.
7. Parents shall have the right to control their child's free time.
8. Weekend and holiday homework shall be considered cruel and unusual punishment. Families shall be entitled to weekends and holidays free from the intrusion of homework.

All this doesn't mean parents shouldn't work with teachers to help their child succeed in school. Homework is the child's job, but parents must safeguard the childhood their children deserve and the quality family time their family deserves. Maybe then back-to-school *could* be a wonderful time of the year.