That is the question most frequently asked of a teacher by interested parents. This list of suggestions may help, though you will likely find that, as involved parents asking this question, you already naturally do many of the following:

**⇒ Show genuine curiosity in the work brought home.** When papers come home, look at them; comment on them; go over them with your child. You might even set up a filing systems with your child to collect work quarterly. This can help you and your child to track progress. Such interest communicates the idea that education is important and encourages your child to do well.

**⇒ Encourage your child to do homework as early in the afternoon as possible.** Expect your child to use their assignment notebook to assure they bring home all needed materials from school. Provide a study area for your child that is free of distractions. Music, TV, siblings, snack, and other distractions will delay the amount of time it takes for your child to complete their work. Set up a desk or table designated for that study. Remember to provide materials for home study and exploration, such as pencils, a pencil sharpener, pens, crayons, markers, and various types of paper. Unless they need occasional assistance, they should be doing their homework independently.

**⇒ Take can active interest in your child’s management of schoolwork, time, and materials.** Insist they keep a legible record of their assignments through completion using their assignment notebooks. In this way, you too can keep up with your child when he/she has a test and needs to study or a long-term project and needs to manage his/her time. If your child has trouble understanding something, try to help. Orally quiz your child when appropriate and be aware of other study strategies, such as flash cards, that can be shared with your child.

**⇒ Encourage your children to read and write for fun!** For example, keep a family journal where everyone in the family gets to record their “Thought For The Week”. You can also choose a novel of interest to the family and take turns reading it aloud, paragraph-by- paragraph, or chapter-by-chapter. This is especially fun if you develop different voices for when the characters speak.

**⇒ Build a home library.** Present many types of literature (e.g. mystery, adventure, humor, historical fiction, poetry, etc.). Provide reference books that include a dictionary, a thesaurus, an atlas, an almanac, and a selection of encyclopedias and non-fiction books. If you use the Internet for such, please make sure they are valid sources.

**⇒ Provide learning experiences outside of school.**  Parks, museums, libraries, zoos, historical sites, and family games offer great learning opportunities and family relaxation time. Vacations can be enhanced with such events, as well. Do remember however, when planning a vacation, to avoid days when school is in session. Travel certainly enriches your child’s education, but extended absences from school, no matter how educational, can also be damaging to your child’s overall academic success.

**⇒ Monitor TV programs, Internet usage, and electronic games.** TV can be instructional and also relaxing in proper does at the proper time. Talk with your children about the programs they watch. TV’s, computers, and electronic games can be very over stimulating. Reports have suggested that people should not be exposed to electronics one hour prior to going to bed to help eliminate any sleep disturbances. If your child has a phone, collect it every night and charge it in your room.

**⇒ Talk with your child about school and every day events.**

**⇒ See that your child gets plenty of sleep.** 7-12 year olds need 10 – 11 hours sleep nightly.

**Encourage daily exercise and good nutrition.**