



# After-School Programs

## Which One Suits Your Child?

An afterschool program can be a blessing for families that want to extend their children's learning or cultural experience. They are also wonderful for working parents who need somewhere for their children to be but don't want them simply sitting with a babysitter. There are so many options available to families today choosing the right one for your child can be a challenge. Here are the benefits of some afterschool activities. But remember, don't overdo it! Keep it simple- kids need family and down time too.

### Sports Programs

Baseball, soccer, football and basketball - all of these, as well as some other choices - are considered competitive sports. There are many benefits to putting a child into a sports centered program. They learn good sportsmanship, how to be a team player, discipline and they get plenty of exercise. If your child is competitive and loves a physical challenge this might be the perfect choice. It can also be good for children who are under motivated to exercise and need to do that. But, keep in mind, if your child hates the sport he most likely will not excel. Karate and martial arts, while not technically a competitive sport such as football, are excellent choices when it comes to discipline, self control and a physical outlet.

### Dance Programs

From jazz to ballet dance classes are a favorite, for girls especially, although don't think your son won't like them. For the boy who thinks dancing is for sissies, he should know men in ballet are among some of the strongest men out there! Ballet teaches self control, discipline and perseverance. Dance in general is fun, girls like the tutus, costumes and fixing their hair up, and it provides plenty of exercise. There is also tap dancing, square dancing, clogging and ballroom dancing. These classes help children with grace, balance and large motor skills. They also provide opportunity for social skills as performances are usually part of the program.

### Educational Programs

If your child would rather read than play football or spends hours over a chemistry set you might want to consider a good educational afterschool program. There are reading clubs, science clubs, history classes and language classes that children can join. The benefits are: enhanced learning and more in-depth study in their chosen program than is usually available in the typical classroom. The classes are also usually smaller so the teaching is more one on one. This type of program might also be good for the child who would immerse himself in sports. Educational programs can also help improve grades. If your child needs improvement in a particular subject, such as math, choose a program that emphasizes that subject.

### Arts & Cultural Programs

Many afterschool programs offer enrichment benefits in areas such as the arts and culture. This would include programs like music lessons, theatre and drama classes, chess clubs, painting or even arts and crafts. These types of programs allow children to explore different areas of the art world before deciding on something long term. The emphasis behind an afterschool program of this kind would be enrichment, encouraging creativity and exploring areas not normally open to kids during regular school hours. If your child is shy, drama may draw him out. Music classes bring out hidden depths in a child and teach discipline.

### Keep Your Goals in Mind

Remember whatever program you pick for your child, regular evaluation is the key to success. Make sure the program is working for you and your child. You want him to grow and flourish. He should have the freedom to reject an activity if he genuinely dislikes it. Generally, programs that combine the educational with the recreational are best suited for younger children. The goal is learning and enrichment but having fun is important too.

Belinda J Mooney is a freelance writer, home school mom of 7 and an avid reader and crafter. She enjoys making and sharing educational resources with other homeschoolers and parents which you can find at [www.learningtreasures.com](http://www.learningtreasures.com). She writes for both print and online publications.

# Homework & Chores:

## How To Deal With Your Child's Complaints

*By Regina Mendoza, Psy. D.*

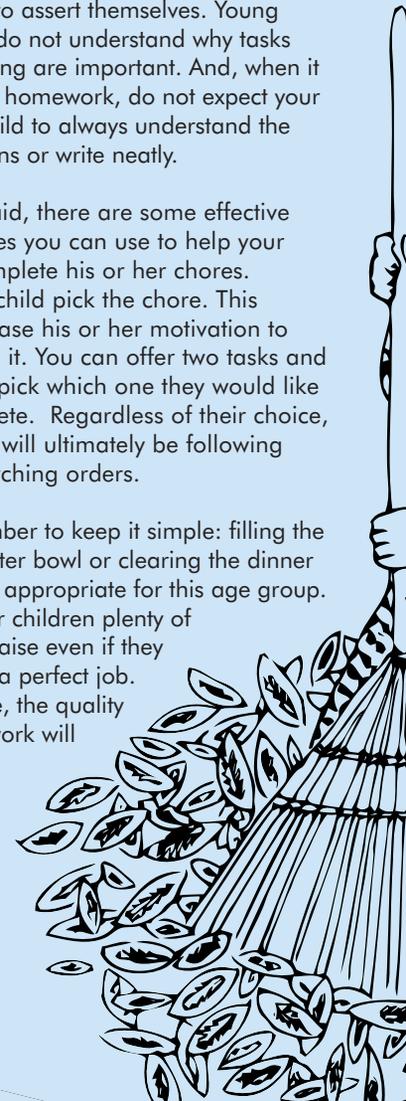
Do you feel like a broken record? "Finish your homework." "Take out the trash." "Clean up your room." "Get in the bath tub." No matter how many times you say it, your requests are ignored or met with the age-old response, "I'll get to it later." Now, you've gotten to the point where you are tired of repeating yourself and making the same worn-out threats.

### You need a new strategy.

Whatever your course of action, it must be consistent with your child's developmental level. Generally speaking, six to eight year-olds have an attention span of 15-20 minutes, are literal-minded, thrive on praise, and like to assert themselves. Young children do not understand why tasks like bathing are important. And, when it comes to homework, do not expect your young child to always understand the instructions or write neatly.

That said, there are some effective techniques you can use to help your child complete his or her chores. Let your child pick the chore. This will increase his or her motivation to complete it. You can offer two tasks and let them pick which one they would like to complete. Regardless of their choice, the child will ultimately be following your marching orders.

Remember to keep it simple: filling the dog's water bowl or clearing the dinner table are appropriate for this age group. Give your children plenty of verbal praise even if they don't do a perfect job. With time, the quality of their work will improve.



For homework, keep your child on a regular schedule. You may even let your child pick the time (after school vs. after dinner). By allowing your child to decide when it's homework time, he or she might be more motivated to do it. Keep in mind that we all have different high-energy times of the day, even kids.

By the time a child is 9 to 12 years old, their attention span will have increased to 30–45 minutes. Children in this age group like to be challenged. They can appreciate abstract concepts, especially those underlying the very rules you want them to follow in the home and at school.

It is not uncommon for your preteen to attempt to assert his independence. Unfortunately, this often takes the form of defiance or the desire for more privacy.

At this stage it is important to revisit your expectations with your child and the consequences of not meeting them. Calmly and clearly explain what you expect from your child and do not deviate from it. Don't forget to also keep up the praise for a job well done.

Your 9 to 12 year olds may begin to give you a myriad of reasons for why they don't have to do their homework or their chores. Let them know you are willing to listen to their point of view, but stick to your rules. You must be consistent, especially when it comes to enforcing the consequences for failing to follow those rules.

*Dr. Regina Mendoza, Psy. D., is a State of Florida licensed psychologist who specializes in the treatment of anxiety, depression, stress, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder for children, adolescents, and adults at her Miami-based practice. Visit [www.reginamendoza.com](http://www.reginamendoza.com)*



# MAKE YOUR PLANS FOR SCHOOL



## Dedicated to Quality Early Childhood Education

### Creative Learning Center

Emilu T. Alvarez, C-7880  
(NAEYC Accredited)  
12455 SW 104 St.  
Miami • 2 1/2 - K  
(305) 274-4006  
DCF # C11MD0556



### Glen Greenstein Early Childhood Development Center at the Dave and Mary Alper JCC

Dr. Janet Stone, Director  
1155 SW 112 Ave, Miami  
Infant-5 years  
(305) 271-9000, x 301  
[www.alperjcc.org](http://www.alperjcc.org)  
DCF # C11MD0537



### Kids For Kids Academy

Beth Davis, Ed.S. CI1MD1312  
National Board-Certified Teacher  
(NAEYC & Apple Accredited)  
14465 SW 144 St, Miami  
(Inside Country Walk)  
6 months-5 years/  
aftercare thru grade 5  
(305) 232-0606  
[www.kidsforkidsacademy.com](http://www.kidsforkidsacademy.com)  
DCF # C11MD1312



### La Scuola - A Reggio Emilia School

Barbie Perez  
(NAEYC & Apple applied for)  
13301 SW 87 Ave, Miami  
6 weeks-5th grade  
(305) 278-9555  
[www.lascuola.com](http://www.lascuola.com)  
DCF # C11MD1433

### L' Atelier - A Reggio Emilia School

Simonetta Medina, Dir.  
(Apple Accredited)  
5960 SW 71 St, Miami  
3 months-5 years  
(305) 662-2326  
[www.latelier.org](http://www.latelier.org)  
DCF # C11MD0186



### Paradise Christian School

Dr. Eileen Fluney  
(NAEYC & APPLE Accredited)  
Head Start  
6184 W. 21 Ct, Hialeah  
7500 NW 58 St, Miami  
(305) 828-7477  
[www.paradisecristianschool.com](http://www.paradisecristianschool.com)  
DCF # C11MD0782



### REM Learning Center

Rose Mary Moreno, M. Ed. C9458  
(NAEYC Accredited, 5 Star Rating from Quality Counts)  
16400 SW 147 Ave. 2.5 Acres  
12 months-K + 1st grade  
(305) 235-0300  
[www.remlearningcenter.com](http://www.remlearningcenter.com)  
DCF # C11MD0478



### The Wonder Years Preschool

Cynthia Suarez, Director  
(APPLE Accredited)  
2965 S. Douglas Rd. Miami  
8 weeks - 5 Years  
(305)-567-5855  
[www.thewonderyearspreschool.com](http://www.thewonderyearspreschool.com)  
DCF # C11MD0096

