



Homework Guidelines for the Child with Cancer Some Practical Suggestions

Children with cancer, who are undergoing treatment, may have frequent or prolonged periods of absence from school. The school, the family, and the medical team will need to communicate carefully to determine the amount of homework appropriate for the child in relation to the current stage of treatment. Each child is unique, and his or her particular response to treatment varies.

Guidelines for assigning homework to a child with cancer:

1. Prioritize assignments. Students with limited energy may not be able to make up all work missed.
2. Shortened assignments may be necessary. Limit the number of skill practice problems, especially in math.
3. Provide video or audio tapes of lectures for a student to watch/listen to while at home or in the hospital.
4. Allow your student to substitute audio-recorded homework for written assignments.
5. Secondary teachers may suggest PASS/FAIL when appropriate rather than a letter grade.
6. If possible, suggest that your student adapt writing assignments to his environment. Writing about hospital experiences can be an interesting and even therapeutic assignment.
7. Think about ways that you can detail for the student what the absolute minimum requirements are for fulfilling the requirements of your class. Share them.
8. Develop a contract with the student that includes assignments, due dates, rewards, and consequences.
9. Think about another student who might serve as a "study buddy" and who can work with the student during study periods, or after school.
10. Develop a study packet for the student to complete while at home that covers core concepts. Chapter outlines can be especially helpful.
11. Involve families in the design of school expectations and goals for their child. They know their child's strengths and limitations best.