

Working Successfully with Tutors

Preparing for Using the Tutoring Industry

- Determine the family weekly budget for tutoring. Decide whether an adult or student tutor is appropriate to your student needs.
- Learn your child's language competencies, deficiencies and class standing from his/her main teacher, if possible.
- Compose a simple draft of tutoring goals about your child's weakness areas. (Many people often will ask to write these goals with the tutor after an initial assessment of student needs.)
- Set realistic goals and timelines with your child. For example, it is unrealistic to expect a tutor will move your child from an F to an A in two weeks time of four to five hours of tutoring. It may be more reasonable to believe that a grade could be raised one or two grade levels under a tutor's direction and your student's committed effort.
- Provide your tutor with a written list of your family's goals. Include class homework, quiz and exam dates. The tutor needs complete information to plan the tutoring session time appropriately.
- Good tutors will have age appropriate expectations for your student. Parents should frankly discuss with their student that when tutors make study suggestions these are based on the academic goals that have been provided. The student would be wise to follow the suggestions, if improvement is truly desired in a challenging area of study.
- Establish a system where your student is responsible for ensuring your tutor is always paid on time. Payment is typically due at the end of each lesson, unless otherwise contracted.

Two Common Consumer Mistakes in dealing in the Tutoring Industry. . .

- Failure to Respect the Tutor's Business

Most tutoring is pursued as a weekly commitment or a short-term fix to an assessed problem. People often overlook the fact that calling a tutor for help and engaging them is actually initiating a business relationship with them. While you may be friendly with your tutor, s/he is a business owner serving as a consultant, providing a service. They cannot help find solutions, if students are unwilling to implement suggestions or parents are unwilling to support the advice.

- Failure to Value the Tutor's Time

Value the tutor's time as much as you value your own time. Most tutors schedule lessons back to back as and tutors get paid for the appointment time, not the amount of time your child is present. Your child's punctuality to sessions will help you get the most return on your investment. It will also help you retain a quality tutoring option.

Commit to your tutor for a set period of time or a specific number of lessons in advance. When you commit to tutoring, a good tutor will commit to helping your student become more successful. Transversely, if you are wishy-washy about your student's needs or your student's availability for tutoring sessions, then a tutor has no logical or emotional reason to commit to you as a client in their schedule. Like most business owners, tutors can choose to decline your business to invest their time in other "patients" who need truly need their help.

Like any "head doctor", most tutors have a cancellation policy. This typically will be 48-72 hours notice, offering the doctor/tutor enough time to reschedule another client. Last minute cancellations because Johnny doesn't feel like going to tutoring does not exempt the student from the financial responsibility of committing to the appointment time. Like doctors appointments, you may owe 1/2 or full service fees for missed appointments.