# Volunteering at Homework House

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# OUR HISTORY

- Founded in 2006 by Sr. Maureen Broughan & Sr. Jane Morrissey
- 1st site in the flats – 15 kids & 2 tutors
- 2nd site opened on Chestnut St. in 2007



# MISSION & VISION

Homework House strengthens our community by promoting educational success and providing free tutoring and mentoring for children living in economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Homework House fosters educational success for children by providing safe, nurturing environments that recognize and build on their inherent strengths and resilience.



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# Day In the Life of a Volunteer







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# When you get to HH:

- Arrival time is around 3:15 pm, at either Chestnut or Summer St.
- Clock in on the tablet when you arrive
  - If you are a college work study student, you get credited for travel time! If your school has provided a means to sign in, you can clock in as soon as you leave campus.
- Head to your assigned classroom to check in with your teacher
- Sit with and engage the children while they're having their snack.





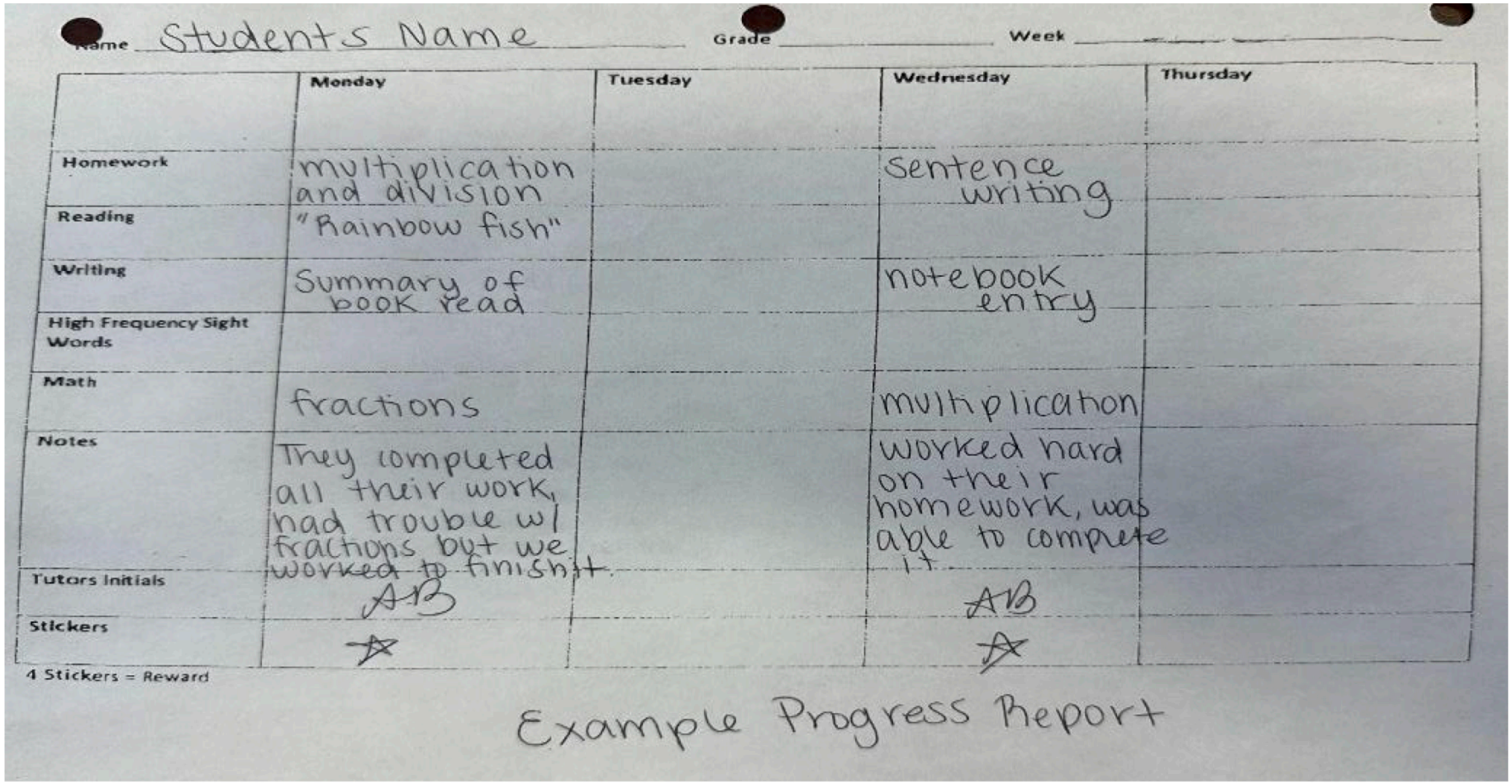
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# In the classroom:

- The teaching staff in the room will fill you in on:
  - What is planned for the afternoon (assigned reading/writing, math, projects, etc.)
  - Which children you will be working with that day
    (You will likely work with the same few students each time you volunteer.)
- After the children have had snack, they will begin their homework, and then work on assigned work for the afternoon.
  - Many children are working below their grade levels
  - Always encourage them to keep trying, and to work hard!
- If the child says they have no homework: CHECK THEIR BACKPACK!
- Fill out daily Progress Reports before you leave!!!!!

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# Sample Progress Report



Name Students Name Grade _____ Week _____

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Homework | multiplication and division | | Sentence writing | |
| Reading | "Rainbow fish" | | | |
| Writing | Summary of book read | | notebook entry | |
| High Frequency Sight Words | | | | |
| Math | fractions | | multiplication | |
| Notes | They completed all their work, had trouble w/ fractions but we worked to finish it. | | worked hard on their homework, was able to complete it | |
| Tutors Initials | AB | | AB | |
| Stickers | ★ | | ★ | |

4 Stickers = Reward

Example Progress Report

# After Homework & Assigned Work:

- Free time!
  - Board games
  - Arts and Crafts
  - Class Project (Science projects, holiday projects, etc.)
  - Playing in the gym
- Great time to connect with the kids
  - Ask them questions about things they enjoy
  - Ask them about school
  - There are also fun getting-to-know-you
  - questions in a basket in each classroom!
- Connecting with the students is very important!
  - The children look up to volunteers
  - Be a positive role model! Tell them about you.
- The children love the volunteers, and look forward to working with them each week!



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# At the end of your shift:

- End of shift is at 5:45 pm. Please make sure that you encourage the children to clean up their space, put away games, etc., before you or they leave.
- Check in with your staff person - Let them know how your day went and/or how the day went for the child.
- Clock out for the day on the tablet. (Again, if you're in college, you get credited for travel – if your school has provided a means of signing out, you can sign out when you get back to campus
- Congratulations!! You've completed your volunteering shift for the day! :)

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# A Few Things to Remember

- You will be in the same classroom every time you volunteer (most days)
- The routine stays the same each time you volunteer  BUT
- No two days are the same! You have to be flexible!
- No cellphones, please!





# SOME TUTORING TIPS:

1. **GUIDE DON'T SOLVE:** Instead of giving the answer, help the child discover the answer themselves.

   - ⇨ Try outlining the text where an answer may be found
   - ⇨ Read out loud to the child
   - ⇨ Work a similar problem step by step, or
   - ⇨ Have the child read with assistance to find the answer.

2. **LISTEN WELL:** Be an active listener

   - ⇨ Learn how to pronounce the child's name and have them learn and use your name.
   - ⇨ Give the child 100% of your attention
   - ⇨ Keep their confidence (unless it is required to be reported)
   - ⇨ Don't make promises you can't keep

# SOME TUTORING TIPS:

3. **RESPECT BOUNDARIES:**

   - ⇨ Know your limits- it's ok to say "no"
   - ⇨ Respect the child's limits
   - ⇨ Don't take it personally if the child takes a while to warm up to you.

4. **ASK FOR HELP:** it's OK not to know the answer!

5. **BE REALISTIC!!!!!**

   - ⇨ You might not see immediate results!
   - ⇨ Look for small steps & successes
   - ⇨ Be honest & frequent in praising the child
   - ⇨ Remind the child that effort is important

# TIPS ON ENGAGING THE CHILD:

1. **REFRAME THE WORK:**
   - ⇨ Try to incorporate the kid's interests into the work
   - ⇨ Feel free to get creative
   - ⇨ Make it a game (e.g. Kahoot!)
2. **NEGOTIATE LITTLE BREAKS:**
   - ⇨ Provide a goal or incentive: work for 20 mins- break for 10 min to relax
3. **LET IT GO!!!** Some days the child just needs a break to talk and relax.

# BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Homework House provides an environment where children are safe, supported, encouraged, and challenged. You are their guide!

# General Guidelines:

1. A positive and constructive approach is the best way to guide the children's behavior.

2. Try rebooting or reframing. If you don't feel like you can handle the situation, call in the staff person in the room for assistance.

3. All forms of corporal punishment, including spanking, are prohibited.
4. No child shall be subjected to crude or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
5. No child shall be denied food, water, or shelter as a form of punishment.
6. No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

# Mandated Reporting Procedures

All Homework House staff & VOLUNTEERS are mandated reporters. By law (M.G.LC119, Section 51A) , you are required to report any suspected instances of abuse or neglect.

# What to do if you suspect a child is being abused or neglected:

1. Report any suspected neglect or abuse of a child IMMEDIATELY to the staff person in your room. They will inform the Homework House Program Director.
2. You will be asked to submit a written report about the incident or suspected abuse documenting your observations including the child's name, date, time, child's injuries, child's behavior, and any other pertinent information.
3. The Program Director will discuss your report with you and with the staff person in the room to assess if a report to DCF is warranted.
4. IF THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR DECIDES AGAINST MAKING A REPORT AND YOU DISAGREE WITH THAT DECISION, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT AND THE RESPONISBILTY TO MAKE THE REPORT YOURSELF.
5. The Program Director will report any suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). immediately It is the responsibility of the volunteer to follow up and confirm that the report was submitted.
6. It is your responsibility to cooperate in any further DCF investigation.
7. DO NOT INFORM THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN THAT YOU/HH ARE MAKING THE REPORT

# DCF PHONE NUMBERS

**Springfield DCF office: 413-452-3200**
M-F 9am and 5pm

**Child-At-Risk Hotline:1-800-792-5200**
M-F 5pm and 9am/weekends or holidays at 1-800-792-5200 between 5pm and 9am or on weekends or holidays.)

Homework House was the very best part of my day! The children were eager to learn and an absolute joy to be with. I was truly honored to be serving children in Holyoke. The children were attentive and willing to engage in a learning experience no matter what the subject.





I feel like every moment I had at homework house was happy. Every time I walked through the doors and up the stairs, I felt like I was a part of something important. I was a piece in the learning of students, and it was these moments that made me want to become a classroom teacher.


Dolphin
Daybreak

# Thank you!



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