

Foster Care to Academic Success

Study Groups

Study groups are a great way to stay on top of your school work and prepare for exams. Studying together can help you in many ways.

How? As a team, you can –

- Reach a better understanding of the subject than working alone, as you discuss, argue and debate.
- Learn by teaching your classmates, or by listening to what they have to say. Each member of the study group will be strong in some areas and weaker in others; help each other out.
- Compare class notes and fill in anything you missed.
- Test each other.
- Stay on track because you made a commitment to others to be at a certain place at a certain time.

Some added benefits. Study groups –

- Prepare you for the “real,” working world, where teamwork is so important.
- Provide support as you encourage and motivate each other.
- Help you overcome shyness about speaking up in front of others.

Getting started. Here are some things to consider when forming a study group –

- Choose wisely. You’ll quickly discover who is serious about the class, who shows up every time and participates, and who seems to understand the subject.
- Three to five members is ideal. With more than five, you may have a hard time coordinating times and staying on task. With less than three, if one person doesn’t show you’re sunk.
- Arrange to meet at a regular time and place, and then put it in your calendar or schedule.
- Be persistent. It may take a meeting or two, and a couple of the members may change, before the group gets into the swing of things.

Foster Care to Academic Success

Study Groups

Practicalities.

- Consider designating one person “group leader,” “head honcho,” or “Emperor of All He Surveys,” (just kidding) to ensure that the group stays on task.
- Prepare an agenda for each meeting. This can be written out, with members given assignments to prepare, or it can be agreed upon in the first five minutes each time you meet.
- Study group is not homework time. Each member should do their readings and homework before the meeting and come prepared to discuss, debate, question, teach and learn.
- Limit sessions to two hours. More than that, and the group may disintegrate into a social gathering.
- Meet at least once a week.
- If there is something you don’t understand even after discussing it as a group, go as a group to the professor or T.A. to have it clarified. Chances are, if you all didn’t get it, the rest of the class didn’t either.

Try it. You may find studying as part of a group just the motivation and support you needed to get great grades. 😊