**It Takes a Village…**

Recently, I posted my top 10 tips for home-schooling success, whether it’s just helping with homework or being full-time home school teacher to your kids. Now I am elaborating on each item on the list. The final parenting tip, #10, is this:

# Draw on and draw in other resources

in your child’s schooling.

Especially in this inter-connected, cyber-technical, harried, 24/7/365 world, keeping your child focused on his homework or on the home schooling assignments can be a real challenge. My thoughts? If you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em. Use all the resources available to you for the task at hand. The more different, creative, engaging, and interesting an activity is for a student, the more likely he will take it on. In today’s world, it does take a village to raise a child, to educate a child.

Fifteen year old Jason, a high school freshman, was gaming on his IPad while sitting at the study desk in his bedroom. Lauren, his mom came to his open bedroom door, but stopped before knocking. She saw the energy Jason was putting out, thumbs flying, trying to knock out all the space aliens he could at one time.

“Uh, Jas?” she offered while knocking on his door. “What’cha doin’? I thought this was the time you set aside to tackle that history essay.”

Jason got one last volley of death ray blasts off before pausing the game. “Oh, hi Mom,” he sheepishly noted, as mom came by his side. “I’m just, you know, taking a break…for just a moment.”

Mom looked over his shoulder to the near blank screen where only the title of his essay was typed. “Usually the beginning of an essay is not where one would schedule a break,” she arched one brow. *Is The Jim Crow Era of Racism Over, or Just on the Down Low?* “Great title. What’s next?”

“I don’t know,” Jason’s voice rose with each word. “That’s where I’m stuck.”

Lauren hugged her man-child and pulled up a chair. “Okay, let’s see.” She helped him devise a plan of attack on the essay. She would text the other moms in their home school group to see what might pop up. She suggested to her son that he read up on the Jim Crow era on Wikipedia, check the current news online that wrote on the racial injustices and police brutality, and also look for TEDtalks and YouTube videos that might shed light. She also volunteered to research references to the alt right, white supremacy, and the Ku Klux Klan.

“Mom!” Jason became exasperated, “Enough already. It’s only supposed to be five pages.”

Today, resources abound and are all practically at your child’s fingertips. As parents, we need to be aware of possibilities, encourage our child’s search, and set time and space parameters for completing school work. With younger children, your approach may need to be more hands-on. However, always encourage his lead and never do a school task for your child. With older children and teens, help set up parameters and then check in on their progress every 20-30 minutes, offering to proofread after they spellcheck and grammar check.

By drawing on and drawing in other resources for your child to use, you are expanding his creativity in completing given assignments. While he continues in school, and it does take a village, you can be his conduit to learning.