

When teachers lose trust in student work

Trust and learning in the age of AI

Tips for parents



Did you know?

When kids use AI for schoolwork, teachers can't assess what students actually know and can do. Teachers rely on student work to assess progress and design instruction. When kids use AI to do work, teachers do not have an accurate way to gauge and therefore support their learning.

AI is impacting teachers' trust in students. In 2024, more than half of U.S. grade 6-12 public school teachers reported that AI made them "more distrustful" of the authenticity of their students' work.*

Teachers struggle to identify when students use AI. While some teachers use plagiarism and AI-detection tools for written work, these tools are imperfect. Students can also use tools that rewrite AI-generated text to sound more human, making detection of cheating even harder.

Unauthorized AI use puts teachers in the role of policing, not teaching. The more teachers have to use their instructional time to detect cheating, the less time teachers have to devote to teaching content and ideas. This hurts teacher-student relationships and reduces time spent supporting learning.

*Up in the Air: Educators Juggling the Potential of Generative AI with Detection, Discipline, and Distrust by Maddy Dwyer and Elizabeth Laird, Center for Democracy and Technology, 2025.

What to notice

Concern about AI use for assignments.

If your kids' school and teachers are sending home warnings on AI use for assignments and your child talks about teachers being suspicious of AI use, it may signal that AI is creating friction in the classroom.

If teachers put increased emphasis on showing work or process. If teachers begin requiring drafts, handwritten work, or explanations of how assignments were completed, it may be an effort to better understand what students actually know and a signal that teachers or the school is concerned about academic integrity.

What you can do: Conversations to strengthen teacher-student trust

With your kids:

We recommend these activities for kids ages 10-14. But you know your kid best! If these are relevant to you, use them!

- **Conversation starter:** Why do you think teachers assign you homework? Help your kid understand that school assignments aren't just about grades. They help teachers figure out how to help you learn!
- **Activity:** Ask your kid to walk you through how they go about writing an essay or story, from start to finish. Where did they start? What challenges did they run into? Did they change their approach? You don't need to critique, just listen!

In your school or community:

- Ask schools how they communicate acceptable AI use for schoolwork or assignments to students (some people call these "acceptable use policies").
- Ask teachers what they are doing to understand students' learning needs in an AI-infused world, and how you can help reinforce the importance of not using AI in assignments for young people.



Find more in our Parent Tip Sheet Library! For more detailed information, including data sources, check out the full report: *A new direction for students in an AI world: Prosper, Prepare, Protect.*