

# Home & School CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

Working Together for School Success

January 2007

MSAD #70 Elementary Program  
Rhonda Foster, Home-School Coordinator

## SHORT NOTES

### Wash up

To keep your family healthy, insist that everyone wash hands *before* handling food or eating, and *after* going to the bathroom, sneezing, blowing their nose, or playing with pets. Regular hand washing is the easiest way to keep germs from spreading.

### Did you see that?

Here's a fun way to build your child's observation skills. Choose an object, such as a flowerpot, that you both can look at for 30 seconds. Then, face the opposite direction and take turns telling something about it. *Examples:* made of glass, contains red and yellow flowers, tall and skinny.

### On the bright side

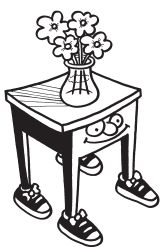
When discussing school subjects with your youngster, be upbeat. "Learning about butterflies is so much fun. This spring when we see one, you'll be able to tell me all about it." Your enthusiasm will motivate him to work hard—and to share what he learns with you!

### Worth quoting

"I cannot do everything, but still I can do something."

Edward Everett Hale

## JUST FOR FUN



**Q:** What has four legs but can't walk?

**A:** A table!

## Build a reading habit

What's the best way to ensure your youngster's school success? Turn her into a reader!

Try these easy ideas to get your child reading throughout the day, every day.

### Leave books around

Put books in the car for your child to read on the road. Stack kids' magazines next to her bed, or place a cereal box beside her breakfast bowl. To keep her interested, change the selections often.

### Set the stage

Ask your youngster to memorize and act out a poem or song with you. You'll have fun rehearsing together, and she'll get reading practice as she learns her lines.

### Search for fun

Show your child the weekly events calendar in the newspaper. Have her read through the listings to find activities the family could enjoy together, such as a winter carnival or an ethnic food festival.

## Rework the routine

The new year is a perfect time to review your youngster's school routines and try to make them even better. Consider these tips.

**Class notes.** Have your child look over his system for organizing class notes. For the second half of the year, he could put notes for each subject in different colored folders.

**Assignments.** Is your youngster keeping track of assignments? Give him a new weekly planner for 2007 to go in his binder.

**Homework log.** To stay on top of homework, try this. On a piece of paper, have your child list each subject down the left side and the days of the week across the top. Then, he can check off boxes as he finishes homework for each class.♥



### Enjoy a joke

Check out riddle, knock-knock, and joke books from the library. Ask your youngster to read you a few jokes each day. She'll get a kick out of making family and friends laugh.

### Look online

Encourage your child to take advantage of online reading opportunities by exploring her interests. If she loves cats, point her to <http://kids.cfa.org>. If space travel is her passion, show her [www.nasa.gov/audience/forkids](http://www.nasa.gov/audience/forkids). Ask your school librarian for help finding sites your youngster will like.♥



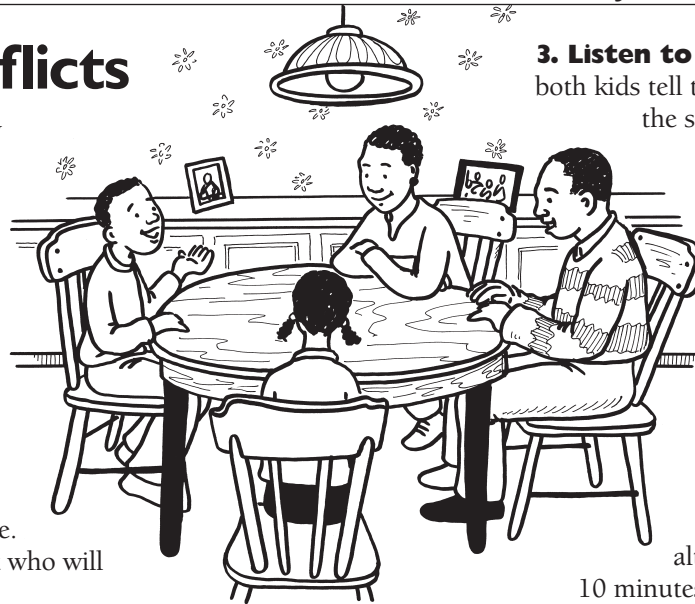
# Solving family conflicts

"It's my turn for the shower!" "No, it's my turn!"

When your kids can't figure out how to resolve their conflicts peacefully, share this step-by-step plan. You'll not only solve the problem at hand, you'll also teach your children a way to work out future disputes.

**1. Call a meeting.** Pick a calm time and place to sit down together, such as in the dining room after dinner.

**2. State the problem.** Quietly describe the problem in a way that doesn't place blame. "I've heard Amanda and Adam arguing about who will use the shower first on school mornings."



**3. Listen to everyone.** Let both kids tell their versions of the story, using polite language. Sharing viewpoints will help each person see the other one's side.

**4. Find a solution.** Ask each child to suggest solutions. Help find one that everyone can agree on. Maybe they can alternate getting up

10 minutes earlier to shower first, or one of them could shower at bedtime instead of in the morning.♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER Thinking hard

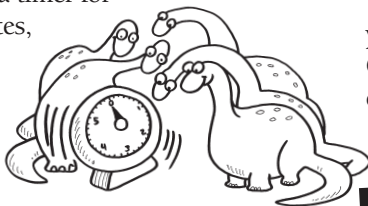
Name five cities. Five kinds of dinosaurs. Five types of clothing.

Play the Game of Fives with your child, and you'll help stretch her thinking and vocabulary skills while having fun together. Plus, it's great practice for brainstorming, which she'll need for doing school projects.

Here's how it works. Have your youngster write five categories on a piece of paper, and you do the same. Trade papers, set a timer for

three minutes, and fill in five items for each group. When the time is up, read your answers out loud.

You can tailor the categories to your child's age. For younger children, you might try vegetables, vehicles, or colors. For older children, you could use presidents, authors, or trees.♥



## Q & A Time to connect

**Q:** My husband and I work long hours. How can we stay in touch with what our child is doing at school?

**A:** Try to carve out a little time each day to talk to your youngster about school. During these times, be sure to shut out all distractions (don't take phone calls or look through mail).

You may be able to check over your child's homework at breakfast. Or, at bedtime, you could ask questions about her school day

("What did you write your story about?" "What did you do in science?").

On weekends, try looking through your youngster's binder with her. Ask her to point out interesting things she has learned. Also, if your work schedule permits, you could call your child at a certain time each afternoon to check on her day.

Show interest in the social parts of school, too. Asking your child who she sat with at lunch and what she played at recess are good conversation starters.♥



## PARENT TO PARENT

### Who's your hero?

For some time, my son worshipped a football star. While the player is a talented athlete, I was concerned that he wasn't the best role model because of his behavior off the field. So I sat down with Phillip to talk about what makes someone a hero.

I asked him what he admired about the football player. "He runs fast and scores a lot of touchdowns," Phillip said. Then, I mentioned some traits in people I admire: they help others, they stand up for what they believe. We talked about different people who might be considered heroes, such as a neighbor who tutors needy kids, or someone famous like Martin Luther King.

I guess my words must have sunk in. Yesterday my son came home and said, "Mom, I realize our principal is a real hero. She helps our school be great!"♥



## OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

Resources for Educators,  
a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.  
3035 Valley Avenue, Suite 103, Winchester, VA 22601  
540-723-0322 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com  
www.rfeonline.com

ISSN 1540-5621