

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

February 2007

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

SHORT NOTES



Develop map skills

Teach your youngster to read a map by helping her create one of her own. Try walking the neighborhood together, and let her sketch out the roads, friends' houses, and other places. Then, help her use the map to show you the way to school.

Is it appropriate?

It can be difficult to tell whether a movie, video game, or TV show is appropriate for your child. You can find guidance at a nonprofit Web site that checks for sexual content, violence, language, and social behavior. Look for easy-to-scan ratings at www.common sense media.org.

Go with whole grains

Did you know that whole grains provide fiber that discourages overeating? Try serving your youngster whole-grain cereals. You'll add nutrition to his diet—and fill him up. Tempt his taste buds by topping the cereal with apples, bananas, or another favorite fruit.

Worth quoting

"Children are like wet cement. Whatever falls on them makes an impression."

Haim Ginott

JUST FOR FUN

Librarian: What's this?

Ben: It's that book I told you I never checked out!



Discipline solutions

Tired of handling the same discipline problems over and over again? Try these solutions to three common issues, and you're sure to see better behavior.

You've asked your child to do something, but he ignores you. Make sure you have your youngster's attention. Slowly and clearly repeat what you want him to do.

"Jason, I need you to take the trash out now." Make sure he gets started—and remember to thank him when he's done.

Your child argues with your decision, trying to wear you down. Calmly say, "I am not going to give in, no matter how much you argue."

Then, walk away to indicate that the conversation is over. In some cases, you may be willing to reconsider. If so, ask your child to write a letter explaining his side, and tell him you'll get back to him at a specific time.

You're shopping in a crowded store, and your child begins to act out. Find a quiet spot—the restroom, an empty aisle, or even the car—and say, "Let me know when you're ready to behave."

Then, wait while he calms down. If this doesn't work, leave for



home, and give your youngster a consequence for his behavior (not going to the playground, for example).

Remember: Children need the most love when they seem the least lovable. Even when your youngster's misbehaving, be sure to tell him, "I love you." ♥

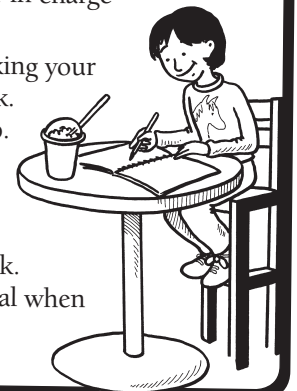
No-tears homework

Homework time can be easier. Use these tips to help your youngster do her work without a fuss:

■ Tell your child she can decide when to tackle homework within a set time frame—say, between 4 p.m. and dinner. Putting her in charge will motivate her to begin.

■ Shake up the routine by taking your youngster out to do homework. Try the library or a coffee shop. The novelty will make the task seem more like fun.

■ When your child works, sit nearby to read or do paperwork. Homework time will feel special when shared with you. ♥



Keys to creative writing

Your youngster will have many creative-writing assignments during her school years. Use these strategies to get started with the next one.

Think of ideas

Help your child dream up story ideas by posing “what if” situations. For example, if you ask her, “What if people could fly?” she might come up with, “We’d need sky traffic lights.” Or ask her to make up stories about household items (“Larry the Lamp was sad when he was dark”). Brainstorming will stretch her imagination.



2 Develop the plot

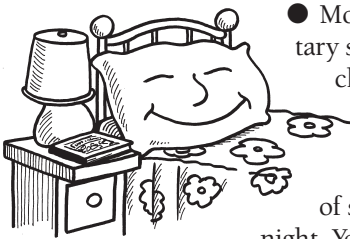
Encourage your youngster to picture her story. Have her close her eyes and imagine the events. Then, she can open her eyes and tell you the tale. She’ll have a clear idea of what to write if she organizes her ideas first.

3 Write it down

Suggest that your child answer “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” “why,” and “how” in her assignment. Try providing a thesaurus (or access to www.thesaurus.com) so she can find more colorful words. When she has finished, have her read her story to you. This will help her catch any mistakes—and give you a chance to praise a job well done! ♥

Bedtime basics

When should your child go to bed? How can you get him to bed on time? Here are some answers that might help:



- Most elementary school children need at least 10 hours of sleep a night. Youngsters

who are well rested usually wake up easily and are energetic all day. If your child is sluggish or grumpy, he might need an earlier bedtime.

- Try to stick to a routine. Depending on your work schedule, you might consider dinner at 6:30, homework at 7, bath and pajamas at 8:15, bedtime story and a good-night kiss at 8:30. Having a schedule lets kids know what to expect.

- Make bedtime relaxing. After reading a book, you could put on quiet music to help your child settle down for sleep. ♥



Help for learning disabilities

Q: My son Ryan is struggling in school. I think he might have a learning disability. What should I do?

A: The first thing you should do is talk to his teacher. Explain your concerns, and tell her what you’ve observed. Ask if she has noticed any problems in the classroom. (“Does Ryan finish classwork on time? Does he seem to understand what he reads?”)

If you’re still concerned, you can request a meeting with the teacher, guidance counselor, and principal. You and the teacher may be asked to fill out some simple forms about your son’s schoolwork and behavior. If they suspect a problem, they might have him tested. These tests will seem like games to Ryan, and the results will help you and the school find ways he can learn best. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Raise your hand!

My middle child, Ariel, was very shy.

When she was in kindergarten, her teacher told me she would probably outgrow it. But two years later, she still wasn’t raising her hand or participating in class much. The teacher said Ariel seemed nervous about drawing attention to herself.

To help my daughter, I started playing “share and tell” at the dinner table

with my three girls. Each child had to raise her hand, wait for me to call on her, and then tell something interesting about her day.

It’s a simple game, but everyone enjoys it. And Ariel is getting used to raising her hand and speaking in front of other people. At our last parent-teacher conference, her teacher said she is participating more in class. Plus, we have much more interesting dinners now! ♥



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