

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

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SHORT NOTES

Internet safety

Here are two important tips to keep your youngsters safe on the Internet. Tell them to open e-mails only from people they know. Also, they should never give out information about themselves on the Web. *Examples:* their school, age, or address; friends' or family members' names.

Homework help

Do your children expect your help with their homework? Let them know you're around if they need you—but their schoolwork is their job. The benefit? They'll learn how to find the answers themselves, as well as boost their skills.

Math measures up!

Encourage your youngster to practice measuring at home. Look for ways he can use a tape measure, a thermometer, or scales. *Example:* "Why don't you help me measure the window? Will the new curtains fit?"

Worth quoting

"When you come to a roadblock, take a detour." *Mary Kay Ash*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What do you have to pay when you go to school?

A: Attention!



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Making school a priority

With spring right around the corner, it can be hard to keep children focused on learning. What can you do to make school a top priority for your kids? Keep these simple ideas in mind—they're useful at any time of the year.



Make attendance job #1. Let your youngsters know that unless they're sick, they must go to school. Try to schedule routine dentist and doctor appointments after school hours. If possible, take family vacations during school breaks. *Tip:* Give awards for perfect attendance each month. Try a "Job Well Done" certificate or a coupon good for a night of bowling or a movie.

Show you care. Want your children to know that you're interested in their learning? Talk about their school activities and projects. Attend as many school events as you can. If homework and after-school activities conflict, speak up: "I know you have baseball practice this evening, but homework comes first. After you finish, I'll take you to practice."

Keep it upbeat. Try to set a positive example for your children, even when your own day has been difficult. Instead of saying, "I had a hard day at work. I'll

never get my project done," try, "Work was hard today, but I made some progress on my project." If you show a positive attitude about your work, your youngsters may feel better about their own. ♥

Beat the morning rush

A calm and happy school morning begins the night before. Go to bed knowing everything's in order with these tips:

- Check the weather forecast and help your child choose clothes, coat, and shoes.
- Have her stow her backpack by the door. Be sure she has put in homework, lunch money, and permission slips.
- Together, plan breakfast, and pack a healthy snack or lunch.
- Test your youngster for tomorrow's quiz one last time.

Note: In the morning, set the oven timer to go off five minutes before your child has to leave. That will be the signal to put on socks and shoes and head out the door. ♥



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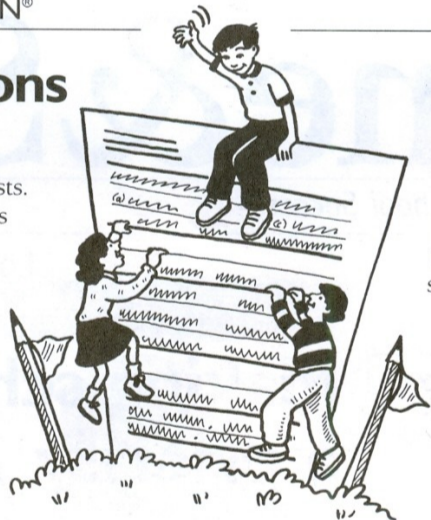
Tackling test questions

Hints for standardized tests

If it's spring, it's usually time for standardized tests. To help your youngster be prepared, share these tips about the types of questions that often appear.

Multiple choice: Read all the answers before marking your choice. Remember, your first instinct is usually best—so don't change your answer unless you're sure.

True/false: Look for words such as *never*, *always*, *all*, and *none*. They're usually in false answers. Words like *may* or *often* are generally found in true answers.



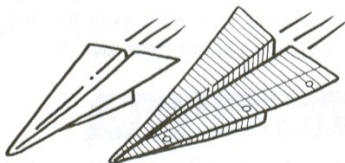
Essay: Read essay questions at least twice. Then, make a list of important thoughts, or key points, about each question before writing your essay. Read through the finished essay to be sure you've included all your key points. Check spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Tip: Your child may feel more comfortable if she's familiar with the test format. Ask your youngster's teacher for a sample test or look at the public library. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER Go fly a plane

Your children can use this activity to find out which materials make a paper airplane fly the farthest.

Materials: loose-leaf notebook paper, magazine page, cardboard or file folder, poster board, tape measure



First, make four airplanes, one from each type of paper. (*Tip:* For instructions, look for books at the library or on Web sites, such as www.paperplane.org.) Next, mark a starting point on the ground. Standing at this point, toss each plane in the air. Then, measure the distance from the starting point to where they land.

The firmer the paper is, the longer the plane will stay in the air. But very heavy paper will cause the airplane to fall faster. Which airplane flies the farthest? ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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PARENT TO PARENT Peaceful solutions

My kids used to fight over everything. They'd squabble about which television show to watch and who would take a shower first. I knew it was time to step in when I caught Beth and Matt swinging at each other.

I figured out a system to handle their arguments. To start, I asked each of my kids to write down their favorite television shows, how much time they wanted on the computer, etc. Then, I told them when I would want to use the TV or the computer. When there was a conflict, we flipped a coin to decide who had first choice. Finally, we agreed on a schedule and pinned it to the bulletin board in the kitchen.

The kids still bicker sometimes. But they know that when I say, "Take a look at the schedule," the arguing is over. ♥



Q & A Handling peer pressure

Q: My son recently decided to stop being friends with a classmate because other kids said, "We don't like him." How can I teach my youngster to think for himself?

A: It's important to give your child the tools he needs to stand up for himself—especially now, before he faces peer pressure about things like drugs and alcohol.

Talk to your youngster about choosing friends who share his interests and values. Kids often give in to peer pressure because they want other kids to like them. If your son has good friends on his side, he won't be as likely to go along with the crowd.

Also, teach him to walk away from uncomfortable situations. For example, if the boys playing basketball are being mean to others, your child could go to another part of the playground to play. ♥

