Home & School CONNECTION®

Working Together for School Success

November 2018

Region #12 Elementary Schools
Ms. Cathy Colella & Mrs. Emily Judd, Principals



SHORT NOTES

Eye on the goal

Boost your youngster's motivation by encouraging her to set goals. Say she wants to make it to the district spelling bee or science fair. She can brainstorm strategies like learning 10 spelling words each day or reading about previous winning science projects. Suggest that she write down her ideas and post them to stay on track.

Say no to secondhand smoke

Children who breathe cigarette smoke tend to get more respiratory illnesses and ear infections. Secondhand smoke can also trigger asthma attacks. It's best not to let anyone smoke inside your home or car. Since youngsters breathe at a faster pace than adults and are still growing, no amount of smoke exposure is safe.

A reading nook

Let your youngster create a special spot just for reading, perhaps in a corner of the family room or his bedroom. He might include a beanbag chair, a lamp, a box or low shelf for books, and a stuffed animal or two. He'll be inspired to curl up and read in his cozy nook.

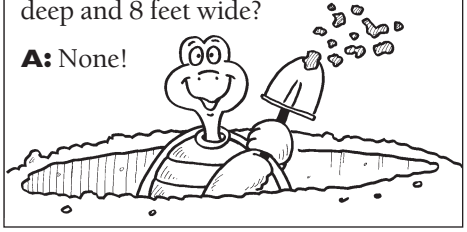
Worth quoting

"It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed."
Theodore Roosevelt

JUST FOR FUN

Q: How much dirt is in a hole 4 feet deep and 8 feet wide?

A: None!



Parent involvement at home

Did you know that supporting your child's education begins at home? Consider these everyday ways to talk about school, deepen his learning, and keep track of school news.



Foster a positive attitude

If you're enthusiastic about school, your youngster is likely to be as well. Ask him about projects he's working on or topics he's studying. Be sure to listen closely, and follow up with questions or comments. Also, you can influence his attitude toward teachers by being positive. ("Mrs. Reeves picked a really cool field trip for your class. I can't wait to hear about it.")

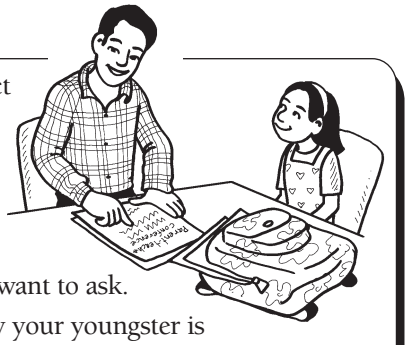
Tie learning to his world

Show your child how what he learns is useful outside of school. If he's studying clouds, ask him to identify types you see in the sky and try to predict whether you'll need an umbrella. Or challenge him to spot vocabulary words on window signs or package labels, and talk about how they're used in different ways.

Stay up to date

Be aware of what's happening in your youngster's classroom, school, and district. Subscribe to email lists, read newsletters, and check websites. Mention upcoming activities to your youngster (school carnival, class play) that you might attend together. Also, put important dates (book fair, math night) on your calendar. It will show your youngster that his school is a priority.♥

Connect at conferences



Fall parent-teacher conferences are the perfect opportunity to strengthen the bridge between home and school. Here are tips.

Before. Watch for notices in your email or your youngster's backpack, and sign up for a time slot. Also, prepare ahead of time by looking over your child's work and listing questions you want to ask.

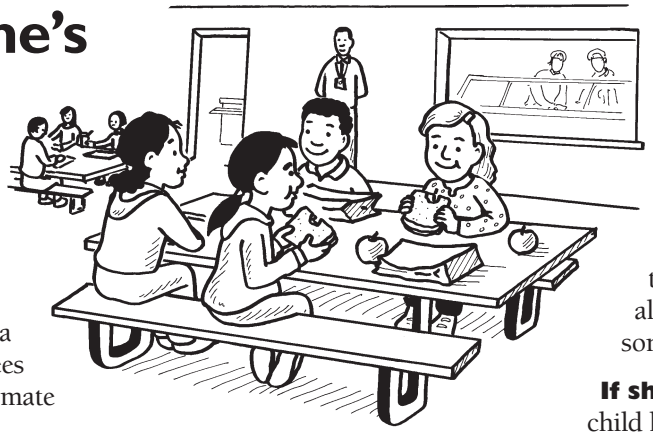
During. Listen to the teacher's feedback on how your youngster is doing, then ask your questions. Be sure to have the teacher explain anything you don't understand.

After. Talk with your child about the conference. Point out what she's doing well (reading more challenging books, finishing classwork) and areas that need improvement (writing legibly, taking turns).♥

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Bullying is everyone's business

Good news: Your youngster can use strategies to help kids who are bullied *and* to protect herself if she's a target. Suggest these ideas for handling bullying situations safely and effectively.



If she's a witness: Your child should get a teacher or another adult right away if she sees someone being physically harmed. If a classmate is verbally bullied (being called names, for instance), it's best to ignore the bully. Instead, your youngster might give the person being targeted an escape ("We need to go to lunch now"). She could also offer to go with the person to tell a grown-up.

If she's a target: Let your child know it's never okay for someone to bully her. She can help to discourage a bully by trying not to react or show she's upset or angry. Also, explain that it's important to tell the school counselor or her teacher about bullying. She shouldn't feel embarrassed or that she's "tattling." Speaking up can help stop the bullying—and keep another youngster from being targeted.♥

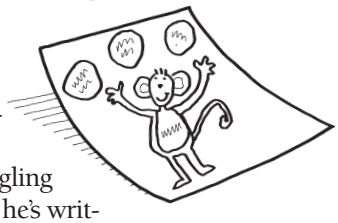
ACTIVITY CORNER

Graphic organizers for the win



Graphic organizers are a visual way for your child to organize information in any subject. Share these activities.

Juggling monkey



To plan a report, suggest that your youngster draw a monkey juggling coconuts. If he's writing a social studies paper on a state, he could put his topic (say, Virginia) on the monkey's belly. Then, he can label each coconut with a fact he needs to find (capital, population). As he researches, he can add information to each coconut (Richmond, 8.5 million).

Football field

When your child writes a persuasive essay, have him first draw a football field. He can write each side of an issue in a separate end zone ("Kids should have chores," "Kids should not have chores"). On each half of the field, he should write statements to support the view in that end zone. *Examples:* "Teaches responsibility" on the pro-chores side, "Interferes with play time" on the anti-chores side.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

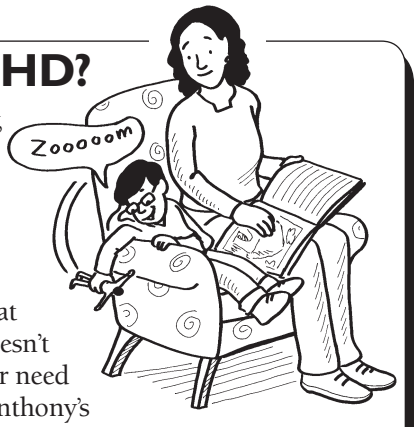
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PARENT TO PARENT

Could it be ADHD?



My first grader, Anthony, seems easily distracted and sometimes has trouble sitting still. When my friend's child was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, I wondered if Anthony could have it, too.

I talked to our pediatrician and found out that just because a child gets distracted or wiggly doesn't mean he has ADHD. He might just be excited or need to burn off energy. He suggested that I talk to Anthony's teacher, and he gave me a form the teacher can fill out if she's concerned.

The teacher said Anthony's attention span is normal for his age and that it should continue to grow as the year goes on. She's going to keep the form on hand. If she notices problems, she'll let me know right away, and I can follow up with the pediatrician. I'm relieved that Anthony is on track—and that his doctor and teacher are on my "team."♥

Q & A

Explain your math strategy

Q: *My daughter's teacher often writes "Explain your thinking" on her graded math assignments. How can I encourage my child to do this?*

A: When your daughter works on math problems, it's important that she understand what she's doing and why. Explaining her thinking is one way for her to check on her own understanding—and to show the teacher what she needs help with.



At home, your daughter could think out loud. Have her look over completed homework and ask herself questions like, "When I solved 32 x 45, what steps did I take?" and "What other strategy would work?"

You might also invite her to discuss her math thinking during daily activities. For example, say, "We're having 11 guests for Thanksgiving, and I need $\frac{1}{3}$ pound of potatoes per person. How can I figure out how many 5-lb. bags to buy?"♥