

# Home & School

Working Together for School Success

## CONNECTION®

January 2003



### SHORT NOTES

#### Getting creative

Next time you're stuck waiting in line, try this quick activity. Pick a common object, such as a piece of paper. See how many new uses your youngster can create for it. (Could it be a parachute for a mouse?)

#### Read-aloud option

Many libraries offer children's books-on-tape. Often, you can also check out the book that the tape is based on. Have your child follow along in print while listening to the story. It's great reading practice.

#### Giggle power

When your children won't do what they're told, a little humor may help. Instead of arguing, make up a story. *Example:* "Once there was a girl who couldn't set the table because the silverware bandit had stolen all the forks." Laughter often leads to cooperation.

#### Worth quoting

"Only a life lived for others is worth living." *Albert Einstein*

### JUST FOR FUN



**Parent:** Why aren't you doing better in history?

**Child:** Because the teacher talks about things that happened before I was born!

## Procrastination stoppers

"My project isn't due until next week. I have plenty of time to get it done. I'll work on it later."

Does this sound like something your child would say? If so, he may be a procrastinator—a person who puts off tasks until the last minute.

Here are some tips to ensure your youngster gets an earlier start. Chances are, he will do a better job if he has more time.

#### Planning ahead

When your child gets a new assignment, help him decide how to tackle it. Suggest he divide it into steps and write them in his assignment notebook. For a book report, the steps could be: 1. Read one chapter each week. 2. Create an outline. 3. Write a draft. 4. Revise the draft.

#### Diving in

Even with a plan, getting started can be difficult. Encourage your youngster to get the toughest part of the



assignment out of the way first whenever possible. That way, the rest of the work won't seem as overwhelming.

#### Staying on track

If your child has favorite games or books close to her workspace, her focus may shift to them. TV and family conversations can also capture her attention. Try to keep her from using distractions to delay her work. ♥

### Studying math facts

Your youngster has a math test coming up and lots of facts to memorize. How can you help?

- ▲ Encourage her to study a little every night. If she gets a head start, she'll have plenty of time to prepare.
- ▲ Together, create a list of the facts he needs to know. *Examples:* multiplication tables, fractions and decimals, formulas. Break them into sets of 10 or 15. Have him learn one set at a time.
- ▲ Suggest she do two or three of the hardest problems from past homework and quizzes each night.
- ▲ Make a practice test with 10 problems. Repeat the test several days in a row. ♥

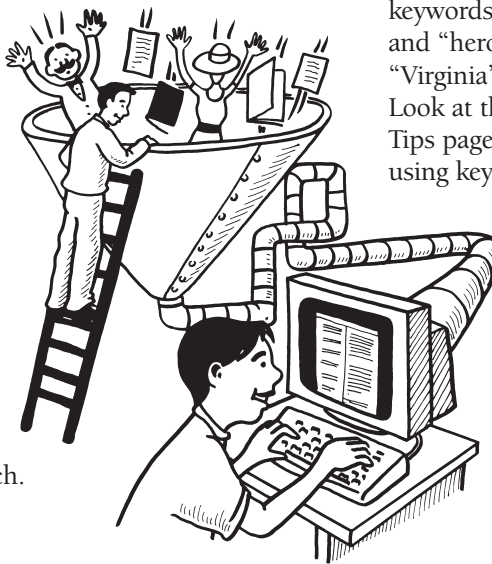


# Mining the Web

Finding information on the Web can be like looking for a needle in a haystack. There are often thousands of sites on any given topic. Share these steps with your kids to help them quickly find what they need:

**1.** Start by visiting kid-friendly search engines. They're designed to limit the information to material that's safe for young people. Try AskJeeves for Kids ([www.ajkids.com](http://www.ajkids.com)), Lycos Zone ([www.lycoszone.com](http://www.lycoszone.com)), or Yahoo!igans! ([www.yahooligans.com](http://www.yahooligans.com)).

**2.** Make a list of keywords to narrow the search. *Example:* For Civil War heroines in Virginia, the



keywords might be "Civil War," "Virginia," and "heroines." Using just "Civil War" and "Virginia" will bring up unhelpful sites. *Tip:* Look at the search engine's Help or Search Tips page for more information on using keywords.

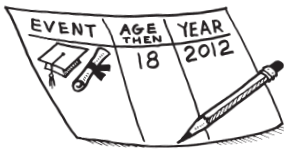
**3.** Once the results are shown, avoid rushing to the first site listed. The most useful sites might be on the second or third page.

*Editor's Note:* Supervising your children's Internet activity is their best protection against inappropriate sites. ♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER

### My milestones

Peer into the future with this social studies activity.



**Materials:** paper, pencils

Ask your children to imagine what their lives will be like as they get older. *Examples:* What will it be like to get a driver's license? Graduate from high school? Vote for the first time?

Help your kids figure out what year these events will occur and how old they'll be. They can make charts to help them keep track. Have them divide their papers into three columns and label them "Event," "My Age Then," and "Year."

Add more social studies to the mix by asking them what it would be like to serve in the U.S. government. *Examples:* What would it be like to be a member of the House of Representatives (minimum age 25) or the Senate (minimum age 30)? Or to run for president (minimum age 35)? ♥

**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

### Eager to exercise

The last time I took my daughter to the doctor for a checkup, he asked how much exercise she gets. "Very little," I said sheepishly. He suggested that I add more physical activity to her routine.

At first it was tough. I bought an exercise video and tried to get Cheri to work out with me. She complained the whole time. Then, I tried signing her up for a dance class at our community center. She didn't like it at all.

Finally, I got smart. I asked Cheri what *she* wanted to do. She eagerly suggested a martial arts class that met at the same community center. I enrolled her the next day.

She loves the class and even practices at home. I'm amazed at how much exercise she gets while practicing her moves. Plus, she has a lot more energy, which helps her concentrate in school. ♥



## Q & A Single-parent involvement

**Q:** *I'm divorced, and my kids don't live with me during the week. What can I do to stay involved in their education?*

**A:** Look for ways to let your children know that you care about what they're doing in school. Consider calling or e-mailing them to ask about their classes. You can talk about what they're learning, what they're enjoying, and anything they're struggling with.

Another idea is to give your kids special folders for storing their completed schoolwork. Have them bring the folders whenever you get together. They'll probably love telling you about their work, and it's a great way for you to stay informed. Whenever possible, attend school functions and get to know their teachers. If time permits, you could even volunteer in their classrooms. ♥

