

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

October 2003

SHORT NOTES



Homework hint

When your child asks you for homework help, try this rule of thumb. Ask him to go over the material three times before coming to you. That way, he has a chance to figure it out on his own.

"No worries" notebook

If your youngster is worried or fearful about something, suggest she make a "no worries" notebook. She can label the outside and write her worries on the inside. Simply writing down fears often makes them less stressful. Drawing pictures may also help.

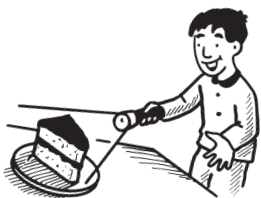
Encouraging words

Many parents encourage their children by saying, "You can do better." But kids often think this means, "I'm not good enough." Take time to point out what your children do well. Then, talk about ways they need to improve.

Worth quoting

"When you come to a fork in the road—take it." *Yogi Berra*

JUST FOR FUN



Parent: "There were two pieces of cake in the kitchen last night. Now there's only one. Can you explain this?"

Child: "It was dark in the kitchen, and I didn't see the other piece."

3 Bs of better behavior

Maria dreaded taking her son, Nate, grocery shopping. He ran through the aisles and begged her to buy snacks for him. Finally, a friend suggested that she try this approach.

First, Nate's mother wrote down the ways he should behave in the grocery store. Then, she went over it with him. The next time she took Nate shopping, she had to remind him only once.

How can you improve your child's behavior? Consider these ideas.

Be proactive

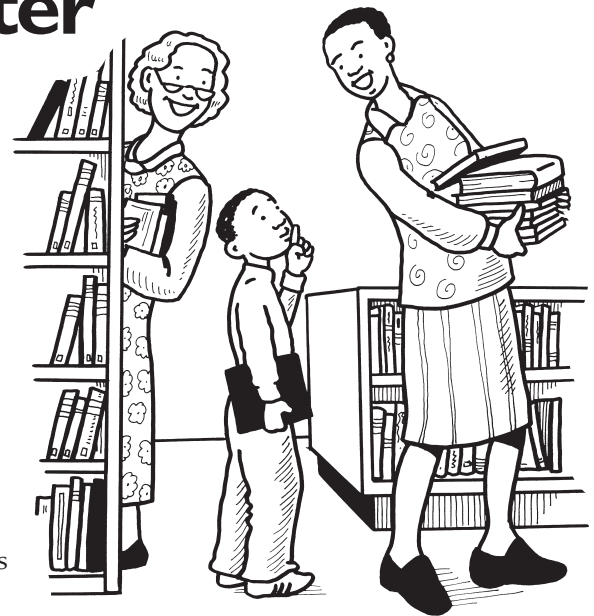
Whenever possible, let your youngster know what behaviors you expect ahead of time. If you're going to the library, for example, talk about why she should use a quiet voice. She may not realize that loud voices disturb others who are trying to read.

Be consistent

Your child is more likely to behave well if you send the same message in similar situations. *Example:* If he won't share with a friend, take him aside and explain why he should. Later, if he doesn't share with a sibling, step in again and reinforce the idea that sharing is a must.

Be specific

When your youngster misbehaves, it's important to point out exactly what he's doing wrong. Saying "Sit still" may not be as clear as "Stop swinging your feet." "Don't run in the house" is more specific than "Calm down." ♥



1, 2, 3, ready for school

This simple activity will get your child on the right track in the morning by saving time and preventing hassles.



Together with your youngster, write down the steps he needs to follow to get ready for school. *Example:* 1. Turn off alarm. 2. Make bed. 3. Feed pets. 4. Eat breakfast. 5. Wash face. 6. Brush teeth and hair. 7. Get dressed. 8. Put on shoes. 9. Check backpack. 10. Catch bus.

Have your child make and decorate a sign for each step. He can use words or pictures for the activities. Hang the signs by his bed, at his closet, in the bathroom, etc. If he forgets a step, you can simply say the number. *Example:* "Jack, number eight." ♥

Reading, family style

What takes only 15 minutes a day and boosts school success? Reading with your children. Here are three ways to spice up family reading time.

● **Take a vacation.**

On a slip of paper, have each family member write down a place he or she would like to visit. Put the slips in a hat and pick one. Together, gather information about the place by checking out library books or looking it up on the Internet. Talk about what you would do on your “vacation.”



● **Find a match.** Watch the first few minutes of the local television news together. Have your children make a list of the stories. Then, see how many of the topics they can find in that day’s newspaper. Choose one, and take turns reading a paragraph aloud.

● **Play a game.** Draw a large box with three rows and three columns on a piece of paper. In each square, list a different type of book. *Examples:* mystery, biography, science fiction. Every time someone finishes a book in a certain category, color in the square.

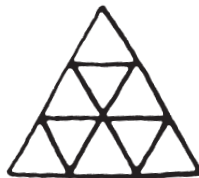
When you complete a row or column, have a “Book Bingo” celebration.

ACTIVITY CORNER

Tricky triangles

Share this math challenge with your youngster to build geometry and observation skills.

Show this figure to your child. How many triangles does he see? *Hint:* The answer isn’t 9.



If your youngster needs help, here’s a clue. Show him this smaller figure. How many triangles does he see in it?



Answers: There are 13 triangles in the large figure and 5 triangles in the small figure. ♥

PARENT TO PARENT

Conference confidence

I was nervous about attending my son’s parent-teacher conference this year. He had gotten in trouble several times for talking in class. The teacher had even moved his seat away from a friend.

The teacher greeted me warmly and told me how well Tristan was doing in spelling. She also praised his cursive writing. She said Tristan was very sociable and well liked. I asked about his behavior. The teacher said talking hadn’t been a problem since the move.

Before I knew it, the time had flown by. I asked her how I could help Tristan in science (his weakest subject). I also mentioned that my father had recently died. The teacher gave me great advice and suggested a book on grieving for me to read to Tristan. I’m looking forward to my next parent-teacher conference. ♥



Q & A

Tips for tattling

Q: *My daughter has started tattling on her younger sister. How can I get her to stop?*

A: First, help your daughter understand the difference between tattling and sharing important information. If her sister is hurt or in danger, she should tell you right away. If they’re playing and get into an argument, she doesn’t necessarily need to involve you.



Older children sometimes tattle to get attention—often a sign of sibling rivalry. When your child tattles, resist the urge to step in. Instead, suggest she try to work things out on her own. You can also ignore her comments and simply point out how she’s feeling. *Example:* “I understand you’re frustrated. Maybe you should play by yourself for a while.” Once she learns you won’t respond to tattling, she will probably stop. ♥

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 • rfcustomer@aspenpubl.com ISSN 1540-5621