

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

November 2005

SHORT NOTES



Vocabulary booster

Your children can make learning new words a habit with this tip. Each week, pick a word from the dictionary. Challenge family members to see who can use it the most that week. Keep a tally, and let the winner choose the next word.

Chore switch

Do your kids complain about doing their chores? Consider rotating jobs. For example, one evening your daughter does the dishes. The next day, it's your son's turn. The least-favorite chores won't seem so bad if your children know they don't have to be in charge of them forever.

People skills

Show your youngster how to "break the ice" when meeting new people. Encourage him to greet people by name and ask questions that show he's interested. *Examples:* "Are you in Boy Scouts?" "Do you like softball?"

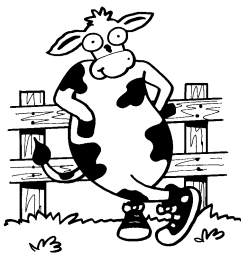
Worth quoting

"The best inheritance parents can give their children is a few minutes of their time each day." *M. Grundler*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What runs all the way around a pasture but never moves?

A: A fence!



Learning in style

Did you know that children do their best learning in different ways? When you discover which learning style your child prefers, you can help him learn and remember information by using his style to his advantage.

Here are three learning styles and ideas for making the most of each.

Visual

Visual learners like to see what they're learning. They enjoy looking at books, pictures, and videos, and usually like to draw and paint. *Tips:* Suggest that your child make a graph to help her study science or a timeline to learn history. Be sure to provide your youngster with plenty of art supplies to encourage her creative side.

Auditory

Children who are auditory learners enjoy hearing new information. They love to play with words, engage in conversations, and listen to books on tape. *Tips:* Encourage your child to rephrase what he reads in his own words. Have him make up rhymes or jingles to memorize facts.

Kinesthetic

Kinesthetic learners are most successful when they can get their bodies involved. These children like hands-on activities and field trips. *Tips:* Let your youngster move



around while she spells words you call out to her. Make learning come alive by taking her on a nature walk or to a museum.

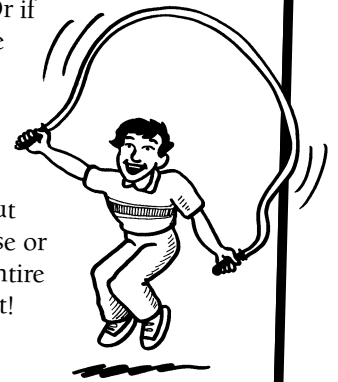
Note: No matter which style your youngster prefers, be sure to offer him a wide variety of activities and experiences. ♥

Indoors and active

Children need exercise—it helps them stay fit and improves learning. Here are some ways to keep you and your youngsters active, no matter what the weather:

● Do you have a basement? Invite everyone downstairs and see who can do the most jumping jacks or jump rope the longest. Or if you have a garage, move the car outside and use the empty space for bouncing balls or playing hacky-sack.

● You can even make your television or stereo a workout ally by popping in an exercise or dance video or DVD. Your entire family will get a fitness boost! For ideas, visit www.fitnessbeginnings.com. ♥

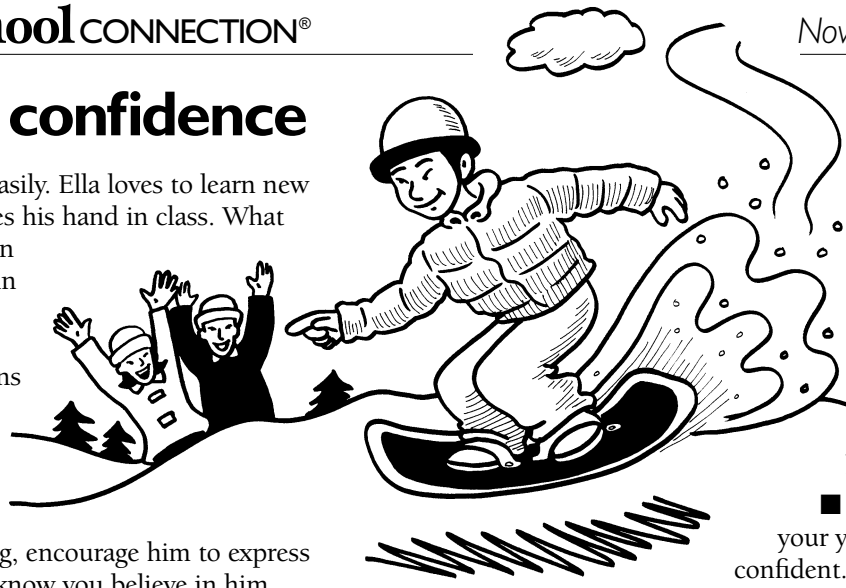


Coaching confidence

Sean makes friends easily. Ella loves to learn new things. Jose eagerly raises his hand in class. What do these children have in common? They believe in themselves and their abilities.

Share these suggestions to improve your youngster's self-confidence:

■ If your child is hesitant to do something, encourage him to express his fears—and let him know you believe in him. *Example:* “Trying out for the team is scary, but you’ve practiced hard. I know you’ll do your best.”



■ When your youngster tries to master a new skill, she may not get perfect results in the beginning. But if you focus on what she did well, she’ll be more willing to keep trying. *Example:* “You have great balance on the snowboard. You took that last turn beautifully!”

■ Sharing his skills will help your youngster feel more confident. Suggest that he use his special strengths to help others. *Example:* “You have a knack for math. Why don’t you offer to help out with the study group at school?” ♥



ACTIVITY CORNER

Coupon challenge

Do coupons always give you a good deal? On your next trip to the grocery store, challenge your kids to find the answer. Their math skills will get a workout—and maybe save you some money!

When you have a coupon and are ready to purchase the item, have your youngsters look at the regular price. *Example:* \$2.99 for mustard. Next, ask them to tell you the value of the coupon (25¢ off one jar). Then, have your kids subtract the value of the coupon from the regular price ($\$2.99 - \$0.25 = \$2.74$).

Finally, see if they can find other brands of mustard in the same size. Do any cost less than \$2.74? Surprise! Sometimes another brand is cheaper, even without a coupon. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

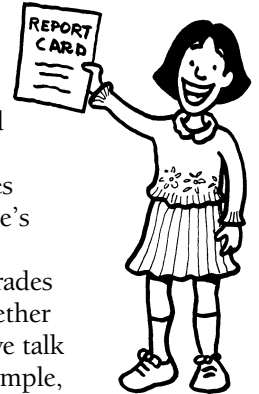
Report card jitters

When I was young, I was always nervous at report card time. Now that I have a child of my own, I’ve found several ways to take the surprise out of report cards.

First, I keep an eye on my daughter’s test and homework grades throughout the year. That way, she and I know ahead of time if she’s having trouble in a specific area.

Then, when she brings her report card home, we go over her grades together. If a grade is low, we discuss possible causes, such as whether she’s turning in every assignment. And if a grade has improved, we talk about how to apply the same tactics in her other subjects. For example, she may need to reread worksheet instructions before beginning to work.

My daughter is learning that she can keep report card jitters under control while also improving her grades. ♥



Q & A

Tackling drugs

Q: My son is in elementary school. Should I be worried about drugs at his age?

A: According to surveys, even children in elementary school feel pressure to try drugs. Discussing drugs with your youngster now is the best way to keep him from experimenting later.

Find opportunities to bring up drug use. For example, if you see someone using drugs on TV, tell your son that

it’s very hard to stop taking them because they’re addictive.

Let your child know how you feel about drugs. *Example:* “We don’t use drugs because they are dangerous and illegal.” As you talk together, let him offer his opinion and ask questions.

If your youngster asks questions you don’t know how to answer, contact the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 800-729-6686 or www.health.org. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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