

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

Hillsboro District #3 - Title I

February 2006

SHORT NOTES



President for a day

Here's a fun way for your youngster to celebrate Presidents' Day. Steer him to the PBS Democracy Project at <http://pbskids.org/democracy/presforaday/index.html>. After your child fills out the job application, he will get a peek at what it's like to be president of the United States!

Share their space

Want to improve your relationship with your kids? Try joining them on their level once in a while. For example, if they're reading or playing on the floor, sit or stretch out beside them. Read a book of your own, or ask if you can play too.

Spelling tip

If your child always seems to misspell certain words, share this tip. Have her look up the correct spelling of each word, break it into parts, and then practice saying and spelling each part. *Examples:* Break "business" into bus-i-ness, or "February" into Feb-ru-ar-y.

Worth quoting

"Leave nothing for tomorrow which can be done today."
Abraham Lincoln

JUST FOR FUN

Teacher: How do you say "good-bye" in Spanish?

Student: "Good-bye in Spanish!"



"What should I do?"

Building decision-making skills

Most kids could use a little guidance from time to time when it comes to making decisions. How can you help your youngster make good choices?

Share this three-step process that he can apply to almost any situation. Suppose, for instance, that your child can pick only one after-school activity but is torn between several choices.



1. Make a list. Encourage your youngster to write down his choices on a piece of paper. Putting his options in writing will help him narrow them to two or three of his favorites. *Example:* computer club, karate, art.

2. Consider the pros and cons. Suggest that he consider both the positive and negative sides to each choice. *Example:* Computer club—really like playing games; not a fast typist. Karate—like being on a team; practices take too much

time on weekends. Art—love painting; not really interested in sculpture.

3. Think ahead. If your child is still having trouble making a final decision, have him think about the long-term results. *Example:* Joining the computer club will give him skills he can use in school and at home. Taking karate could eventually lead to participating in competitions. Art classes will help him decide if being an artist is a goal he'd like to pursue. ♥

Making clean a routine

Would you like for your kids to pitch in with the housekeeping? The trick is to include cleaning up in their daily routine so they do it automatically. Here are several ideas.

■ **In the bathroom:** Have your kids finish brushing their teeth by rinsing out the sink and putting toothbrushes and toothpaste where they belong.

■ **In the bedroom:** Encourage your children to turn pants, socks, and other clothes right-side out before putting them in the hamper to be washed.

■ **In the dining room:** Tell your youngsters that they need to carry their dirty dishes and silverware to the sink when they've finished eating. ♥



Tips for study success

From elementary school through college, children need good study skills. Give your youngster these tips to help her get the most out of study sessions:

- ✓ Have clear goals for studying. *Example:* "I will reread class notes and the assigned chapters in my textbook every evening."
- ✓ Set priorities. For instance, study the most difficult material first.
- ✓ Get in the habit of studying as soon as you get home from school or right after dinner, when your mind is the sharpest.
- ✓ Try memorization techniques. For example, use the first letters of key words in a



sentence. "Never Eat Soggy Waffles" can help you remember the directions (North, East, South, West).

- ✓ Review frequently—a few minutes each day is best. Repeat main ideas out loud as you read them.
- ✓ When you get tired, go for a short walk. The exercise will energize you. And reward yourself. For example, after finishing a chapter, have a healthy snack.

Hint: Remind your youngster to be confident. Encourage her to imagine herself doing well on her next test. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER Fizz factor!

Chances are your kids have made lava as part of a volcano project in school. It's often done by mixing baking soda with vinegar. But do they know what causes the mixture to fizz? The baking soda is alkaline and reacts to the acid in the vinegar.

Lots of other liquids will fizz when mixed with baking soda. The more acidic the liquid is, the greater the fizz. Try this experiment (parent supervision is recommended).

Have your children mix 1 teaspoon of baking soda with a few tablespoons of one of the following liquids. Which ones cause the greatest reaction?



- ▲ orange juice
- ▲ buttermilk
- ▲ coffee
- ▲ whole milk
- ▲ sour cream (mix with 1 tsp water)
- ▲ cranberry juice
- ▲ caffeinated tea ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Q & A

Type and seek

Q: Our children use the Internet to do research for homework projects. What's the best way for them to find the information they need?

A: Have your youngsters start with a subject directory. These directories organize information by categories and are great for finding details on broad topics, like "science and nature" and "sports and recreation."

Two child-friendly sites are KidsClick! (www.kidsclick.org) and Yahoooligans! (www.yahoooligans.com). Your kids can click on a listed category, or they can type what they're looking for into the search window. *Example:* For a report on how snow forms, they could type "snow" or "how snow forms." Then, they can review the results of the search for the information they need.

Remember to monitor your children's time on the Web. Even kid-friendly directories can pull up undesirable links. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Secret mission: Kindness

I have an elderly neighbor, Mrs. Perez, who lives alone. I try to keep an eye on her and give her a hand when she needs it.

A few weeks ago, my kids complained they were bored. I decided a little kindness would be a good outlet for their energy. I told them we were taking on a secret

mission to do one nice thing each week for Mrs. Perez. The kids loved the notion, and before long, they had dozens of ideas. They took her trash to the curb on trash day, brushed snow off her car, and tucked a flower in her newspaper.

Of course, Mrs. Perez is in on the "secret," but the kids don't know that. I think they enjoy the good deeds as much as she does! ♥

