

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

November 2009



Riddle Elementary School
Mrs. Julie Wright, Guidance Counselor

SHORT NOTES

Ticket, please!

If you want to limit your child's TV time, try this idea. Every week, give her seven slips of paper. Each is good for an hour of television. Remind her to plan ahead. For example, if she wants to watch a two-hour movie on Saturday, she'll need to save an extra ticket during the week.

DID YOU KNOW?

Being less stressed can improve your youngster's memory and concentration—and even keep him healthier. Explain how you relax, perhaps by reading, walking, or listening to music. Your child can experiment with those ideas or come up with his own, such as shooting baskets or drawing.

Thanksgiving craft

Let your youngster help prepare for holiday entertaining by making pot-pourri for your house. Have her paint paper cups and fill them with small, torn pieces of tissue paper. Then, she can sprinkle them lightly with water and add a dash of cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice. She'll feel proud when guests admire her creations!

Worth quoting

"Good character, like good soup, is usually homemade." *Anonymous*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What do you get when you cross a porcupine with a balloon?

A: POP!



Respectfully yours

Teaching your child to speak and act respectfully is one of the most important things parents can do. Here are suggestions that will help you raise a youngster who makes others feel respected—and earns their respect in return.

Behave respectfully.

Together, create family rules that contain the word "respect." *Examples:* "Respect others by keeping your hands and feet to yourself." "Respect property by putting clothes and toys away." Have your child draw a picture for each rule.

Speak respectfully. Ask your youngster to rephrase requests that aren't respectful. If he shouts, "I want a snack!" you might say, "I'll listen when you ask nicely." And since he will follow your lead, talk to him the same way you'd like him to address you. Instead



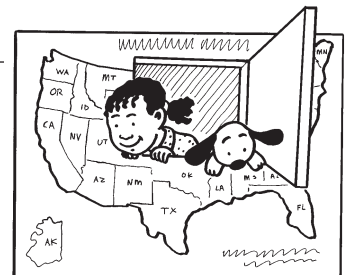
of saying, "You're in the way," say, "Excuse me, please."

Disagree respectfully. Teach your child to share his opinion politely. For example, show him how you respect his choice of ice cream flavor while explaining your own: "Chocolate chip is yummy. But I like strawberry because it's fruity." Remind him that he won't always agree with people—sometimes it's okay to "agree to disagree." ♥

World traveler

Which states border yours? What is the capital of Egypt? Your youngster will get to know her world better with these geography activities:

- Help your child memorize states' locations so she can find them on a map. Look at a U.S. map, and take turns secretly choosing a state. Give clues until other players guess it: "This state borders Mexico and the Pacific Ocean." *Answer:* California.
- Show your youngster landmarks and cities around the world with Google Earth (<http://earth.google.com>). She might type in "Egypt" to see Cairo and the pyramids or "France" to see Paris and the Eiffel Tower.
- Encourage your child to borrow geography books from the library. She can learn more about each state in Laurie Keller's *The Scrambled States of America*. Or she might read *Around the World with Phineas Frog* (Paul Adthead) and use clues on each page to figure out where the characters are. ♥



Everyday math

Add a little math to daily activities. You'll build your youngster's number skills and show her that counting and arithmetic are part of everyday life.

Numbers

Hunt for numbers during outings so your child can see all the ways they're used. Work as a team to find every number from 1 to 100, and check them off on a tally sheet as you go. In the grocery store, look on aisle signs and price stickers. At a football game, read numbers on players' jerseys and the scoreboard. Can your family find all 100 in a day?



Counters

Serve raisins for a snack. Give each family member a handful, and ask everyone to estimate and then count the number they have. Let your youngster add them all up—how many raisins does your family have altogether?

Facts

Show your child real reasons to learn multiplication by using facts throughout the day. If you have one bathroom, 4 people in your family need to shower, and each gets 10 minutes, you'll need 40 minutes for everyone to have a turn ($4 \times 10 = 40$ minutes). If you play mini golf and it costs \$5 per person, that's \$20 ($4 \times \$5 = \20). ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER



Magazine learning

Turn old magazines into new learning tools. Here are two ideas:

1. Your youngster can practice grouping objects by choosing a theme and cutting out related photos from magazines. If the category is furniture, for example, he would group them into couches, tables, and beds. Then, have him make smaller groups (say, according to room or color).



2. A two-sided jigsaw puzzle will stretch your child's logical thinking. Have him tear out two full-page pictures or ads from a magazine. Then, cut off the front panel from a cereal box. Let him glue one picture on each side of the panel and cut the panel into pieces (12 for younger children, 24 for older ones). To put his puzzle together, he will first need to figure out which picture each piece goes with. ♥

PARENT TO PARENT

Be in charge

While searching for a job recently, I saw many positions that required strong leadership skills. Knowing what an important quality this is for the workplace, I started thinking about ways I could let my daughter practice being a leader.

I decided to put Ella in charge of our family garage sale. After telling her what tasks needed to be done, I asked her to give one to each person. I explained that good leaders think about people's strengths when they divide up responsibilities.

Ella asked me to write the garage sale ad, since I had put advertisements in the newspaper before. Her dad is a store manager, so she asked him to price the items. And she decided to make posters to hang in our neighborhood because she loves art.

Our sale was very successful. We sold many things we didn't need anymore—and our daughter got hands-on experience being a leader. ♥



Q & A Conferences count

Q: I volunteer weekly in my son Micah's classroom, so I see how he's doing in school. Do I still need to go to the parent-teacher conference?

A: By helping out at school, you're showing your son that you care about his education. Attending a conference is a different—and important—way to connect with the teacher.

At your conference, you will get one-on-one time with the teacher to talk just about

Micah—something that won't happen while you're reading with students or making copies. She may show you examples of his work and provide suggestions for ways you can help him at home, such as making vocabulary flash cards or listening to him read.

And you can give her information that may help her teach your son. For example, you might mention his hobbies or discuss problems he had with a project. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

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

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