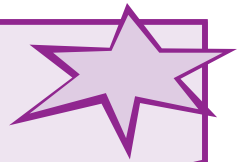




Tips and Activities to Help Your Child Succeed In School



May 2011

Parent Resource Newsletter

Parents Are a Child's First and Most Important Teacher

Quick Fifteen Minute Reading Activities

Try these quick reading activities for your younger children.

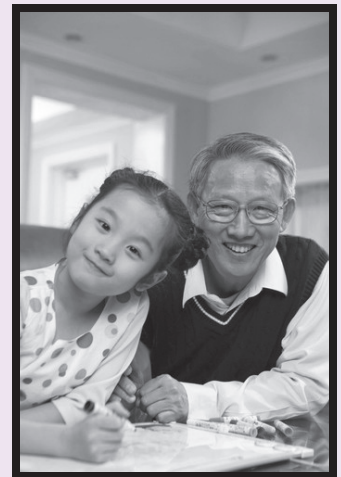
1. Instead of spending the evening watching TV, have a family story reading time using a good action story or an exciting adventure. Plan a craft around the details in the story.
2. On a car trip make it a game to point out and read road signs, license plates, or billboards. Or have your children look for certain words or signs.
3. Read the walls! Label things in your child's room such as clock, door, window, etc. Encourage them to read the walls.
4. Include a printed note in your child's lunch box.
5. When going for a doctor's appointment, bring along a book for your child to read.
6. Even when you are out of town you can bring a storybook to call home and read to your child. It will mean even more because you planned ahead.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Many grandparents say the best part of being a grandparent is that you can spoil them and then send them home. But for many grandparents this isn't the case. After spending many years raising their own children they are now raising their grandchildren.

According to a 2000 U. S. Census Bureau report, 2.4 million grandparents are raising their grandchildren younger than 18. The information also states that among grandparents, 39 percent of them had primary responsibility for their grandchildren for 5 or more years.

There are support groups for "grandparents as parents". Social service agencies can help you to find meeting times and places. The AARP group has a Grandparent Information Center.



Writing to the President

Children of every age have concerns about things they see and hear on the news. Encourage your child to write to the President. The letter will probably be read by a White House secretary who may refer it to the President.

At any rate your child will probably get a reply and may even get a picture of the President or a picture of the White House. It would be exciting to get mail from the White House.

The address for the President is:

The President of the United States
White House Office
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500



Bullies

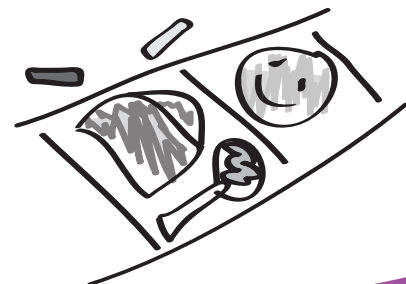
There have always been bullies who pick on other kids throughout time. Children should never have to put up with physical abuse. Tell your children that if they are pushed around, pinched or slapped they must tell you or the teacher, and then it is the adults responsibility to take care of the matter.

Talk to your children about bullies and why they do what they do. They use threats and force to control others by making them afraid to make themselves feel good. Bullies are acting out because they have problems and they don't know how to deal with them. Let your child know that it isn't his/her fault and you will help them through it.

Homemade Sidewalk Chalk

It's a lot of fun for children to draw and write on the sidewalk with chalk on a beautiful Spring day, and it easily washes off with water or rain. Here is a recipe for the chalk.

In a large bowl mix 1 cup of water and 1 cup of Plaster of Paris. Add some powdered tempera paint to the mixture. After mixing well, set the mixture aside for a few minutes. Then pour the mixture into a mold such as small paper cups, cupcake papers, etc. and let it dry. Depending on the size of the mold it may take a day or a little longer to dry completely.



School Bus Safety

Most children hurt by school buses aren't hurt riding inside the bus, but outside the bus in the blind spots where they are hidden from the bus driver's view. Most schools have bus drills and teach school bus safety, but you can help by talking to your child about safety.

Some safety topics you could talk about are:

1. Stay away from the wheels and the back of the school bus.
2. Move at least 10 feet in front of the bus and wait for the bus driver to signal you that it is safe to pass in front of the bus.
3. Wait for the school bus on the side of the street you will be picked up and don't stand on the edge of the curb. Back up a few feet.
4. Wait till the bus comes to a complete stop and the door opens to walk towards the bus.
5. Stand in single file with other students and use the handrail to board the bus.

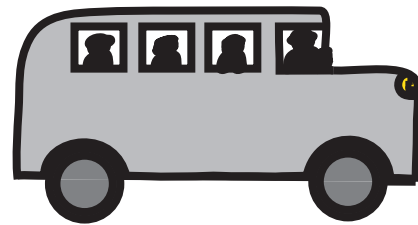
It is also important when students are actually riding on the bus to pay attention to some rules. It's hard for the driver to keep his mind on the road when students are yelling, jumping around and throwing things. Some school bus behavior rules include:

1. Sit down while the bus is moving.
2. Clear the aisles of book bags, jackets, etc.
3. Never throw things around on the bus.

4. Keep the noise down so the driver isn't distracted.
5. Keep your head, hands and arms inside the bus.
6. Don't run around and shove other kids while waiting at the bus stop.

Warn your child that if they drop something near the school bus to wait until the school bus drives away to pick it up. If they leave something on the school bus they shouldn't run after the bus.

We send our children to school every day with great expectations and we want them to return home safely. Let's not wait until something happens to discuss safety with them.



Encouraging Positive Behavior

- A smile
- Complimenting a specific behavior
- Thumbs up gesture
- Giving the high five
- Praise positive results

Stress

We all have stress in our lives, but children are less prepared to deal with it. Sometimes they act out in negative ways when they are stressed. Here is a list of some stressful things that children sometimes have to deal with.

1. Fight with a friend or sibling
2. A quiz or test
3. Worrying about what others think of you
4. Moving to a new neighborhood or school
5. Divorce or remarriage of a parent
6. Being poor
7. Little privacy
8. Birth of a sibling
9. A teacher who doesn't like you
10. Death

One of the best ways to handle stress is to talk about it. Let your child know that you are there to talk about whatever is worrying him/her. Let your child's teacher know if it is something that can be dealt with at school, or at least the teacher can be understanding if the child is acting out at school.

Stress Producers for Teenagers

(from *Secrets of the Teenage Brain* by Sheryl Feinstein)

- failing an exam
- physical appearance
- judgment or evaluation by others
- unrealistic classroom demands
- the future
- problems with peers
- problems with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- any situation that threatens self-esteem
- disagreements with teachers, parents, or other adults

Addition and Subtraction Activities

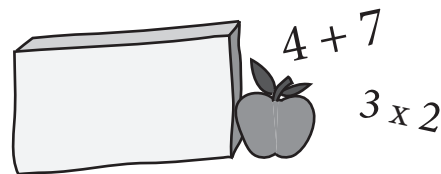
Become a Detective

Play an addition or subtraction game around the house with common objects such as pasta, buttons, milk jug lids, paper bag ties, etc. Separate a group of 12 objects into two groups and ask your child to tell you how many there are in each group and then how many are there all together. Then take away one of the groups and ask how many are left.



Math at the Grocery Store

When you take your child to the grocery store and start putting things into the basket talk about addition and subtraction. For example: If we put 3 baking potatoes in the basket and then add 2 sweet potatoes, how many are there all together. Math in the real world helps children to see abstract numbers in a more concrete way.



Math for Lunch

At mealtime, make up addition and subtraction story problems. For example, I had 7 grapes, but I am eating 2 of them. How many are left? After a while let your child come up with their own story problems.