

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

Knollwood Elementary
Barbara Teller Cohen, Principal

SHORT NOTES

Picture this

Good readers form mental pictures as they read. To improve your youngster's comprehension, read a book without letting him see it. Then, ask him to guess what the illustrations look like. *Examples:* How are the characters dressed? Is the setting bright or gloomy?

Raising good sports

You can teach your child to be a good sport by being one yourself. When you attend a game, clap and cheer for players who try hard, even if they're on the other team. You'll help your youngster learn to be gracious to everyone in the game.

Line them up

Sometimes kids get math problems wrong simply because they haven't lined up the numbers correctly. Try this. Have your child work problems on graph paper, using one box per number. Once she gets used to this system, she'll be able to transfer her lining-up skills to regular paper.

Worth quoting

"Life doesn't require that we be the best, only that we try our best."
H. Jackson Brown Jr.

JUST FOR FUN

Teacher: Name one important thing we have today that we didn't have 10 years ago.

Brian: Me!



Homework time

Nathan likes to start homework right after school. Elise prefers to relax first. Luis listens to soft music when he studies, while Bella needs silence.

Which homework routine is best? They're all fine! With help from their parents, these students have discovered what works for them. Use these strategies to help your child find a winning homework routine.

When and where?

Try planning a regular time each day when family members do quiet activities. You'll help your youngster focus by limiting distractions. For example, she can do homework in the kitchen after school while you pay bills or cook. Or everyone can read in the living room at night while she works in her room.

Take a break

Schedule short periods of work to fit your child's attention span. If she has an hour of homework, she can do



30 minutes and then take a break (shoot hoops, have a healthy snack) before finishing up. *Tip:* Have her keep track of time—and stay on task—by setting an alarm clock to signal her break.

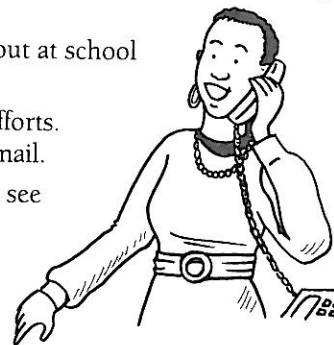
First things first

Before she starts, help your youngster put her assignments in order. Have you noticed she gets more done when she does written work first? If so, she can complete her math worksheet, then practice spelling words and, finally, study science. *Idea:* Suggest that she rank homework from hardest to easiest and tackle the more complicated work first.♥

Parent power

There are many ways you can support your child's learning and school. Here are a few ideas:

- Spend a few minutes every evening looking over handouts your youngster brings home. Fill out forms to return the next day.
- Tell your child's teachers if you can help them out at school or home.
- Make sure teachers know you appreciate their efforts. From time to time, send a thank-you note or an e-mail.
- Contact your child's teacher immediately if you see a problem. Working together will help your youngster succeed.
- Attend conferences, parent meetings, and school events regularly.♥



Let's behave!

Did you know that getting your youngsters to behave can be fun? Try these ideas to encourage better behavior—and cut down on everyone's frustration.

Distract. Being playful can stop misbehavior, especially if it's caused by boredom. *Example:* You're stuck inside on a rainy day, and your kids begin to get cranky. Say, "Freeze! Splash time!" Fill the bathtub, cover the floor with towels, and let them play in the water with cups and boats. (*Note:* Never leave children unsupervised near water.) Or call out, "Pillow time," and have



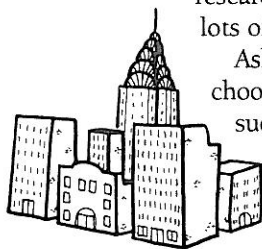
celebrate with an extra story every night for a week.

Note: Children often act out to get your attention. Try to spend a few minutes a day playing a game or talking with each child, and you're likely to see better behavior.♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Web quest

The Internet will seem like a fun, familiar place by the time your child finishes this activity. He'll also practice research skills and learn lots of interesting facts.



Ask your youngster to choose a subject he likes, such as architecture or coin collecting. Then, have him think of things he'd like to know

about his topic and write down questions. *Examples:* "What are buildings made of?" "How many state quarters are there?" Add your own questions to spur more research: "What is the tallest building in the world?" "Which coins are used in Europe?"

Finally, help your child search the Web for information. He can use child-friendly search engines such as Ask for Kids (www.askforkids.com), CyberSleuth Kids (<http://www.cybersleuth-kids.com>), or KidsClick! (www.kidsclick.org). Let him type keywords ("building materials," "state quarters") into the search box and browse through sites to find the answers.♥

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

Bullying: The bystander's role

Q: My child came home from school upset because kids were picking on a classmate and wouldn't let her play with them. What advice should I give my daughter?

A: Tell your youngster that her classmate was being bullied—and that she has the power to help stop it!

There are several things she can do. She could start by standing up to the bully and saying something like, "That's not nice." Then, she might ask the child who is being bullied to join her in a game or school project.

Also, remind your youngster to report bullying to a teacher or other adult when she sees it. Let her know this is not tattling, but a way to help someone who is being hurt. You can explain: "Asking an adult to help a child who is being bullied is like asking the nurse to help a child with a scraped knee."♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Thinking games

Between school, errands, and activities, my family spends lots of time on the go. I decided to use some of it for "thinking games."

I taught my kids a game my parents used to play with me, called "Would You Rather?" I offer two options and ask which they prefer and why. For example, I might say, "Would you rather live near the beach or the mountains?"



My son came up with a game he named "Three Favorites." Someone picks a category (outfits, movies), and everyone tells their top three choices. My daughter thought of "What Doesn't Belong?" We take turns naming items (owl, ostrich, eagle) and asking the others to explain which is the odd one out (ostrich, because it doesn't fly).

Now they want to play all the time. I'm glad because we're having fun—and I've noticed they've gotten better at thinking through their ideas.♥