Home & School CONNECTION®

Working Together for School Success

May 2019

Northwest Local School District
Title I

SHORT NOTES

Being neighborly
Show your child how neighbors can depend on each other. If a package is delivered on a rainy day and the family isn't home, she could write a note saying she's holding it for them. Or if someone leaves headlights on, knock on their door together to let the person know.

Everyday research
Sharpen your youngster's research skills by challenging him to use them for practical purposes. Say he wants a pet or wonders why he needs to go to bed on time. Ask him to look into what being a pet owner would require or how sleep affects kids.

Growing up
As your child approaches puberty, she might compare herself to others. Explain that everyone develops at their own pace. The tallest person in her class right now may not be tallest in a few months. Good hygiene can boost confidence, so discuss routines like showering and using deodorant.

Worth quoting
"It's not what you look at that matters. It's what you see." *Henry David Thoreau*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: Why do bees hum?

A: Because they forget the words!

Summer learning traditions

Your child has spent the entire school year learning new things. Help him hang onto that knowledge, and learn even more, by starting summer traditions like these.

STEM Olympics
Boost your youngster's STEM skills with a series of household engineering competitions. For the first contest, each person could build a catapult with craft sticks and rubber bands. See whose catapult can launch a ball the farthest. Next, maybe family members will compete to engineer a boat that carries the most pennies without sinking.

Family celebrations
Have your child use math to plan special events, such as an Independence Day cookout. Give him a budget, and let him look through grocery and dollar store flyers for the best prices on ingredients and supplies. He should list items and prices, and add up the total. Next, perhaps he'll host a National Ice Cream Day party on July 21 or a back-to-school celebration the last weekend of summer break.

Reading pals
For a fun way to stay in touch—and practice reading—help your youngster find a relative to be his reading pal. Maybe he and his grandfather will take turns reading chapters of a novel via video chat. Or record a video of your youngster reading a book to send to a younger cousin. The little one can do the same to show her big cousin how she's learning to read.♥

Let's limit screen time

For a healthier body *and* mind, your youngster needs to fill her days with something other than screen time. Here's how to encourage physical activity and real-life interactions:

- Decide on a daily screen time limit that is right for your family. Then, create rules to enforce the limit, such as "Play outside every day" and "Screen time ends at least one hour before bedtime."
- Be a role model by putting away devices yourself. For example, avoid using your phone when you're talking to or playing with your youngster. Or turn off the TV, and announce that it's time for a walk together.♥

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Beyond please and thank you

Whether your child is at home, in public, or at someone else's house, using good manners shows respect for others. Consider these tips.

Acknowledge visitors. Explain how to welcome guests. If your youngster is playing a game and people visit, she should stop and chat.

Likewise, let her know to acknowledge when they leave by walking them to the door and saying goodbye.

Share public spaces. When you use an escalator, you might say to your child, "We're standing on the right side. The left side is for walking." Or while waiting for the elevator, you could tell her, "Let's step back so people can get off before we get on."

Answer politely. "Would you like pretzels or grapes?" When your child is offered options at someone else's home, she may think it's good manners to reply, "Either one." Point out that it's more helpful for the host if she says what she wants. ("I'd like grapes, thank you.")♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

What's in the newspaper?

A newspaper brings plenty of learning opportunities to your youngster's doorstep. Take advantage of the paper with these activities.

Alphabet grab bag

Let your child cut out individual letters from headlines and use them to spell as many words as possible. He might also make sentences using uppercase and lowercase letters.

Comic relief

Your youngster can put events in a logical sequence with this idea. Cut out comic strip panels, mix them up, and ask him to arrange them in the right order. For a bigger challenge, mix up panels from several comic strips for him to sort and put in order.

Picture this

Have your child practice critical thinking. Cut out a newspaper photograph and show it to him without the caption or article. Can he figure out what the article is about? He could write a caption for the photo, then read the article to see if his caption makes sense.♥

Q & A

Musical experiences

Q: *My daughter loves music class in school. She said she'll miss it this summer. Any ideas for "music class" at home?*

A: It's great that your child likes music. In addition to bringing lifelong enjoyment, music can improve math and language skills by helping her recognize patterns and build vocabulary.

Luckily, music is everywhere. Explore styles by listening to different radio stations in the car. Or let her ask your smart speaker to play everything from rock and jazz to classical and bluegrass. Encourage your daughter to discover favorite genres and songs and to sing and clap along.

If your community has a summer concert series, plan to attend a few shows together. She'll get to see and hear a variety of instruments—not only guitars and drums, but perhaps banjos, bagpipes, or accordions.

Also, check the parks and recreation department for low-cost music classes. Maybe she'll learn to read music, sing harmonies, or even play the ukulele.♥

PARENT TO PARENT

Appreciating teachers

During a recent PTA meeting, parents were brainstorming low-cost gift ideas for Teacher Appreciation Week May 6–10. I wanted my son Aiden to recognize what his teachers do for him, so I wrote down the suggestions for him to choose from.

My son decided to put candy, pencils, and sticky notes into a jar for his classroom teacher. On the pad's top note, he wrote, "Thank you for teaching me to write!" Since his art teacher's favorite color is yellow, he's making her a yellow-themed goody bag with dollar store items—including highlighters with a note saying, "You shine bright!"

Aiden is enjoying putting together the gifts. He can't wait to hand them out and express his appreciation.♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

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