

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

January 2004

SHORT NOTES



Making friends

If your child has a hard time making friends, you can help. Invite a schoolmate out for pizza, to the library, or to your home to watch a movie. Remember: Try not to “force” friends on your child—just arrange fun times.

Learning about government

The U.S. government has a new Web site for children. It’s a fun gateway to information on everything from art to transportation. Visit www.kids.gov and click on “Web Treasure Hunt” to find out what the site has to offer.

Sibling solution

Try this tip to encourage your kids to get along. Give them a blue index card each time they work together and a green index card each time they don’t. If they earn more blue cards than green in a week, reward them with a special treat.

Worth quoting

“He who never made a mistake never made a discovery.”
Samuel Smiles

JUST FOR FUN

Teacher: You copied from Jason’s paper, didn’t you?

Student: How did you know?

Teacher: His paper says, “I don’t know.” Yours says, “Me neither!”



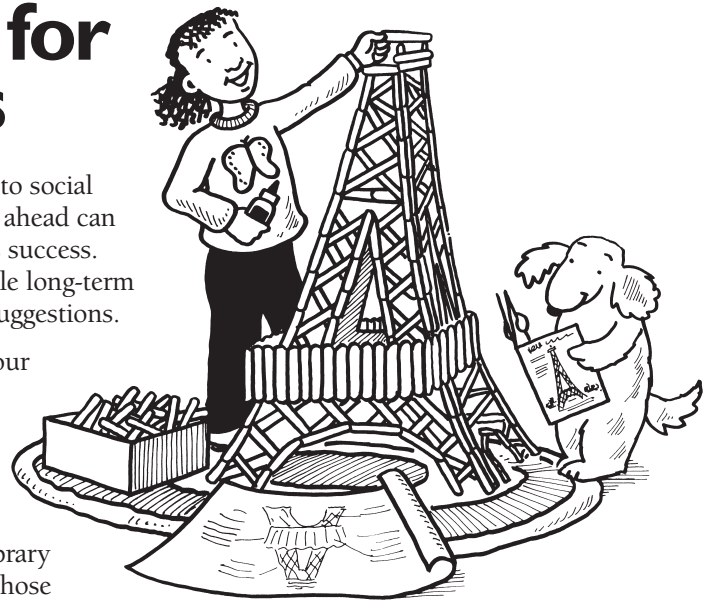
Primed for projects

From science projects to social studies reports, planning ahead can be the key to your child’s success. Help your youngster tackle long-term assignments with these suggestions.

1 Pick an idea. If your child must come up with his own topic, have him skim through his textbook for subjects he’s interested in. Then, suggest that he look at library books and Web sites on those topics and make a list of ideas. If he has trouble picking one, he can share the list with his teacher and get her advice.

2 Make a schedule. Once your youngster chooses an idea, encourage her to think about all the tasks needed to complete the project. Help her create a schedule that shows each step and when she needs to complete it. *Hint:* Consider using a theme, such as “a track meet,” to illustrate the schedule. She could show each step as a hurdle and follow her progress by marking off each hurdle she “jumps.”

3 Have a workspace. When your child begins the project, select an out-of-the-way place for him to store his work. *Examples:* on a table in the corner of the living room, on top of a bookcase. Give him a special place to keep all his supplies together. That way, he can quickly set up and put away his project each time he works on it. ♥



Resolve to read

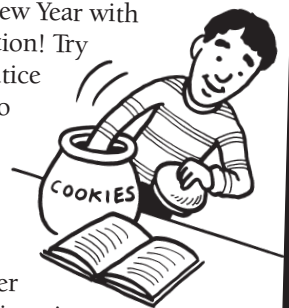
Ring in the New Year with a reading resolution! Try these ideas to entice your youngster to read for fun.

“Quick” reads. Place short stories, poems, newspaper articles, and comic strips around the house where your child will find them.

Bedtime reading. Allow your child to stay up for an extra 15 or 20 minutes if she spends the time reading.

Read-aloud tidbits. Share what you’re reading—from magazines and books to recipes and junk mail. Read aloud exciting passages or interesting facts.

Book allowance. Offer your youngster a small monthly sum that can be spent only on books or other reading materials. ♥

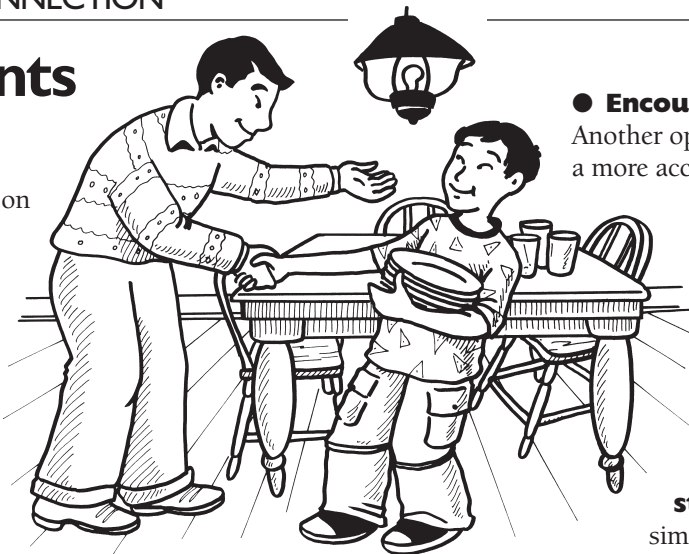


From complaints to compliance

“That’s not fair.” “You’re picking on me.” “It’s not my turn.”

When parents make requests, kids often respond with hearty protests. Here are several tips for handling your child’s complaints peacefully.

● **Repeat your request.** Try ignoring your youngster’s reaction and restating your instructions in a calm, unemotional way. Your child will probably stop complaining after a few repetitions. This method keeps emotions in check and avoids a power struggle.



● **Encourage a better response.**

Another option is to teach your child a more acceptable way to react. For instance, she says, “I don’t want to clean my room. My TV show is still on.” Suggest an alternative answer. *Example:* “May I have ten minutes to finish watching my show before cleaning my room?”

● **Empathize, but stand firm.**

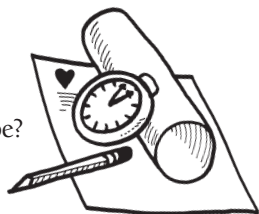
Sometimes simply recognizing your youngster’s feelings will foster cooperation.

Example: “I know you think it’s unfair that you have to do the dishes, but you and your brother agreed to take turns.” ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Have a heart

Did you know that the first stethoscope was a hollow wooden tube? A French doctor invented the instrument almost 200 years ago. Your child can follow in his footsteps with this science activity.



Materials: cardboard paper towel tube, stopwatch

Place one end of the tube over your heart. Have your child listen at the other end. Ask him to count the number of beats in 30 seconds. Multiply the number by 2 to find out how many times your heart beats in a minute.

Then, run in place or do jumping jacks for one minute. Have your child listen to your heart and count again. Can he recalculate the number of beats per minute?

Explain to your youngster that when we exercise, our hearts beat faster to pump more oxygen to working muscles. ♥

OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,
a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.
3035 Valley Avenue, Suite 103, Winchester, VA 22601
(540) 723-0322 • rfecustomer@aspenpubl.com
ISSN 1540-5621

Q & A

Tips for traveling parents

Q: I’m on the road a lot for work. How can I make the separation easier on my son?

A: Setting up a routine for saying good-bye and keeping in touch may help. Consider these suggestions.

Have a special dinner or outing together the day before you leave. Let your youngster know how long you’ll be away. He might like counting down the days on a calendar until you return.

Trade items with your child before each trip. *Example:* Give him a photograph to keep by his bed; he could give you a favorite toy to put in your suitcase. You may also want to write notes for him to read each day you’re gone or leave him a tape recording of a book you’ve read aloud. If possible, try to call your youngster at the same time each day while you’re away. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Pets and responsibility

My daughter Robin has wanted a pet since she was very young. I kept saying no—I was afraid she wouldn’t take care of one, and I would end up shouldering the load. As a single parent, I just couldn’t handle the added responsibility.

However, a few months ago, a friend gave her a guinea pig and a cage as a birthday gift. I was upset at first, but Robin promised she would take good care of her new pet.



First, she read several books on pet care from the library. Then, she talked to an employee at the pet store about how to clean the cage. Robin has been great about feeding, playing with, and cleaning up after the guinea pig. Taking care of her new friend has taught her a lot about responsibility. ♥