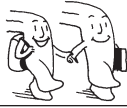


# Home & School CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

Working Together for School Success

September 2010

St. Joseph School  
Catholic School Council



## SHORT NOTES

### Numbers at a glance

Stay in touch with your youngster's school by keeping phone numbers of teachers, the school counselor, and the school office handy. You might post a list on the refrigerator or a bulletin board. Also, add them to your cell phone so you'll recognize the number if a staff member calls.

### DID YOU KNOW?

There's more to good vision than seeing clearly. When your child reads, his eyes must work together and be able to track, or follow, a line of text. Since many children have undiagnosed eye problems, talk to your youngster's pediatrician if he struggles with reading. The doctor may suggest a complete eye exam.

### In the news

How can your child stay up-to-date on current events? Clip or print articles that you think are appropriate for her age. Then, leave them by her breakfast plate or on her bedside table for her to read. Also, let her see you read the news, and talk to her about what's going on in the world.

### Worth quoting

"All great achievements require time."  
*Maya Angelou*

## JUST FOR FUN

**Q:** What has no hands or feet but climbs high at night?

**A:** The moon.



## Expect the best

Setting high expectations for your child is a key to his success in school. Set the tone for a great year by letting your youngster know what you expect from him—and helping him see what he can expect from himself.



### Be realistic

Match expectations to your child's abilities and interests. For example, if he's strong in math and science, you can expect him to earn good grades in those subjects. Then, consider overall standards, such as finishing his work on time, listening to his teachers, and doing his best. Finally, think ahead to long-term plans. You may feel it's important that your youngster go to college or volunteer in the community, for instance.

### Be clear

Remember to communicate your expectations to your child. You can weave them into everyday conversations. *Examples:* "We'll play catch after you do your homework" or "The science fair is coming up. I can't wait to see your

project." Talk regularly about long-range expectations, too. Your youngster will see himself as a future college student when you say things like, "You'll be able to learn more about that when you're in college one day."

### Be supportive

Work with your child to help him meet your expectations. For instance, provide materials for his projects and help him set aside time to work on them. Let him know that you expect his best and that you're certain he can do it. You'll build his confidence and encourage him to make it happen. ♥

## After-school chats

"What's in your backpack?" Greet your child with this question, and you'll discover a lot about what she does in class.

- Set aside time each day to go through her papers. Try to do it first thing after school when her day is fresh in her mind.

- Look over your youngster's work together. Help her feel proud by pointing out something specific that she did nicely. For instance, if she shows you a picture of your family, you might say, "I like how you drew your brother playing chess and your little sister with pigtails."

- Have her talk through math problems or science experiments to show you what she's learned. She might explain how she finds the perimeter of a triangle or why ants dig tunnels, for example. ♥



# Making friends

A new school year brings opportunities to reunite with old friends and make new ones. Use these tips to help your youngster build friendships—learning to work and play with others will help her do better in school and enjoy it more.

**Reach out.** Encourage your child to be on the lookout for classmates who share her interests. If she enjoys making friendship bracelets and notices a classmate wearing one, she might strike up a conversation about her hobby. Or help her



find an after-school activity (scouts, gymnastics) where she will meet children with similar interests.

**Get in touch.** Keep a class list handy, and let your youngster call to invite a classmate over. Before a friend visits, your child might brainstorm possible activities. When her guest arrives, she can ask, “Would you like to do magic tricks or play a board game?” Having a plan will help playtime go more smoothly.

*Note:* If your youngster is having trouble making friends, talk to her teacher. She may be able to suggest a classmate who would be a good match or offer ways to help your child feel more comfortable.♥

## ACTIVITY CORNER



### Guess the definition

Request a consonant or “buy” a vowel? This version of the popular game show *Wheel of Fortune* is a fun way for your child to study vocabulary in any subject.

First, have him give you a list of words and definitions from a textbook or a teacher handout. Choose a word. On a piece of paper, write a blank in place of each letter in the definition. *Example:* For “absorb,” you would write “\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_” (to soak up).

To play, you each begin with 25 cents. Have your youngster guess letters that go in the blanks—consonants are free, and vowels cost 5 cents. The goal is to figure out the definition and name the vocabulary word before all the blanks are filled in. When he answers correctly, he gets a penny for each blank that remains. Then, let him give you a definition to figure out. Keep playing until someone runs out of money.♥



## Q & A

### Keep moving!

**Q:** I’ve heard that a lot of kids don’t get enough exercise. How can I be sure my children stay active?

**A:** Regular exercise—about an hour a day—can help your youngsters stay healthy and energetic. Walking or biking to school is an easy way to fit in physical activity if you live close enough to school and there’s a safe route. You might ask other neighborhood parents about setting up a walking schedule. A different adult could accompany the children each weekday, or younger children might walk with older ones. Also, encourage your kids to combine exercise with playtime. In nice weather, they might play kickball or freeze tag outside. Indoors, they could dance to upbeat music or play active games like Twister or Cranium. To cut down on time sitting still, try to limit TV and video games to less than an hour a day.

Finally, let them see you being active, too. You could go swimming together or take a family hike on the weekend, for example.♥



## PARENT TO PARENT

### Our family calendar

With both of our boys now in school and busy with activities, I knew our family needed a way to manage our busy schedule.

My husband suggested having the kids make their own calendar. So with software on a library computer, we printed calendar pages for September through June. The boys made a picture on construction paper to go with each month. For example, Eli drew a picture of his school for September, and Owen painted pumpkins for October.

Then, we helped them add important events from the school calendar, such as standardized test dates, school holidays, and the end of each grading period. We also penciled in their after-school activities and family events.

I stapled the pages together and hung our calendar in the kitchen. Now we

have the boys check it every evening after dinner. It helps us plan the next day and ensure that we don’t forget anything.♥



### OUR PURPOSE

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

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