



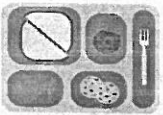
TLJA TIMES

A newsletter for Timothy L. Johnson Academy parents and families.
Timothy L. Johnson Academy 4615 Werling Dr., Fort Wayne, In 46806 (260) 441-8727

April 2021



We are here to serve you and your family! If you have any questions, please contact the school office at 441-8727.



Breakfast & Lunch

All students attending TLJA will receive free school meals. Timothy L. Johnson Academy has been approved to implement the Community Eligibility Provision for breakfast and lunch. This means that parents will not need to fill out the long meal application.

Dear TLJA Family,

Thank you to each of you for the support you give to us as we focus on providing a quality education for your child. We work hard every day to provide a calm, safe, and engaging learning environment. We need your help insuring your child gets needed rest as well as exhibiting good daily attendance.

Attendance at school is crucial to your child's success at Timothy L. Johnson Academy. We need students on time and ready to work every day. For every 5 minutes they are absent, they miss out on another key concept. If you emphasize an importance for school, they too will believe it is important. My wish is that all of our students would have perfect attendance!!

Dawn Starks
School Leader



**Parents-
We need the
Intent to
Return Form
as well as the
School Survey.
Please complete if you
haven't
already.
(attached)
Thank you!!**

Need Transportation?

If you haven't been contacted regarding your transportation needs, please contact the school office at 441-8727. We provide transportation for all students!!

Student Dress Code

TLJA students are to be in dress code every day.

- **Shirts** must have a collar and be **light blue, navy, black or white**. Shirts must be solid color with no stripes, prints, or labels.

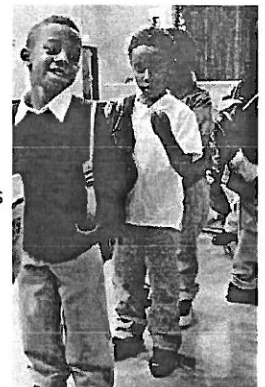
- **Pants, shorts, and skirts** must be **khaki, navy, or black**. Students are not to wear jeans, denim, leggings, or sweats. No sagging allowed!

- **Belts** are to be worn if necessary.

- **Sweaters** worn inside must be light blue, navy, black, or white and have no prints or logos. Students are not to wear outdoor jackets and coats inside.

- **Shoes** should totally enclose the student's foot. No sandals or backless shoes.

Any questions regarding the dress code should be referred to the school office or your child's teacher.



Please be sure to read with your child at least 20 minutes every night!!

APRIL HEALTH NEWS

*SPRING CLEANING:

In addition to your regular springcleaning chores, consider adding some that will make your home a little safer for your kids, such as cleaning out your medicine cabinet, checking product recalls, and looking for broken toys, etc.

*SUN SAFETY:

Remember the sun's rays are strongest between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Use SPF 15 or higher, even on cloudy days. It is important to get a healthy dose of sunshine each day.

*NEW IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE:

Check with your health care provider to make sure your child is properly immunized, especially children entering Kindergarten and 5th graders. All 11 year-old students are required to have a Tdap booster (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) prior to entering 6th grade.

*ASTHMA/ALLERGY ACTION PLANS:

Seasonal Allergy and Asthma Action Plans are important to review and update with your health care provider, and a copy should be on file in your child's school as well as having a rescue inhaler. Learn what your child's triggers are--pollen, grass, molds temperature changes, exercise, smoke, perfume, pesticides.

Mark Your Calendar:

APRIL

4/20 Park Dept. plant delivery for students to take home

4/30 APRIL MAKE-UP Day
No school

MAY

5/14 MAY MAKE-UP Day
No school

5/25th Last Day of School
HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

5/31 Memorial Day

TIME TO PRE-REGISTER FOR 2021-2022

In order to plan for our 2021-2022 classes, we would ask that you please pre-register your student for this coming school year by sending back the Intent to Return form. Many exciting plans are in the future, and we want your child to be a part of those plans.

If you have a child who will be five (5) by August 1, 2021, he/she is eligible to be enrolled in next year's Kindergarten class. Please contact the elementary school at 441-8727 to have an enrollment form mailed to you, or stop in the Elementary School Office for an application. Remember, you must supply the school with your child's birth certificate as well as his/her immunization records,.

If you have not yet returned the Intent to Return form for your active student(s), attached to this newsletter is another form for you to complete and return. Returning this form is an assurance that your student will be enrolled at Timothy L. Johnson Academy for the 2021-2022 school year.

We hope to see all of our families back with us next year as we continue to educate the youth of today in the best possible way.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school at 441-8727 or, please call 543-4077 for any questions regarding the Middle School.



TAKE A PLANT HOME

The Fort Wayne School Children's Flower and Vegetable Association has donated plants for school children in Fort Wayne. TLJA students will receive their plants to take home on Tuesday, April 20th.

If you have children in grades Kindergarten through the Fourth grade, they will receive a plant to take home to care for over the summer. In the fall, they may bring back their plant to be judged and receive a ribbon at the Timothy L. Johnson Plant Show. The plant will then be returned to students to take back home.

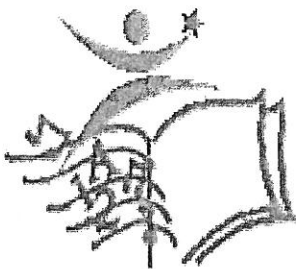
TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR PLANT AND RETURN IT WHEN YOU COME BACK TO SCHOOL IN THE FALL

Your plant died? Don't worry, you will be able to bring in any favorite plant from home for judging to receive a ribbon.

TESTING SCHEDULED

On April 19th through May 14th students in grades three through eight will take their ILearn tests. Also, April 19th and April 20th will be the EOY (End of Year) testing for elementary students. April 19th through April 21st will be middle school student EOY testing.

We would request parents and guardians make sure students get a good eight hours of sleep and a good breakfast to help aid in their success with these tests. It is also very important that students arrive at school promptly at the beginning of the school day to ensure they are prepared to begin testing procedures.



TIMOTHY L. JOHNSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
4625 WERLING AVENUE
FORT WAYNE, IN 46806
(260) 441-8727 (260) 441-8727 FAX

INTENT TO RETURN

TO

TIMOTHY L. JOHNSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022

March 18, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

In order to plan for our 2021-2022 classes, we would ask that you please pre-register your student for this coming school year. With the TLJ Elementary Academy growth we have experienced, it is important you pre-register your student for the coming school year in order to make sure a seat in the classroom is held for your child. Many exciting plans are in the future, and we want your child to be a part of those plans. When we receive your *Intent to Return* form, we will secure a spot for your child.

-----PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO SCHOOL-----

It's time to reserve your child's space for next fall, the 2021-2022 school year. Please return this form as soon as possible to the school office. If not returned your child could lose his/her space for next year.

Child's Name	Please circle child's <u>current</u> grade level					
	K	1	2	3	4	5
Child's Name	Please circle child's <u>current</u> grade level					
	K	1	2	3	4	5
Child's Name	Please circle child's <u>current</u> grade level					
	K	1	2	3	4	5
Child's Name	Please circle child's <u>current</u> grade level					
	K	1	2	3	4	5

My child/children _____ Will attend _____ Will not attend Timothy L. Johnson Middle School next year. Please send home pre-enrollment forms for me to complete for the 2021-2022 school year for my students.

Parent or Guardian Name (please print)

Phone #

Attached is the Parent End of Year Survey. Please complete for each of your children and their unique classroom experience. Every classroom that has 100% returned will have an ice cream party. Thank you for a great year.

Mrs. Starks

End-of-Year Parent Survey

Thank you for entrusting your child to me this year! Together, I believe we have achieved a lot and grown even more. However, there is always room for improvement. Please help me by completing the following survey and returning it to me.

5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=unsure/neutral 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

My child felt happy in the classroom

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

My child was motivated to learn

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

My child feels safe at school

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

I am satisfied with my child's progress this year

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

I am satisfied with the amount of homework my child received

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

I am satisfied with the overall discipline at my child's school

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

I am satisfied with my communication with the teacher

5 4 3 2 1

Comments:

The best thing about this year
for me was:

The best thing about this year
for my child was:

In the future, please keep in
mind:

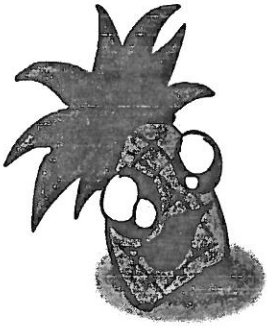
Thank you for taking time to provide valuable feedback that will help me as I plan for next year's class! If you need to discuss any of this with me in person, please contact me to set up an appointment.

WHAT IS SPINEY AND DELICIOUS?

- The pineapple plant is a tropical fruit that is indigenous to South America. Originally coming from the area between southern Brazil and Paraguay.
- The pineapple spread throughout South America, the Caribbean, Central America and Mexico, where it was cultivated by the Mayas and the Aztecs. Columbus came across the pineapple in 1493 and took it back to Europe.
- The word 'pineapple' was recorded in 1398 to describe 'pine cones'. It was not until 1694 that pine cones were first called pine cones. On arrival to the Americas, European explorers called the tropical fruit pineapples around 1664 because they resembled the pine cone.
- An individual pineapple can take over two years to grow, although they are usually picked slightly earlier than this.
- The most famous pineapple entrepreneur was James Dole who moved to Hawaii and started a pineapple plantation in 1900, just after John Kidwell first introduced a pineapple industry to Hawaii. 'Dole' is still a major company in the pineapple industry today.
- The top of a pineapple, after cleaning and drying, can be planted in soil and a new plant will grow.
- When growing its fruit the pineapple plant produces over 200 flowers varying in color from lavender, through to light purple and red. The individual scale like fruits of these flowers then join together to create the pineapple.
- The individual fruit segments of a pineapple interlock in two helices, 8 in one direction, 13 in the other, each of which is a Fibonacci number.

APRIL FRESH FRUITS AND VEGGIES

			1	2
				NO SCHOOL
5	6	7	8	9
SPRING BREAK – NO SCHOOL				
12	13	14	15	16
Cantaloupe Chunks	Celery Sticks	Mixed Fruit Chunks	Jicama Sticks	Kiwifruit
19	20	21	22	23
Squash/ Yellow Coins	Grapefruit Slices	Grape Yellow Tomato	Plum- Black Chilean	Petite Banana
26	27	28	29	30
Baby- Peeled Carrot	Honeycrisp Apple	Broccoli/ Cauliflower Floret	Strawberry	Cucumber Slice

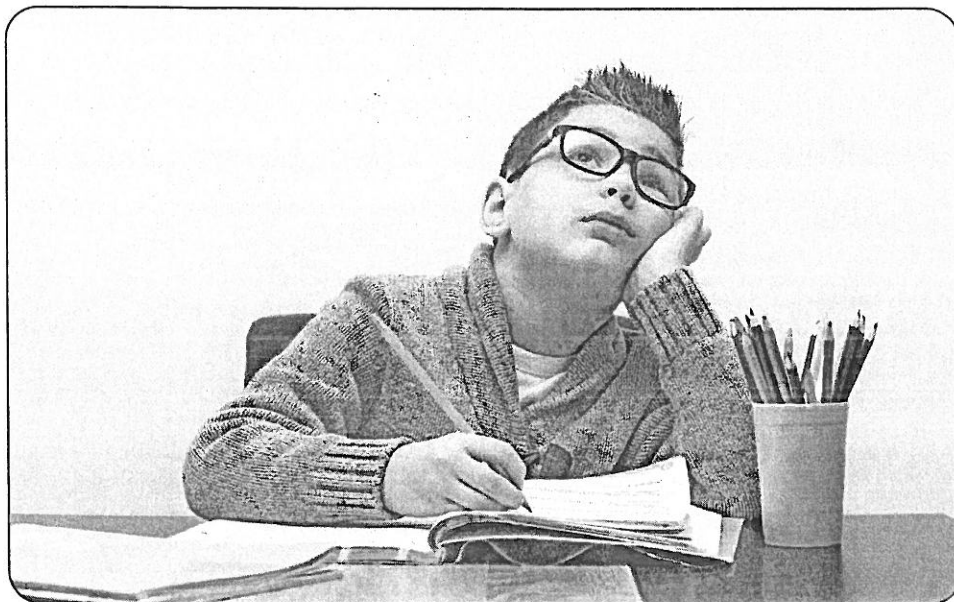


Elementary School Parents[®]

Timothy L. Johnson Academy

make the difference!

April 2021
Vol. 32, No. 8



Improving focus boosts your child's ability to learn

Everybody's mind wanders now and then. But if your child regularly "zones out" during class, it can impact his ability to learn and retain new information.

Studies show that younger students who can't focus tend to become older students who can't focus. And that can mean big trouble for your child's education.

To help your elementary schooler strengthen his attention skills:

- **Remove distractions.** Keep the TV and other screens off while your child works. Keep noise to a minimum.
- **Break down large assignments.** If he has a social studies report to write, show him how to divide it into smaller steps. "First, think about

what you want to say. Next, make an outline of your thoughts. Then, start writing."

- **Encourage breathers** during study time. Don't force your child to work for long periods of time. Instead, set a timer for 20 minutes and have him take a five-minute break when it goes off. Frequent short breaks help your child clear his head.

Remind your child to do this during class, too. Even a 30-second break (maybe by closing his eyes and breathing deeply) could help him buckle back down and refocus.

Source: A.J. Lundervold and others, "Parent Rated Symptoms of Inattention in Childhood Predict High School Academic Achievement Across Two Culturally and Diagnostically Diverse Samples," *Frontiers in Psychology*, Frontiers Communications.

Word games strengthen writing skills



If your child has trouble forming and punctuating sentences, encourage practice by

turning writing into a game.

Here are two games to play to exercise writing skills:

1. **Fill-in-the-Blanks.** Review the different parts of speech and write a story with missing words. For example: "The girl stepped on a ____ (noun)." Take turns filling in the blanks. You can help by saying things like, "A noun is a person, place or thing. I'll choose the word *pie*!" Make the words as silly as you'd like. Then read the story aloud.
2. **Punctuation Point.** Write a short story without punctuation. Then read it together. It's challenging! This illustrates how important punctuation is for a sentence's clarity.

Now edit the story, adding punctuation that makes it easy (or funny) to read. Suggest that your child write a story for you to punctuate. Discuss why you chose—or didn't choose—certain punctuation marks.

Put an end to procrastination by doing the crummy job first



Your child has a math worksheet, a chapter to read and a spelling assignment. If she hates spelling, tell her to do that assignment first. Here's why:

- **Crummy jobs are a part of life.** We all have to do some things we don't like. Talk to your child about some of the jobs you don't enjoy doing, but have to do anyway. Doing the laundry and cleaning the bathrooms every week isn't fun, but it is necessary hygiene.
- **Putting off a difficult task just makes it—well, more difficult.** Until she gets that spelling finished, it's going to occupy her mind and hang over her head.
- **Finishing a dreaded task feels wonderful.** Help your child learn to focus on how great she'll feel when the job is finished—not

how she feels while she's doing it. But let her know that it's also OK to build in a small reward for finishing an unpleasant task, such as spending 10 minutes shooting hoops.

Sometimes, all it takes is a little push. Set a timer for 15 minutes and say, "Work on your spelling for 15 minutes. Then you can stop." Once your child gets started, it probably won't be as painful as she thought.

Source: R. Emmett, *The Procrastinating Child: A Handbook for Adults to Help Children Stop Putting Things Off*, Walker & Company.

"Procrastination makes easy things hard; hard things harder."

—Mason Cooley

Mild hearing loss can impact your child's ability to read



Does your child struggle with reading? The issue could be his hearing. According to research, up to 25 percent of

younger school-aged children may have mild to moderate hearing loss. Unfortunately, it often goes undetected by parents and teachers.

The degree of impairment need not be dramatic, either. Simply having multiple ear infections can be enough to damage your child's hearing.

Have your child screened by his doctor and be aware of these signs of hearing impairment:

- **Favoring one ear.** When you talk to your child, does he turn one ear

toward you? If so, it may mean that's his "good" ear, even if he doesn't realize it.

- **Making things louder.** Does your child gradually turn up the volume when everyone else thinks the sound is fine?
- **A loud speaking voice.** If your child speaks more loudly than necessary (assuming he's not angry), it might be because his voice sounds muffled to him.
- **An uneasy feeling.** If you have a hunch that something is wrong with your child's ears, trust your gut. Ask his doctor how to proceed.

Source: Coventry University, "Screen children with reading difficulties for hearing problems," ScienceDaily.

Do you help your child deal with disappointment?



All children face disappointments. Are you helping your child learn to deal with them? Answer *yes* or *no* to each question

below to find out:

___ **1. Do you help your child understand what can't be changed and what can?** For example, "You can't change the fact that it is raining, but you can change your plans."

___ **2. Do you encourage your child to choose a positive response when the unexpected happens?**

___ **3. Do you point out what your child can learn from mistakes?** "Next time, you'll start studying a few days in advance and earn a better grade."

___ **4. Do you have this rule:** You can feel disappointed, but you can't sulk? Your child is entitled to her feelings, but she can also control her actions.

___ **5. Do you help your child figure out solutions on her own—instead of trying to fix problems for her?**

How well are you doing?

If you answered mostly *yes*, you're teaching your child how to cope when things don't go her way. For *no* answers, try those ideas.

Elementary School
Parents
make the difference!

Practical Ideas for Parents to Help Their Children. ISSN: 1046-0446

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It's not too late to beef up your engagement with school



This school year has been challenging, to say the least. However, when parents and schools work together, the results can be incredible—including increased academic achievement and better student attitudes and behavior.

Your involvement doesn't need to be complicated or time consuming. And even though the end of the school year is right around the corner, it isn't too late to get involved.

Starting right now, you can:

- **Attend school events**—even if they are virtual. Participate and make an effort to connect with staff and other families.
- **Pay attention** to school information sent home and posted online. Keep

track of important dates, such as end-of-year tests and celebrations.

- **Volunteer.** Ask your child's teacher if there is anything you can do to help out. Perhaps you could read to students or help in another way.
- **Join the parent-teacher group.** If you can't attend meetings, take time to read the minutes from each meeting.
- **Ask the teacher questions.** "How can I help my child succeed?" "What are the most important school tasks for us to accomplish each day at home?"
- **Keep talking to your child** about school. Ask about what he is learning. Let him know his education is important to you.

Building your child's social skills can give learning a big boost



Students learn much more in school than academics. In every class, whether it's in person or remote, kids practice an important skill—getting along with others.

Research shows that problems with social skills can interfere with learning and make it difficult for kids to succeed in school and in life.

To reinforce social skills:

- **Be a role model.** Children notice how parents interact with others. Do you introduce yourself to new people? Stay connected with friends? Support people you care about? Let your child see you being a good friend.
- **Read stories.** There are many books about friendship. After reading, talk about the story.

- **Role-play.** Kids need help practicing manners. With your child, pretend you're meeting new people. "Hi, I'm Jane. Nice to meet you!" Also focus on sharing and kindness.
- **Socialize.** Give your child plenty of opportunities to spend time with other children. This may be challenging for the next several months. Look for safe or virtual opportunities that will allow your child to interact with others.
- **Relax.** Children don't need lots of friends. Just one good buddy is fine, as long as your child cooperates well with others. If you have any concerns, talk with her teacher and work together on solutions.

Source: K. Steedly, Ph.D. and others, "Social Skills and Academic Achievement," *Evidence of Education*, National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities.

Q: My son has struggled with math this year and now he says he hates it. I can't really blame him, because I'm not good at math either. How can I help him develop a better attitude?

Questions & Answers

A: Parents' attitudes about math have a lot to do with how well their children do in math. Kids whose parents tell them they didn't like math when they were in school often struggle with math as well. Likewise, children whose parents instill a sense of enjoyment about math tend to perform better.

To help your child develop a positive attitude about math:

- **Set the tone.** Let your child know you believe *everyone* can be successful in math. If you say this often to your child, he'll start to believe it!
- **Avoid stereotypes.** Boys and girls can be engineers. Children of all races can be successful in school. In fact, students who are successful in math can go a long way toward breaking the baseless stereotypes that others may hold.
- **Talk about careers.** Young children may decide that being a Ninja Turtle or an Avenger is a great career choice. Expand their horizons. Talk about people who use math in their jobs—an airline pilot, a weather forecaster, an architect, an astronaut, a researcher, an accountant, etc.
- **Connect math to the real world.** When you and your child go to the store, bank, restaurant, etc., point out all of the ways people use math. At dinner, challenge family members to tell one way they used math that day.

It Matters: Building Respect

Encourage your child to develop self-respect



Children who are disrespectful often lack something they desperately need: self-respect. If they don't value themselves, they will find it hard to value and respect other people. They will also have trouble following rules.

But how does self-respect develop and how can you encourage it? Self-respect comes from:

- **Competence.** It feels great to be good at things. Give your child opportunities to learn and practice new skills—everything from reading to playing sports to doing chores.
- **Accomplishments.** Notice and compliment your child's progress. "You've read three books this week. I'm impressed!"
- **Confidence.** It helps to have parents who stay positive through challenges. Display a "You can do it" attitude. Help your child see mistakes as great opportunities to learn.
- **Freedom.** Give your child some independence. Let him make age-appropriate choices. For example, "Would you like to organize your closet today or tomorrow?"
- **Support.** Show that you accept, appreciate and love your child for who he is and what he believes. Ask about his day. Listen to his answers. Help him solve problems.
- **Imitation.** If you have self-respect, your child is more likely to have it as well. Be kind to yourself and believe in your worth.

Help your child understand why it's important to follow rules

One of the ways kids show respect is by following rules. This is easier for children to do if they understand why rules are important.

In addition to explaining the reasons for specific rules, you can:

- **Play a game without rules.** After a while, stop and talk about how things are going. Then play with rules and see which way is better.
- **Imagine a world without rules.** Talk about what would happen if people could steal ... if kids didn't have to go to school ... if people didn't wear seat belts. What would that be like?
- **Encourage your child to be a leader.** Being a student council member, for example, will give her experience making and enforcing rules.



- **Praise your child for obeying rules.** You might say, "Thanks for getting up on time. Now we can eat breakfast together." This encourages her to keep respecting rules.

Six strategies parents can use to demonstrate respect



When it comes to teaching kids about respect, the idea isn't to teach them at all. It's to show them. When you demonstrate what respect looks like, you'll go a long way toward helping your child become respectful himself.

To demonstrate respect:

1. **Be polite.** Say *please*, *thank you* and *excuse me* when talking to your child. Don't barge into his room, either. Instead, knock.
2. **Be kind.** Don't insult or belittle your child when he messes up. Making a mistake doesn't mean he's "worthless" or "no good."
3. **Be compassionate.** Try not to embarrass your child, and never tell jokes at his expense.
4. **Be fair.** Don't pass judgment on your child or punish him for something before learning all the facts.
5. **Be dependable.** If you tell your child you'll do something, do it. And when you can't do something, be up front about it.
6. **Be honest.** Every "little white lie" you tell chips away at the respect your child feels—or doesn't feel—for you. He's watching what you say and do, so always try to do the right thing.

Helping Children Learn®

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

Timothy L. Johnson Academy



April 2021

Save these special days to enjoy learning together this month

In April, nature seems to reawaken. April is also full of opportunities to reawaken your child's interest in learning. Celebrate these special days with some fun activities:

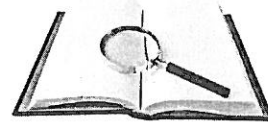
- **International Children's Book Day** (April 2). This day is designed to inspire a love of reading. Read a story from another country with your child.
- **National Walking Day** (April 7). Get out a map and help your child plan a new walking route to a familiar place. Walk there together. What new things do you notice?
- **Teach Children to Save Day** (April 11). Encourage financial literacy. Talk with your child about the difference between needs and wants, and about the different ways people save (in piggy banks and bank accounts, by using coupons, etc.). Have him decide on something to save for.
- **National Laundry Day** (April 15). Look online together for pictures of early washing machines. Then teach your child how to do his own laundry.
- **World Creativity and Innovation Day** (April 21). What would your child like to invent? Have him draw a picture of his idea.
- **National Honesty Day** (April 30). Talk with your child about why it is important to be honest *every* day!



Teach your child to look for clues to word meaning

Context clues help students figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word they read from other information in the sentence.

For example, in the sentence "Joe wanted to buy new shoes, but the price deterred him," context clues (the qualifier *but* and the word *price*) indicate that the sentence is about the cost of the shoes. That can help your child figure out that *deterred* means "prevented him" from buying the shoes.



Model motivation to learn

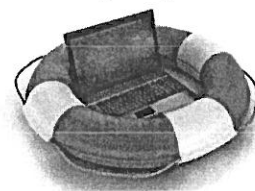
The examples you set for your child have a huge influence on her. Here are three key ways to show her that learning is exciting:

1. **Be a learner** yourself.
2. **Share what** you learn.
3. **Show an interest** in what your child is learning, in and out of school.

Reinforce online safety

Technology has made school possible for millions of students in the past year. But as kids become comfortable learning, creating and sharing content online, they can lose sight of the need to do it safely. To protect your child:

- **Review rules** and expectations. Your child should communicate online only with people you both know. Remind him never to share passwords.
- **Learn about the websites** he wants to visit and the apps he wants to download. Make sure you approve.
- **Ask him to tell you** if anything odd or inappropriate occurs while he's online.



Help your child get started writing

A blank piece of paper can make any writer's mind go blank. Getting started is often the hardest part of writing. When your child has a case of writer's block, help her get off to a running start by asking questions.

If the assignment is to write about a personal experience for example, ask your child to:

- **List her recent experiences:** the day the power went out and she brushed her teeth by flash-light; the day she saw a baby deer in the yard, the day she learned to ride her bike; the day she sprained her ankle. Then, have her choose one experience to write about.
- **Tell you the story** of the experience. What happened first? Next? In the end?
- **Answer the basic** newspaper reporter questions: *who, what, when, where, why* and *how*. This will help her collect all the important details she'll need to include in her writing.

Source: C. Fuller, *Teaching Your Child to Write*, Berkley Books.

Helping Children Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

April 2021



How can I encourage my child to move a little faster?

Q: I feel as though I'm always telling my child to hurry up. I don't like rushing her, but she tends to dawdle over everything. How can I help without constantly nagging?

A: Children are naturally curious, so a little dawdling can be a good thing. Some children may enjoy watching an ant walk up the window, or stop to see if they can see the clock hands move. This helps them learn.



But when kids dawdle too much, it can keep them from completing necessary tasks. It can also inconvenience others. Here are some things to try:

- **Be specific about things** you want your child to do. Saying "Please get dressed and brush your teeth now" is better than "Get ready for school."
- **Follow up.** If you say, "It's time to do your math," make sure that your child gets started. Otherwise, you'll probably have to make the same request 10 minutes later.
- **Avoid overwhelming your child.** If you ask her to do several things at once, she may do one but forget what else you said.
- **Use encouraging words.** Don't ask, "Why are you always so slow?" Your child won't know how to answer that. Instead say, "When you have finished your reading we can go outside and look for birds nests."

Parent Quiz

Are you taming test anxiety?

If your child approaches tests with anxiety and dread, it will be harder for him to show what he knows. Are you helping your elementary schooler stay calm and do his best on tests? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you help** your child make and stick to a study plan to prepare for a test?
2. **Do you tell** your child that you expect him to do his best, but that you will love him no matter what grade he earns?
3. **Do you encourage** your child to tell the teacher if tests make him nervous?
4. **Do you share** calming techniques with your child, such as deep breathing, picturing a happy place or pushing against a wall?

5. **Do you teach** your child to reassure himself with self-talk, such as "I studied. I know this. The answer will come to me"?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are reducing causes of test anxiety. For each no, try that idea.

"A day of worry is more exhausting than a week of work."

—John Lubbock

Strengthen a grasp of math

April is Mathematics Awareness Month. Creating a "fist list" is a fun way to build your child's awareness of the steps or concepts related to a math skill. Have her:

- **Trace her hand** on a piece of paper.
- **Write the skill** on the palm. For example, "Adding three digit numbers."
- **Think about the ideas** she needs to remember, such as "line up the ones, tens and hundreds columns" and "work from right to left."
- **Choose the five** most important steps or tips and write them on the fingers of the hand. She can study her fist list, and look at her own hand to help her recall it.

Source: H. Silver and others, *Math Tools, Grades 3-12*, Corwin.

Self-talk is empowering

A strong self-image will help your child do what he knows is right, even when others seem to be doing something different. Teach him to repeat these statements to himself:

- **I can say no** to things that would put me in danger.
- **I can make** good choices for myself.
- **I can say** "You're my friend, but I don't choose to do that."
- **It's OK** if I make different choices.

Focus on essential rules

Can you count your family's written-in-stone rules on one hand? If not, you may be trying to enforce too many.

Keep things simple by regularly emphasizing just your most important basics, such as no hitting, give every assignment a try, limit non-school screen-time, etc. Then as your child matures, you can modify your home and school-related rules, knowing she has the basics down pat.



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