

# **NAD**







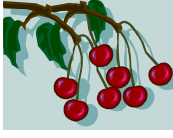
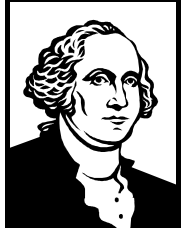



## **HOME AND SCHOOL NEWS**

**FEBRUARY - MARCH 2010**

**NAD HOME & SCHOOL NEWS**  
**Prepared by Upper Columbia Conference**  
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# February 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Invite parents and grandparents to a sweetheart banquet	1 Pre-sell tickets to the banquet so you know how much food to prepare	2 <b>Groundhog Day</b> 	3 Plan a theme for food, decide who will cater it, advertise widely to school families	4 Invite upper grade students to serve, provide music and design invitations	5 Put a notice in your church bulletin about upcoming sweetheart banquet	6 “Hatred stirs up strife: but love covers all sins.” <b>Proverbs 10:12</b>
7 <b>Author, Laura Ingalls Wilder’s Birthday, 1867</b>	8 Ask someone to take digital pictures at the banquet to give to guests as a memento	9 Print a menu and program for the banquet – provide five nice prizes for prize drawing	10 <b>Islamic New Year</b> 	11 <b>National Inventors’ Day</b>  Carver	12 Remind teachers and students about the upcoming art show	13 “Better is a dinner of herbs where love is... <b>Proverbs 15:17</b> <b>Sweetheart Banquet</b>
14 <b>Valentines Day</b> 	15 <b>President’s Day</b>	16 	17 Enlist volunteers to set up gym or school hallways and foyer for the art show	18 Begin planning for school-wide Math Night	19 	20 “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” <b>John 13:35</b>
21 	22 <b>George Washington’s Birthday, 1732</b>	23 	24 Encourage each classroom to focus on one aspect of Math – give suggestions	25 	26 <b>Grand Canyon National Park established 1919</b>	27 “For the love of Christ constrains us;” <b>II Cor. 5:14</b>
28 First Chartered Passenger Railroad in the U.S., 1827	<b>February is Black History Month</b>					

January						
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Notes:

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# March 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 <b>Peace Corps Founded, 1961</b>	3	4	5	6 “He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Ps. 91 <b>School Art Show</b>
7	8 <b>Great Britain Imposed the Stamp Act, 1765</b>	9	10 <b>Abolitionist Harriet Tubman Day</b>	11 	12	13 “I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him shall I trust.” Ps. 91:2
14 Daylight- Saving Time begins, 2 a.m.	15 	16	17 <b>St. Patrick’s Day</b> 	18 <b>Math Night</b> 	19 Tomorrow is the first day of spring 	20 “He shall cover you with his feathers and under his wings you shall take refuge.” Ps. 91:4
21	22 Begin planning for your May track & field day and school picnic	23 <b>World Meteorological Day</b>	24	25 Start planning your April fundraiser & teacher appreciation week	26	27 “There shall no evil befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling.” Ps. 91:10
28	29 	30 Artist Vincent van Gogh’s Birthday, 1853	31 Cesar Chavez’s Birthday, 1929			

## February

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Notes:

## April

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# A Promise Kept

By Kristi Powers

**I**n a world where so many lives are being torn apart by divorces and heartaches, comes a story of a father and a daughter, and a promise that was kept.

My father was not a sentimental man. I don't remember him ever "ooohing" or "ahhing" over something I made as a child. Don't get me wrong; I knew that my dad loved me, but getting all mushy-eyed was not his thing. I learned that he showed me love in other ways.

There was one particular time in my life when this became real to me...



I always believed that my parents had a good marriage, but just before I, the youngest of four children, turned sixteen, my belief was sorely tested. My father, who used to share in the chores around the house, gradually started becoming despondent. From the time he came home from his job at the factory to the time he went to bed, he hardly spoke a word to my mom or us kids. The strain on my mom and dad's relationship was very evident. However, I was not prepared for the day that Mom sat my siblings and me down and told us that Dad had decided to leave. All that I could think of was that I was going to become a product of a divorced family. It was something I never thought possible, and it grieved me greatly. I kept telling myself that it wasn't going to happen, and I went totally numb when I knew my dad was really leaving. The night before he left, I stayed up in my room for a long time. I prayed and I cried and I wrote a long letter to my Dad. I told him how much I loved him and how much I would miss him. I told him that I was praying for him and wanted him to know that, no matter what, Jesus and I loved him. I told him that I would always and forever be his Krissie...his Noodles. As I folded my note, I stuck in a picture of me with a saying I had always heard. "Anyone can be a father, but it takes someone special to be a daddy."

Early the next morning, as my Dad left our house, I sneaked out to the car and slipped my letter into one of his bags.

Two weeks went by with hardly a word from my father. Then, one afternoon, I came home from school to find my mom sitting at the dining room table waiting to talk to me. I could see in her eyes that she had been crying. She told me that Dad had been there and that they had talked for a long time. They decided that there were things that the both of them could and would change-and that their marriage was worth saving. Mom then turned her focus to my eyes-"Kristi, Dad told me that you wrote him a letter. Can I ask what you wrote to him?" I found it hard to share with my mom what I had written from my heart to my dad. I mumbled a few words and shrugged. Mom said, "Well, Dad said that when he read your letter, it made him cry."



It meant a lot to him and I have hardly ever seen your dad cry. After he read your letter, he called to ask if he could come over to talk. Whatever you said really made a difference to your dad."

A few days later my dad was back, this time to stay. We never talked about the letter, my dad and I. I guess I always figured that it was something that was a secret between us.

My parents went on to be married a total of thirty-six years before my dad's early death at the age of fifty-three cut short their lives together. In the last sixteen years of my parent's marriage I, and all those who knew my mom and dad, witnessed one of the truly "great" marriages. Their love grew stronger every day, and my heart swelled with pride as I saw them grow closer together...

When Mom and Dad received the news from the doctor that his heart was deteriorating rapidly, they took it hand in hand, side by side, all the way.

After Dad's death, we had the most unpleasant task of going through his things. I have never liked this task and opted to run errands so I did not have to be there while most of the things were divided and boxed up. When I got back from my errand, my brother said "Kristi, Mom said to give this to you. She said you would know what it meant." As I looked down into his outstretched hand, it was then that I knew the impact of my letter that day so long ago. In my brother's hand was my picture that I had given my dad that day. My unsentimental dad, who never let his emotions get the best of him, my dad, who almost never outwardly showed his love for me, had kept the one thing that meant so much to him and me. I sat down and the tears began to flow, tears that I thought had dried up from the grief of his death, but that had now found new life as I realized what I had meant to him. Mom told me that Dad kept both the picture and that letter his whole life. I have a box in my home that I call the "Dad box". In it are so many things that remind me of my dad. I pull that picture out every once in a while and remember. I remember a promise that was made many years ago between a young man and his bride on their wedding day, and I remember the unspoken promise that was made between a father and his daughter...

A promise kept.

Kristi Powers

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Write Kristi and let her know your thoughts on her story!

Kristi is happily married to Michael and they have three boys. Her writing appears in seven inspirational books, including many in the Chicken Soup series, and their own book entitled: Heart Touchers. Kristi is also homeschool mom and fills her "free time" doing youth ministry and loves her job as a CASA volunteer!

To read more of Kristi's writing visit: <http://www.HeartTouchers.com>

"Let every day be a day of humility; condescend to all the weaknesses and infirmities of your fellow-creatures, cover their frailties, love their excellencies, encourage their virtues, relieve their wants, rejoice in their prosperities, compassionate in their distress, receive their friendship, over-look their unkindness, forgive their malice, be a servant or servants, and condescend to do the lowliest offices of the lowest of mankind." From William Law, A serious call to a devout and Holy life, 1729

**Author Kristi Powers Contributing Author to [Chicken Soup for the Christian Teenage Soul](#) and 9 other inspirational books.** Check out her book co-authored with her husband Michael: [Heart Touchers "Life Changing Stories of Faith, Love, and Laughter"](#) by visiting: <http://www.HeartTouchers.com>+



# HEART PRINTS

\*Author Unknown

Whatever our hands touch  
We leave fingerprints!  
On walls, on furniture  
On doorknobs, dishes, books.  
There's no escape.  
As we touch we leave our identity.

Oh God, wherever I go today  
Help me leave heartprints!  
Heartprints of compassion  
Of understanding and love.

Heartprints of kindness  
And genuine concern.  
May my heart touch a lonely neighbor  
Or a runaway daughter  
Or an anxious mother  
Or perhaps an aged grandfather.

Lord, send me out today  
To leave heartprints.  
And if someone should say,  
"I felt your touch,"  
May that one sense YOUR LOVE  
Touching through ME.



## Quotes:

*"If you can't be thankful for what you receive, be thankful for what you escape."  
Author Unknown*

*"Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus!"  
1 Thessalonians 5:18*

*"The time is always right to do what is right."  
Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.*

# Health Bites from PositiveChoices.com

## Hot Science Snippets

### Can you fight the flu and other infections with food?

Are there foods we could be eating to help fight off infections and disease? Absolutely! A lot of research is demonstrating that a nutrient-rich diet is necessary to help support the immune system. Most nutrition experts agree the best way to get all the nutrients our bodies need is through a balanced diet based on plenty of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and some nuts. Taking individual supplements and vitamin pills can upset the delicate balance between the nutrients—or actually be toxic. Getting them from good food makes overdosing nearly impossible.

**PositiveTip:** *How many fruits and vegetable do you need to eat? Find out for yourself online at [www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)!*

### Mild Dehydration Can Negatively Affect Your Mind!

More than 50 Tufts University male and female students from athletic teams volunteered in a study that examined the effects of mild dehydration on cognitive performance. Each was assigned to complete team practice either with or without water replacement. Cognitive testing followed. Those in the “dehydration group” demonstrated higher negative mood ratings and confusion than the hydrated group. Those with water replacement had better vigilance and attention than the other group. The amount of mild dehydration (1-2%) experienced by these students was similar to what many people experience in their busy, daily lives when they skip drinking sufficient water.<sup>1</sup>

**PositiveTip:** *Help maintain optimal cognitive performance by drinking at least 6-8 glasses of water every day.*



# More Health Bites from PositiveChoices.com

## Hot Science Snippets Continued

**Pick up your walking pace! A slow pace might triple your risk of cardiovascular death.**

The speed at which you walk may dramatically influence your risk of dying from cardiovascular disease according to a five year French study of healthy men and women over 65 years of age. Those in the lowest third of walking speed had a threefold increase in risk of cardiovascular death compared to those in the highest third of walking speed. These differences held true after controlling for potentially confounding factors.<sup>2</sup>



**PositiveTip:** *Pick up your pace! Walk as fast as comfortable without running - it could significantly extend your life.*

**High selenium status increases risk of high cholesterol and diabetes.**

Selenium, an essential nutrient necessary for proper cellular function, has recently become a popular supplement thought to have anti-cancer properties. A new British study has linked high levels of selenium to increased levels of total cholesterol and LDL (“bad”) cholesterol.<sup>3</sup> High selenium status has also been linked to a higher incidence of diabetes.<sup>4</sup>

**PositiveTip:** *When it come to nutrition, it is possible to get too much of a good thing! Selenium supplementation is not advised.*



### References

1. Perceptual & Motor Skills, 109, 251-269, 2009
2. BMJ 2009; 339:b4460
3. J Nutr. 2009 Nov 11. [Epub ahead of print]
4. Environ Health Perspect. 2009 September; 117 (9): 1409-1413

# Sweetheart Banquet



- **Six weeks prior**, choose a gym or church fellowship
- **Choose someone to cater**, raise money for a mission trip or your home and school team. Just be sure the food will be fabulous! Choose a menu with your caterer; agree on a price-per-plate.
- **Ask an upper-grade teacher** to supply students to serve. You decide whether this is to be buffet-style or served at the table.
- **Invite your guests** to dress up - this is a formal event, church-wear is just fine.
- **Sell tickets** in advance so you know how much food to prepare. Always plan for five-ten extra plates to insure you will have enough food for all guests. This will be a adults-only event. Offer childcare for a nominal fee. This could also be an eighth-grade fundraiser.



Decide what ages of children you are willing to do child-care for. Children should come fed, although you could supply some snacks. Childcare providers will provide activities for the children. You'll need at least two adults, plus the students who will be helping. Make sure this part of your program is well-organized.

- **Advertise/advertise** - electronically contact parents and grandparents. Put notices in church bulletins. Put up posters around the school. Send out invitations to school families. Talk about it in your school newsletter - announce it at church - even if it is only "Please look at your bulletin for details regarding the upcoming Sweetheart Banquet."
- Ask your music teacher to provide a short musical program for the banquet.
- This would be a good opportunity for your principal to talk about the school and to suggest some needs the school might have. I know of one school that auctioned off one bottle of sparkling cider for several hundred dollars to benefit the school. Guests had a great time bidding against one another. The school sold only one bottle. Or, an offering could be taken for the benefit of the school. Whatever you do, keep it short and simple.
- **Get a crew to decorate** - decorating will include setting up tables, setting tables, making center-pieces, etc.
- **Fix a place where couples can stand** for a digital picture. Get email addresses so you can send the digital picture to them. Provide a sheet of paper so participants can write their email addresses if they wish to receive a digital copy. If individuals want a printed copy, purchase photo-paper and have a color printer on hand so you can print pictures. Charge for this service. Put a poster near the photo-staging area so guests know up front the price for a printed photo.



## Sweetheart Banquet Childcare

- **Check-in/Check-out System** - be sure you have a check-in/out system. Quality Discount Wristbands have a wide variety of wristbands and options for keeping track of children and making sure the right people are picking them up. See the information at the bottom of this page.
- **Have several craft** activities set up around the room, so as children enter, they can immediately go to a station and have something interesting to do. Some suggestions include:
  1. Make a Valentine - put out cardstock, construction paper, fancy scissors, glue, ribbon, rubber stamps and colored ink and watch the children create the perfect Valentine for their parents or grandma and grandpa. Let them make several - put the finished Valentines in an envelope for them to take home.
  2. Coloring Corner - supply colored markers, crayons and a variety of pictures kids can choose from to color.
  3. Clay or Play Dough - children can create.
  4. Puzzles
  5. Twister Game - set out a Twister sheet and watch the fun.
  6. Open up the gym for four-square, let kids shoot baskets, organize a relay, then several tag games.
  7. Serve fruit, popcorn and something to drink.
  8. Find an appropriate, fun video for children to watch.

**Quality Discount Wristbands** can provide a wide range of [wholesale Tyvek wristbands](#) in a variety of types, styles, colors and patterns and [customize id wristbands](#) you can choose the color to fit your event. We Supply all types of event discount identification wristbands to suit event requirements, from Tyvek Wristbands, (synthetic paper wristbands) Plastic Wristbands, Vinyl Wristbands and [custom imprinted Wristbands](#) with your logo and text design.

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**Wristband tips:** Changing the color of your wristbands depending on the day of the event will ensure that people do not reuse wristbands.

**The great advantage** of Tyvek wristbands is their tamper-proof nature. It is very difficult to tamper with Tyvek Wrist bands, lowering the chances of guests switching wristbands with others. They fit around the wrist and are permanently lock in place so they cannot be slipped on or off the wrist. Tyvek is also waterproof, ensuring that our bands can be worn in any weather, even at water theme parks.

### Sand Castle Tyvek Wristbands



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**Our new Twin-Bands®** [wristbands](#) are ideal for secure identification between children and Parents of guardians and are great for [Day Care Centers](#) and Pre-Schools.

**NO WAITING to place your wristband order!! Call 253-671-9912**

# FUNDRAISING ART SHOW

**H**ave you ever walked the halls and marveled at the beautiful art I've been impressed by the free-students. Here is an opportunity can raise a portion of the money portion for the most pressing needs of your school.



of your school or entered a classroom produced by the children? I have! flowing creativity and the talent of to make money for your school. You for art education and supplies and a

If you are fortunate enough to have an art teacher, talk to them months in advance, so they can set aside some of the best works made by students. These can be mounted or framed if you have available funds. Also talk to classroom teachers so they can set aside special artwork.

## One simple way of doing an art show:

Every class does art. If your teacher could have one or two lessons involving art where he or she put away the work and parents came in and mounted the artwork on black construction paper (\*or mat board) and hung it outside the classroom, you would have an instant art show. There are a few twists you can add to your school art show that would make such an event a small fund-raiser.

The art show you can sell frames for the artwork... or even turn it into a dinner with pizza and soda, and charge for the refreshments. Even a bake sale at the art show would be fine.

The art show is another magnet to bring in every family in the school. You can set up a pledge table at the front door, too.

Have a "special donation" or grant sign-up sheet for parents. Special donations could include paper, paints, or even gift certificates to art supply stores or catalogues.

*Source: Beyond the Bake Sale, The Ultimate School Fund-Raising Book, Jean C. Joachim, 2003, p 100.*

**\*Mat Board** - Want a great way to display or frame your art cheaply or perhaps for FREE? Go to a frame shop and ask the manager for the centers of the mat board (that is what's left over after they cut the mats for framing). They come in many sizes and colors. Most shops discard them. I used to get them for free. Mat board is a wonderful medium for "cavass" for painting with acrylic water color paints or for mounting other artwork. If your school is fortunate enough to have a mat cutter you can make your own smaller mats for framing pictures!



*Continued on next page...*

# Art Show Ideas

Would you like to make more money for your school? Hold on to your hat, because we can “Kick it up a notch,” as Chef Emeril would say.

## All-School Art Show:

**Step One** - Set a date for your art show, talk to your administration to have them “with” you for this fundraiser. Talk to teachers to get them on board. Ask them to set aside the best artwork. Tell them the show will be judged; students will enter artwork at their age or grade level. There will be ribbons and participation ribbons for all entries. Encourage a variety of art for the show. Give teachers ideas.

**Step Two** - With your team, determine the scope of the art show, choose class/age groups, choose categories of art to be entered in the show. Some categories are as follows:

- Pencil drawing
- Pen and ink drawing
- Acrylic water color
- Pastels
- Still-life
- Landscapes
- Portraits
- Seascapes
- Buildings
- Watercolor
- Impressionist works
- Works that mimic famous artists - be sure original artist is mentioned when displaying these works
- Torn-paper pictures
- Collages



## Other Art Mediums:

- Photography & digital photography both black & white and color
- Pottery or ceramics
- Sculpture
- Art glass
- Other



**Step Three** - Visit classrooms, be enthusiastic! Invite kids to enter. Limit each person to two entries.

**Step Four** - Invite local artists to come to your school to share an art lesson with one or two classrooms. Invite parents who love art to teach an art class for their child’s class.

## Art Show Ideas Continued:

**Step Five** - Arrange to hold the art show in your gym and school foyer. If you don't have a gym, ask for the use of your church's fellowship hall. Enlist dads to set up dividers so art can be displayed on both sides of the divider. Put dividers in an accordion pattern down the center of the room and also across the narrow sides of the room. Place art on the walls.

**Step Six** - Engage five judges. Judging must start a couple of hours before your art show opens to the public so ribbons can be in place.

**Step Seven** - Art Auction - plan a silent auction for the majority of the art work. If some art work is NOT for sale, clearly mark it as such and display it in a special area. Choose three or four pieces to be sold at a live auction the last hour of your art show. Enlist an auctioneer for selling those pieces. Set up tables in the live auction area and give attendees bidding numbers. Important: this doesn't have to be computerized because you are only selling three - four items.

**Step Eight** - Ask a local artist to donate an art piece for your live auction. (*If you don't ask, you don't get!*) You'll HAVE to place a minimum bid on these items. This is NOT a time for bargain hunters! Make the minimum bid at least 75% of the value of the piece.

**Step Nine** - Enlist an AWESOME MC. This is so important to the success of your event!

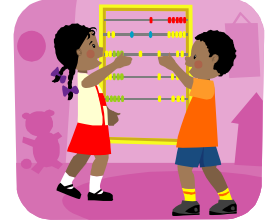
**Step Ten** - Serve sparkling cider, fruit platters and small designer desserts. Children should not be allowed to get food without a parent present. Open the serving line just before the live auction begins and invite guests to sit down and enjoy.

MOST OF ALL, celebrate the children and their families, THANK the teachers and, have fun!





# MATH NIGHT



For home and school meeting this month, plan a math celebration. **Focus** on the fun aspects of math. You might title it **Math is for Everyone!** Or, **Math is Everywhere!**

- Enlist the help of your administration and teachers for this event. Invite students, parents, grandparents and family members to attend.
- Ask each classroom to come up with a math game to share during the evening. Encourage teachers to use math manipulatives and make the evening game-based.
- Provide a light supper.
- Invite adults to participate in math games with students. Students could lead some of the games.
- Plan a location - perhaps the library, where students who want help with homework can get it. One teacher could be assigned to be there, or teachers could split up the evening, spending an allotted amount of time there, then be available in their classrooms.
- Offer math help ideas for parents.
- Offer a time when parents can meet as a group with the classroom teacher so the teacher can provide homework-help ideas that give ideas for what is being taught in current math lessons.
- Visitors will rotate from classroom to classroom. Some activities can be set up in the hallways and gymnasium.

## Some suggestions:

Adding Tricks

Algebra

Cuisinaire Rods

Fun with Calculators

Fraction Fun

Mental Math

Multiplication Games /Tricks

Problem Solving

Smart Art

Solve-the-problem, color the picture

Tessellations

**Awesome Resource** This can be ordered through Amazon.com.

*Make it Simpler; A Practical Guide to Problem Solving in Mathematics, by Carol Sallee & Tom Meyer.*

# Just for Parents





## **Kids can't grow up responsibly if parents don't show them how**

You probably know some people who've never quite grown up. They may have jobs, but never seem to be able to live on their own.

One reason may be that they didn't learn how to take on the responsibilities of adult life. Their parents may not have taught them the skills they need--to balance a budget or to take care of basic life skills like cooking or doing laundry.

If you want your child to grow up and live as an independent adult, you need to start teaching him those skills today. Here are some ways you can help your child develop the habits that will get him ready for adult life:

- Expect him to get himself up in the morning. Even a first grader can learn to wake up to an alarm.
- Teach him to care for his own clothes. Young children can put clothes in the laundry basket. They can fold their own clothes and put them away. Older kids can learn how to do laundry.
- Help him manage money. Whether it's an allowance or payment for extra chores, teach your child the value of saving.
- Enlist his help. Every family member should do something that helps out the family. Young children can set the table. Older kids can learn how to prepare a simple meal. When they do these things, thank them for making your home run more smoothly.
- Volunteer. Make time for your family to volunteer together. Doing something for others builds responsibility.

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## Reinforcing Learning

# Help your elementary schooler build strong observation skills

One thing that sets scientists apart is their skill as observers. Scientists notice and remember details. Here's a fun way to help your child develop this trait.

Ask your child to describe the front of a building she knows well. It could be your house, your apartment building or the school. Just choose a building that she sees regularly.

Have her be as accurate as she can. How many stories high is the building? What color is the front door? How many windows are there? Are the window frames painted a different color?

Write down what she thinks she remembers. Then take a trip. Walk outside to look at the front of your house. Walk down the street to see the school.

Check the reality against the details your child remembered. What observations were correct? Which details did she miss?

You can turn this into a game when you're out for a walk. Say, "How many windows were in the front of Mr. Johnson's house?" See if your child can remember without looking.

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## Talking & Listening

# What can you do to make sure your child is listening to you?

You've talked and talked. But you feel like a television set with the volume turned down--your child just isn't listening.

Nothing is so frustrating to parents. But there are things you can do to make sure your child listens when you have something important to say.

To get your child to listen, try these two strategies:

1. Make eye contact. If your child's eyes are on the TV set, her brain is there, too. So calmly say, "Peyton, I need to say something to you. Could you look at me, please?" Remember: If you shout, "Look at me when I'm talking to you," your child is likely to just tune you out!
2. Remember that less is sometimes more. Keep your instructions short and simple. It's best to give no more than two steps at a time. "Please pick up the books and put them on the shelf." Any more than that and your child is likely to forget what you've asked.

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## Screen Time

# Too much screen time can equal too little play time for your child

Kids spend too much time in front of a TV or a computer and too little time in active play. According to a recent scientific study, this is leading to an increase in childhood obesity.

More than 70 percent of 10-year-olds spend over two hours a day watching TV or playing on a computer. That means they don't have much time for active play.

You can probably figure out the result. Far too many children today are struggling with obesity. By age 11, one in five children is considered obese.

Over their lives, these kids will face many more health problems. They are more likely to contract diseases like diabetes.

What can you do? Here are some suggestions:

- Limit time watching TV and on the computer. If your child has a cell phone, time spent texting is also considered screen time.
- Build in time for active play. Doctors recommend 60 minutes a day. Go to a park and play together!
- Add exercise time to screen time. Keep weights or an exercise mat nearby. During commercials, challenge your child to do sit-ups or a few jumping jacks.

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## Building Respect

# Teach your child to respect other people's property, belongings

A classmate brought a really neat toy car to school. Your child really wanted a car like that. So he "borrowed" it.

Helping children learn to respect another person's property is an important skill for getting along with others. Talk with your child about a time when someone did not respect his property. Did they take something without asking? Did they borrow it and not return it? Did they break something while they were using it?

Talk with your child about how he felt when that happened. Then talk with your child about how he can show respect for another person's property.

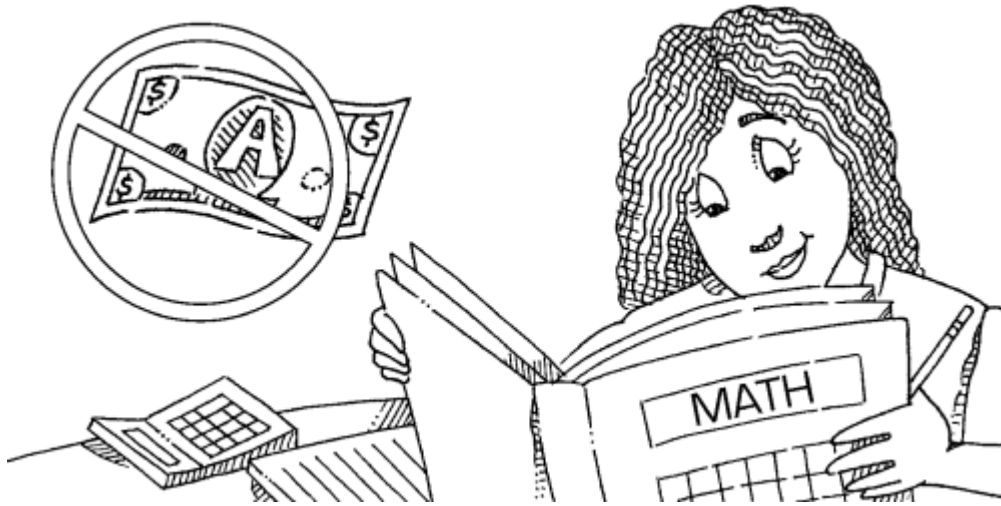
Here are some ideas:

- Always ask permission before using something that belongs to someone else.
- Be careful when using something that belongs to another person.
- Return things when you said you would.

Talk about how these same rules apply to things at school. Your child should take care of his math book so he can return it in good condition.

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## Experts say paying for grades is not an effective motivator

You're worried about your child's math grades. Then she makes a suggestion. "I would do better if you paid me for every A on a math test," she says.

Should you get out your wallet? No, say most experts on motivation. Here's why paying children for good grades is not an effective motivator:

- It puts the emphasis in the wrong place. If you promise your child \$1 for a good grade, she'll be working for the money. She may find that she wants the dollar so badly that she's willing to cheat to get it.
- It doesn't help your child learn the satisfaction of doing a job well. Children need to learn the joy that comes just from doing something to the best of their ability. There's a lot of pleasure that comes from walking into a newly-cleaned room. There's great pride in handing in a paper that was the best your child could do. Those are the rewards your child ought to be working for.
- It puts all the focus on the outcome. Children need to learn the importance of sticking with a challenging subject. They need to learn that practice really does make perfect. Putting all your attention on a reward at the end of the process will make it harder for your child to learn those lessons.

So what should you do? Let your child know that school is important. Set aside time and space for her to do homework. Celebrate her successes with time spent together. And keep your money in your pocket!

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## Reinforcing Learning

# Show your child how to use time more wisely



You have experienced a semester of the many demands of middle school. The second semester can be even busier than the first. Using time wisely is essential. Your child should resolve to do so and you can help. Encourage your child to:

- Expand use of planners. Your child should already be writing down all her assignments, upcoming tests and due dates. Have her consider adding study schedules in her planner.
- Practice saying no. Your child can't accept every invitation or volunteer for every event and stay on top of her schoolwork. Using time wisely means sometimes responding with, "Thanks for thinking of me, but I have too much on my plate right now."
- Take a different approach for tests. Just one time, have your child agree to study 20 minutes a night for one week, instead of waiting until the night before the test. Discuss the difference in how she used her time, and what the result was.

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## Setting Expectations

# Setting clear expectations for your middle schooler is key

Don't make your middle schooler guess what you expect from him. Spell it out! When it comes to setting expectations for your middle schooler:

- Be precise. "Clean the basement" might mean totally different things to you and your middle schooler, so make your instructions clear. "Please put your video games away, bring your dirty plate upstairs and vacuum the rug."
- Give a time frame. Attach a very specific time frame to chores. "I need you to empty the dishwasher within the next 15 minutes." It may help avoid foot-dragging on your middle schooler's part.
- Get his input. Your preteen isn't a little kid anymore, so don't treat him like one. Whenever possible, let him put in his two cents when it comes to the house rules. For instance, has he been insisting that he's old enough for a later bedtime? He may be right.
- Trust him. Respect your middle schooler by assuming he'll do what he's told. (In other words, don't hover as he works.) If he falls short again and again, you may need to supervise more closely. But if he does well? Honor him with some breathing room.
- Offer praise. Is your middle schooler doing a great job following the rules and pitching in? Let him know!

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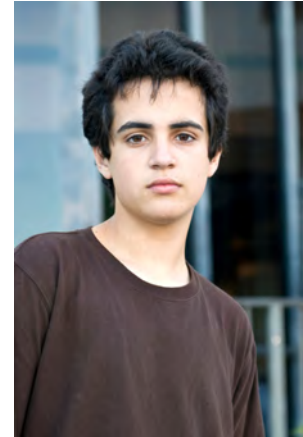
## Spending Time Together

# Expect your middle schooler to remain a part of the family

Middle school is often the age of the closed door. Your once-affectionate child wants to be alone much of the time.

This behavior reflects that your child is growing up and becoming a separate person. You should respect it, but at the same time never let your child lose sight of the fact that he is part of a family. Privacy is fine, but total separation from the family is not. Consider these guidelines:

- Insist your child spend most of his time at home. Two evenings a week is plenty of time with friends.
- Keep TVs and computers in family areas. Having one in his bedroom gives your child more reason to separate himself.
- Grant your child leeway when it comes to family activities. Allow him to sometimes opt out, but make it clear there are other times when he will have to come along.
- Consider letting your child bring a friend to spend time with your family. Discuss this in advance so he knows that this is an occasional treat.



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## Responsible middle schoolers exhibit self-reliance, persistence

Of course you want your preteen to become a responsible person. But does he know what that means? To help him understand what "being responsible" looks like, talk about the traits responsible people share. Also, suggest ways he can model those same traits.

For instance, responsible people usually demonstrate:

- A sense of duty. They do what they're supposed to do--even if they don't feel like it. For your preteen, that might mean getting to school on time, finishing his homework every night and doing his chores.
- Self-reliance. They value self-sufficiency, so they do as much as they can for themselves. True, your middle schooler is too young to be completely self-reliant. But he can take a big step toward becoming more responsible. Empower him to handle many of his own tasks, such as doing his own laundry.
- Persistence. They don't give up, and they don't abandon goals just because they seem out of reach. Your preteen can demonstrate persistence by hanging in there when the going gets tough. If he doesn't earn a spot on the basketball team this year, for example, he can sharpen his skills in the off-season and try again next time.

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## Peer Pressure

# Guard against negative peer pressure from other adults

Children are not the only ones who face peer pressure at this age. As a parent, you may find yourself battling it, too.

Usually, this parent peer pressure is no better for your child than the kind she gets from her own peers. It involves someone else trying to get her to do what isn't right for her. But this time they are going through you.

Guard against:

- The parent version of "everyone else is doing it." Just because a parent organizes a co-ed sleep-over doesn't mean your child should go. Say, "I appreciate the invitation, but our rule is that Kelsey doesn't attend these parties. That's our final decision."
- Being made to feel guilty. Stick to your values no matter what others say to you.
- Parents who supply children with alcohol. Yes, there are those who say "They're going to do it anyway. They might as well do it safely at home." This is nonsense! And it sends a terrible message. Do not ever let your child attend events chaperoned by such adults.

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## Computers & Internet

# Communication, common sense lead to your child's online safety

Your preteen may be a whiz when it comes to surfing the Internet, but that doesn't mean he's an expert at keeping himself safe online. In fact, his "super surfing skills" might lead him to think he's safer than he really is. And that's where you come in.

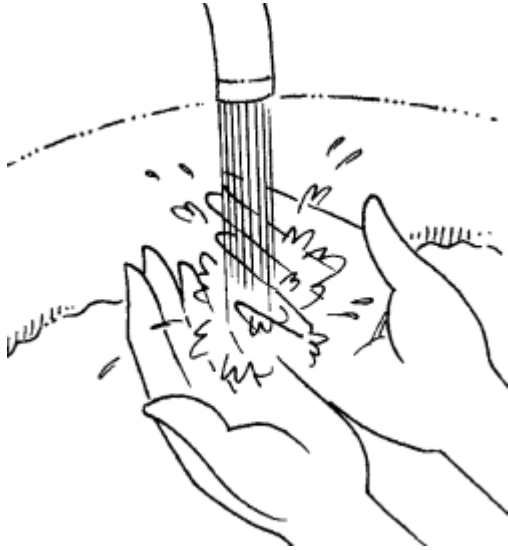
Take time to talk with your middle schooler about staying safe online, and don't feel intimidated because he knows more about how the computer works. You're the adult, and you know more about how the world works.

To help your middle schooler stay safe when he's online:

- Enforce some rules. Are chat rooms off-limits? If so, make sure your preteen knows. Is he forbidden from visiting fee-based sites? Make that clear. Establish serious consequences if your child breaks the rules.
- Talk about the dangers. Don't assume your preteen knows the pitfalls of sharing too much information online. Speak with him about keeping all of his personal information private. Also, remind him that "stranger danger" applies online, too.
- Trust, but verify. Tell your preteen that inappropriate sites are forbidden, but also block them with parental-control software.
- Be aware of his online life. Does your preteen have a MySpace or Facebook account? That may be fine--as long as he's not keeping it secret.
- Don't allow the computer in your preteen's bedroom. He's less likely to get into trouble if he's surfing the Internet in the living room or kitchen.

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## Help your preteen avoid those winter colds with good hygiene

Your preteen can't learn much in school if she's stuck at home with a cold or the flu! So keep her attendance up by helping her stay healthy this winter. Here's how:

- Remind her to dress appropriately. Your preteen may think she's "too cool" for a hat and gloves when the days turn frigid, but insist she wear them anyway.
- Avoid nosebleeds. Dry winter air can cause nasal irritation. Keep your preteen's nose from drying out by using saline spray or a cool-mist humidifier.
- Wash, wash, wash. Germs love to hitch rides on dirty fingers, so remind your preteen to wash her hands often. It's one of the best ways to avoid wintertime bugs.
- Soothe dry, cracked skin. Have your preteen use lotion as needed.

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## Attendance Matters

# Why is it so important for your middle schooler to be in school?

Every day of school is important. But after winter break, missing days of school can be especially tough on your child. She should be in school every day unless she is ill.

Here's why:

- Once the year is half over, many teachers turn a serious eye to the end-of-year exams that are so important to school accreditation. The pace of instruction picks up. It becomes more difficult to catch up after missed days.
- In just a few weeks, if not before, teachers will also begin to review for the end-of-year exams. This review will go on at the same time as regular teaching.
- Your child may have more homework as a result of faster instruction and review. The more time she is out of school, the more it piles up. And she will be required to turn it all in.

Please continue to:

- Emphasize to your child the importance of daily attendance. Being on time is important, too!
- Accept no excuses except true illness for having your child miss school.
- Refrain from making plans for your child that would require her to miss school.

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## After School

# After-school activities benefit your preteen

Middle schoolers often have access to after-school programs either at school or in the community. Many such programs are academic. Others help your child do better in school in other ways. Regular attendance in such programs may be worthwhile.

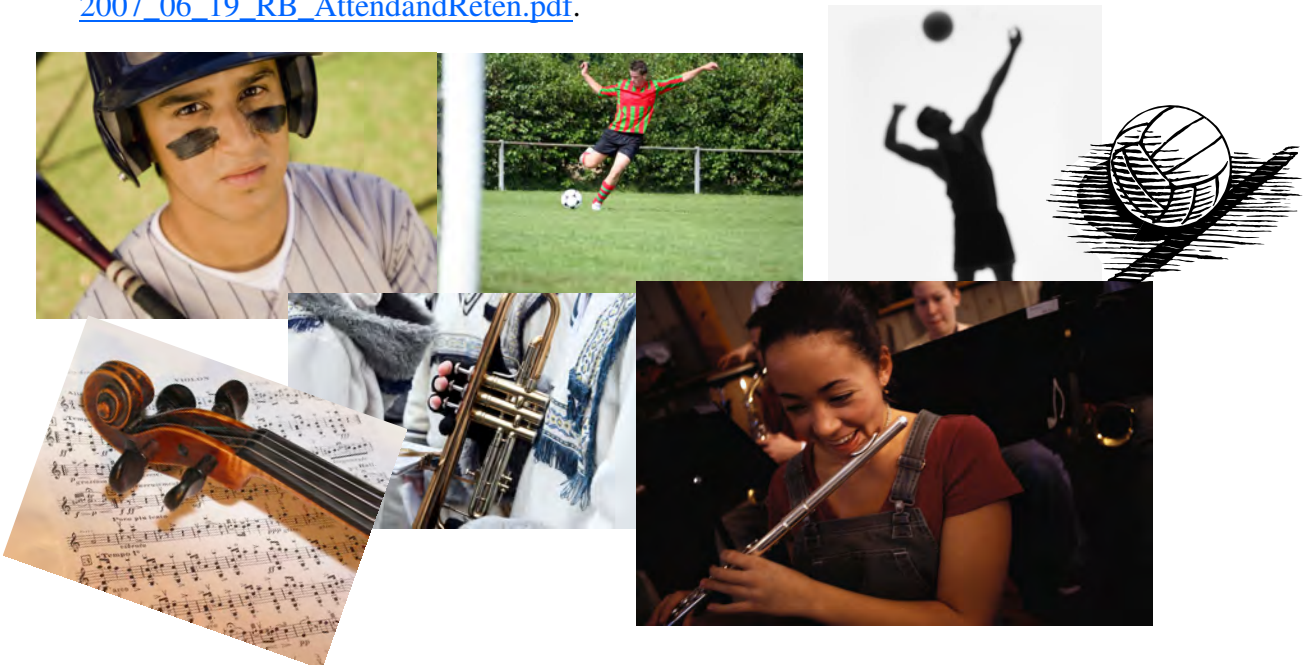
In fact, research shows that regular attendance in after-school programs promotes:

- Better social skills. This includes the ability to communicate and solve problems.
- Better performance in school. That includes higher grades and more completion of homework. Also seen: Not dropping out and more attachment to school.
- Healthier habits. That includes less cigarette and drug use.

To help your child get these benefits:

- Find safe transportation. Some after-school programs include bus transportation. If not, your child may be able to get home in a car pool or community bus.
- Consider home schedules. Of course your child has responsibilities at home. Try adjusting these perhaps twice a week so your child can attend a program.
- Enlist other adults. A program run by adults your child knows and trusts is ideal. But if not, find an adult leader he can respect.
- Look for a program that interests your child. At the least, ask him to give it a chance.

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# President's Day



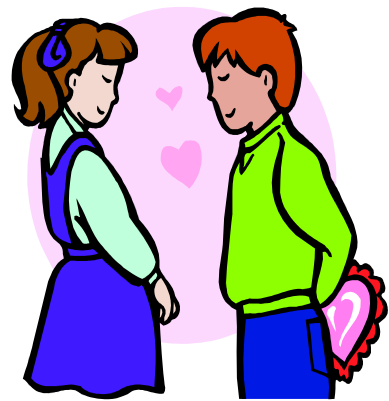
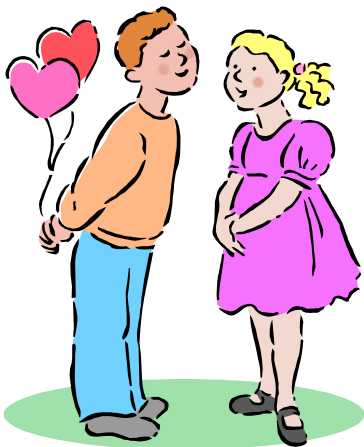
*Washington*



*Roosevelt*



*Jefferson*



## You Are Invited to a Sweetheart Banquet!



