

PARENTING REALLY MATTERS™

A RESOURCE FOR PARENTS
OF CHILDREN IN 4th, 5th, and 6th GRADES



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and the Port Angeles School District

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**Start every day as if it is
a totally different day
-a new and fresh beginning.**

Family Meetings

FAMILY MEETINGS
ARE A GREAT WAY TO
STAY CONNECTED, MAKE
PLANS, SOLVE PROBLEMS,
AND HAVE FUN. HERE ARE SOME TIPS:



1. SET A REGULAR TIME AND PLACE AND SERVE SNACKS.
2. PROVIDE GROUND RULES (NO PUT-DOWNS, NO INTERRUPTING).
3. HAVE A PURPOSE SUCH AS PLANNING AN ACTIVITY.
4. DISCUSS IDEAS AND TAKE NOTES SO ALL CAN REMEMBER WHAT WAS DECIDED.

THESE KINDS OF TIMES CAN ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO BE INVOLVED IN DECISION MAKING AND GUIDELINES FOR THE FAMILY. TRY A COUPLE AND SEE HOW IT WORKS.

Family Ties, May, 2007.

Improving Grades

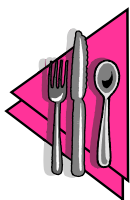
Parents have tried most things to try to motivate their child to get A's and B's in school - money, trips, punishment, no television and even no activities.

None work.

A better way is to set limits to make sure your child does homework and studies each day.

If no homework, he can always benefit from reading, reviewing or some other educational activity.

Sonna, L., *The Everything Tween Book*, Adams, MA, 2003.



GOOD MANNERS AT HOME

So many of life's lessons are learned at home.

Manners are one of them. Use each meal for everyone to share their day and talk about life's issues, but also to model and teach good manners.

Wyckoff, J. L., and Unell, B. C., *How to Discipline Your Six to Twelve Year Old Without Losing Your Mind*, Doubleday, NY 1991.

Keep Our Kids Safe

According to the National School Safety Center, bullying is "one of the most underrated but enduring problems in schools today." In fact, the results of a recent survey tell us that "as many as one in four kids" state they have been bullied recently in school.

What can you do? Work with the school through your PTA to initiate a peer mediation program, and contribute your efforts to establish workshops so that both students and teachers are trained in nonviolent conflict resolution. For additional information, contact the National Center for Assault Prevention at 609-582-7000 or the National School Safety Center at 805-373-9977.

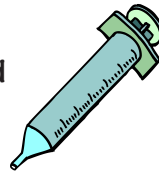


Newer Vaccination Recommended

"Children who are 11 and 12, students entering high school, and college freshmen headed for dorm life should be vaccinated" for meningitis according to federal health officials and the American Academy of Pediatrics. While not a huge number of students get meningitis, it kills about 1/5 of adolescents who do get it.

Ask your doctor about this issue.

Tanner, L., "New Meningitis Vaccination Recommended for Children," *The Seattle Times*, May 27, 2005



What Does He Do Well?

Talk with your child about what he is good at. Is he attentive to the dog, does he read books a lot, does he check in with his grandfather, is he a great can kicker, is he good with kids, does he do chores without being told, is he a great talker, is he polite, does he make friends easily? The strengths you see in him as a child are clues about his strengths in the future. The teacher, veterinarian, actor, therapist, or athlete of tomorrow is being built today.

In addition to the future, he needs to hear what he does well. It makes him feel better about himself but it also improves your relationship with him when you focus on the positives.



By the time your child is about 10, she understands quite a bit about abstract ideas. This is important for her to understand the concept of saving money. By this age, she understands multiplication which helps her grasp interest. Show her how her money can grow and encourage her to save a portion of money given to her for her birthday, holidays, and even her allowance. Let her open a savings account and praise her for what she is doing.

Money Magazine, December 2007.



think it's really important to stress to parents that they are the boss.

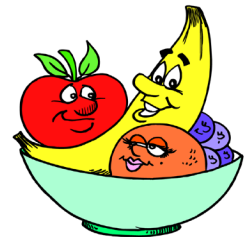
You want to be your children's friend, but you are not their friend; you are their parents.

Children love some structure and some real, honest, good rules."

-Dr. Charlotte Thompson, Pediatrician

Your Hungry Child

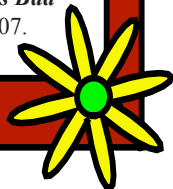
Chances are, when your child comes home from school, the first stop is the kitchen. Make sure you have food that is appealing but healthy. If nothing he sees is appealing, then out come the chips, candy, and sweets. Take him with you when you go to the store to see what kinds of food he is into this week; this is a changing scene. It is okay to let him know you won't buy junk food.



Preadolescence

As you see the signs of your child getting older, give some thought about what things your family likes to do for fun. All too frequently, we forget about having fun with our children. What does your family do?

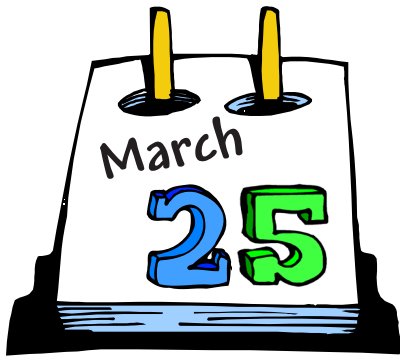
Trachtenberg, J., *Good Kids Bad Habits*, Collins, NY, 2007.



A New Way to Keep Up

There are pluses and minuses about the internet. Now, it also is one more way to keep up with your teen's attendance, grades on individual assignments, and even her debt with the cafeteria. Check it out. If you don't have a computer, the library or the tribe has access for you. You received a letter about this at the beginning of the year. Parents are raving about it. Contact your local school to get your password.





It's Time to Talk!

Parents: Want to help your child make the best choices possible about alcohol? Please attend the Town Hall Meeting Tuesday, March 25 at 6:30 p.m. at Stevens Middle School to talk about the problems of underage drinking in our local community. Parents, students, and interested citizens are invited. Sponsored by the Port Angeles Healthy Youth Coalition. Don't miss this important evening.

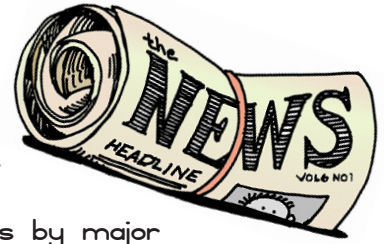
Are You Registered to

VOTE

Elections come regularly. For you to vote and make your wishes known, you need to be a registered voter. Pick up forms at a school, library, or city hall. You can even register online now. Set an example for your child.

Talk About a News Story

If you have a teen who is really into baseball, as either a player or a fan, don't miss the chance to talk about the use of steroids by major league players.



Find out what he thinks about it. What you are really talking about is drugs. Here is a chance to discuss a topic involving people he has heard of but doesn't know.

Sometimes, it is easier to talk about hot topics when they aren't too close to home.

On the other hand, as he grows older, steroids can become a problem for an adolescents who think they are a way to become really good at sports.

That's another reason to talk about steroids now.

Equality = Thoughtful Decisions

Parents frequently go out of their way to treat their children equally.

That probably isn't very fair.

Each child is different so giving each the same rules, privileges, presents, and praise isn't fair at all.

Fairness means making thoughtful decisions about each child's needs.

Sonna, L., *The Everything Tween Book*, Massachusetts, Adams, 2003.

PASS ON COMPLIMENTS

Let your child know that your neighbor commented on how polite he was each time he passed.

Let him know whenever someone says something nice about him.

We all need to look for ways to say positive things to our kids.

Then, he has to work on keeping his good reputation intact.



Why Talk About Alcohol Now? He's Just a Kid!

Most elementary age children do not drink alcohol. That's good, and why this is a perfect time to talk with your child about the problems connected to alcohol.

We know there is a link between early alcohol use and problems in adolescence and later life. Research also tells us that the problems for young drinkers are far greater than the problems for an adult drinker, and greatest

if drinking begins early.

Fortunately, you can have a very positive influence on whether your child will try alcohol or other drugs. When children learn about drugs at home, they are 50% less likely to use drugs according to a 2005 study released by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. The key is to talk to him before he becomes a teenager, when he is most likely to encounter drugs for

the first time. Lynn D'Antoni, an addiction counselor at Meninger's Adolescent Treatment Program.

5 Tips to Stop Pre-Adolescent Drug Use, www.northstarmentalfitness-blog.com/2007/01/post_5.html, www.psychiatrictimes.com/psychiatryNews/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=201803417&cid=BreakingNews



Sleep Issues

It isn't unusual for children of this age to begin to develop sleep problems. It certainly is an issue that parents need to deal with right away. Parents need to set bedtimes and also create the conditions your tween needs to get enough rest.

When your child doesn't get enough sleep you can usually tell. You are likely to see irritability, falling asleep during rides, napping after school, trouble in school, difficulty waking in the morning, tearfulness, hyperactivity, difficulty unwinding at bedtime, and sunken appearance in the eyes.

Remember that children between ten and thirteen years old need about 10 hours a night. Make sure that television is off way before bedtime and that phone calls don't keep coming in to disturb your child's sleep. Taking these simple steps will really help solve the problem.

Sonna, L., *The Everything Tween Book*, Adams, MA, 22003.



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If you have any questions about this newsletter call Karen Meyer at 457-1453 or email us at prm@parentingmatters.org. This newsletter is funded through Clallam County Health and Human Services' Washington State Incentive Grant.



You may be surprised to find your delightful 10-year-old change into a difficult, energetic, preadolescent. Be prepared.

Ames, L, Ilg, F, & Baker, S., *Your Ten-to-Fourteen-Year-Old*, Dell, NY, 1988.

Encourage a Healthy Self Image

There are several ways you can make your child feel good about who he is.

1. Accept his unique personality, even if it's not always what you expect.
2. Strive for balanced behavior. If he is active, structure some calm, quiet time in his day.
3. Support his interests, ideas, and activities, not what you think they should be.
4. Allow him to take reasonable risks within safe limits.
5. Always model responsible, appropriate behavior.

Remember, you are his first teacher.

Social & Emotional Development in Middle Childhood, www.brightfutures.org

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