

Home & School CONNECTION[®]

Working Together for School Success

January 2009

Middletown Public Schools



SHORT NOTES

Touch base

Parents often contact teachers when they're concerned about their children. But teachers want to hear from you when everything's going well, too. Send a quick note about something your child enjoyed (a field trip, a history unit). When communication becomes a habit, it will be easier to chat if a concern crops up.

Chore balloons

Motivate your youngster to help around the house by turning chore assignments into a game. Write tasks on balloons (vacuum, dust, mop). Then, set a timer for one minute while you bat the balloons around to each other. When the buzzer sounds, catch a balloon—and do that chore.

Snowman spelling

Improve your child's spelling with this "chilly" version of Hangman. First, use a pencil to draw a snowman on paper. Then, think of a word and write one blank per letter. Ask your youngster to guess the letters one by one. For each incorrect guess, erase one part of the snowman (head, hat, nose). Can she figure out your word before he "melts"?

Worth quoting

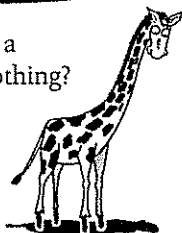
"It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice."

Anonymous

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What's as big as a giraffe but weighs nothing?

A: A giraffe's shadow.



Prevent bullying

Bullying is more than hitting or shoving—it's also using words to make threats, put other children down, or leave kids out. Help your youngster deal with different kinds of bullying with these suggestions.

Situation #1:

Your child complains that she isn't popular—the "in crowd" won't let her sit at their lunch table.

Although you can't make the students include your youngster, you can build her self-esteem and show her how to make friends with kids who will treat her nicely.

Encourage her to talk to friendly classmates and avoid those who are mean or exclude others. Help her gain confidence by finding friends who share her interests (music, pets) and inviting them over to play.

Situation #2:

A classmate has been making fun of your youngster and calling her names.

Bullies who tease may be hoping for a reaction. If they get one, they may tease even more.

The best response is to speak confidently and walk away. For instance, your child might say, "You shouldn't talk to people like that." Then, she should join a group of friends or approach an adult.

Note: Always listen to your youngster if she tells you she's being bullied. Assume she's



being honest, and assure her she is not tattling. Talk to her teacher and guidance counselor so they can help handle the situation.♥

Resolving to do your best

A new year is the perfect opportunity for your youngster to put his best foot forward. Share these ideas, and watch him shine:

- Be prepared. Your child should take completed homework and books to school, sharpen his pencils, and be ready to start working.
- Look over work carefully. Encourage him to double-check arithmetic and proofread for misspelled words and careless errors on classwork and quizzes.
- Attempt bonus or extra-credit questions on worksheets or tests. A few points here and there can really add up!
- Add flair to projects. Your youngster can put graphics, photographs, or drawings on a poster. Or he could insert a poem or a quote into a report.♥

