

# Home & School

## CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

Working Together for School Success

April 2020



### SHORT NOTES

#### Parents: Join the club!

It's never too late to get involved with the PTA or PTO at your youngster's school. You might sign up to help with a spring event, such as a car wash fundraiser or a teacher-student basketball game. You could also pitch in over the summer to help plan back-to-school activities for the fall.

#### Dealing with perfectionism

Some kids become frustrated if their work doesn't turn out "perfectly" on the first try. If this happens to your child, encourage him to think of his worksheet or drawing as a work in progress. He can go back and edit answers or tweak parts until he feels proud of his work.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Waiting lists for popular library books can be long, so now's a good time for your youngster to start thinking about summer reading. Let her list books she'd like to read. Then, visit the library or help her check its website to see if any of the books have waiting lists and add her name to them now.

#### Worth quoting

"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference." *Winston Churchill*

### JUST FOR FUN

**Q:** What goes up but never comes down?

**A:** Your age!



## A sprinkle of kindness

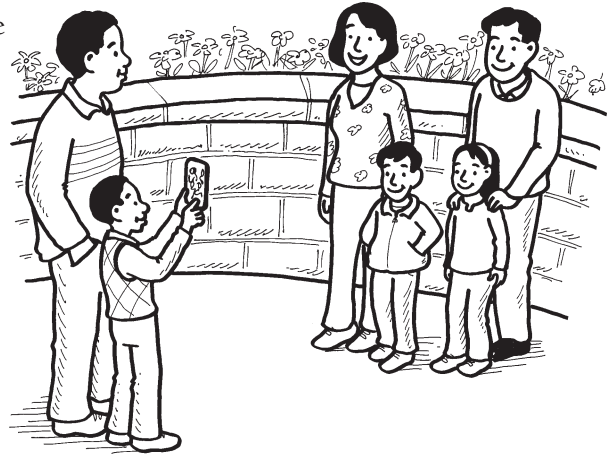
Kindness makes every place a better place, whether your child is in school, at home, or out and about. Inspire him to be kind with these ideas.

#### Be there for others

Is there a student in your youngster's class who seems lonely or an elderly neighbor who doesn't get out much? Suggest that your child seek out his classmate on the playground or in the cafeteria. Or you and your youngster could find out which board games the neighbor likes and invite him over to play one.

#### Pass it on

Teach your child about "paying it forward." When someone is kind to you (say, another driver pays your toll), tell your child about it. Then, ask him to think of ways to keep the kindness going by doing a kind act for another person. If the two of you notice people trying to



take their own photo, your youngster could offer to snap the picture.

#### Surprise with gifts

Giving handmade gifts to others "just because" is a sure way to brighten someone's day. Ask your child to come up with gifts he could make for someone else. He might create paper flowers for his aunt, design a bookmark for his brother, or write a poem for his grandpa. Then, help him follow through by delivering his gifts in person or mailing them.♥

## Seven ways to ask about school

Want to get your child to talk about her day at school? Try asking questions that encourage more than a yes-or-no answer. Here are seven to start with.

1. What do you think I would have liked best about school today?
2. How would you describe your day to a pet?
3. What's your favorite paper in your backpack, and why?
4. Who did you play or work with today, and what did you do together?
5. What was the easiest thing you did today? The hardest?
6. What healthy foods did you eat at lunch?
7. What new words did you hear or read, and what do they mean?♥



## Collect and learn

Whether your child has postcards on her bulletin board, a bucket of rocks on the patio, or a jar of sea-shells on her dresser, she's a collector! Encourage her to use her collection as a learning tool with these suggestions.

**Writing.** Let your youngster start a log to keep track of her collection. She can write a description of each item: "Uncle Phil sent me a postcard from his trip to St. Louis, Missouri. It has a picture of the Gateway Arch, the world's tallest arch."



her postcards. Or she might visit a geology website to identify rocks or read a children's encyclopedia to learn about sea animals with shells.♥

**Math and science.** Ask your child math questions about her collection. How many rocks does she have? How many more does she need before she has 10, 25, or 100? She could also classify the items, perhaps organizing sea-shells by color, texture, or size.

**Research.** Your youngster can learn more about the objects she collects by reading library books or kid-friendly websites. She could use an atlas to discover more about states or countries on

## Playing on my own

No friends or siblings around to play with? No problem! Playing alone teaches your youngster to entertain himself, solve problems independently, and use his imagination. Consider these tips for helping him make the most of solo play:

- Have your child put together a basket of toys that he can play with alone. Good options include play dough, building blocks, jigsaw puzzles, and single-player games like Simon or Rush Hour.



- Share solo activities you enjoyed at his age. You might teach your youngster to play Solitaire, do yo-yo tricks, or make paper airplanes.

- Provide props for imaginary play, such as old clothes and accessories for dressing up, or take-out menus and catalogs for playing restaurant or store. Your child will have to be creative to play multiple roles—maybe he'll use two different hats and pretend he's two construction workers deciding how to dig a tunnel.♥

## Staying safe online

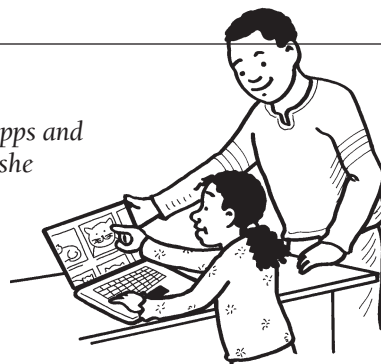
**Q:** My daughter loves to download new apps and play online games. How can I make sure she stays safe?

**A:** One of the best ways to keep your daughter safe online is to be involved in her activities.

If she wants to use a new app, explore it together first. Is there a setting that prevents strangers from contacting her? Are there ads, and if so, are they ones you're okay with her seeing?

Once you approve an app, have your child choose a username that doesn't reveal her name, location, or age. For instance, PizzaFan123 is safer than ChicagoKid2011. If she needs a profile picture, help her find a cute animal photo or another image she likes rather than her own picture.

Then, create a rule that she may only play with people she knows in real life. And finally, set screen time limits so your youngster has plenty of opportunities to play and talk with people in real life.♥



## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Poetry month

April brings showers—and poems! Your youngster can celebrate National Poetry Month with these activities that encourage him to write and read poems.

#### Shared poems

Participate in Poem in Your Pocket Day on April 30—or any day. Let your youngster look in books and online for poems he'd like to carry with him and share with others. He could copy poems onto

index cards or write his own. He might read them to friends on the school bus, in the cafeteria, or on the playground.

#### Sidewalk verses

Have your child use chalk to write his own poems on the sidewalk. He could draw inspiration from spring, perhaps describing buzzing bees, blooming flowers, or chirping birds. He can leave his poem there for others to enjoy—until the rain washes it away.♥



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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www.rfeonline.com  
ISSN 1540-5621