

# Home & School CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

Working Together for School Success

Holden Intermediate School  
Michael Abbott, Counselor

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## SHORT NOTES



### Web wonders

Would you like to expand your child's horizons? Visit NASA's "Astronomy Picture of the Day" (<http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>) or Goddard Space Center's "Earth Science Picture of the Day" (<http://epod.usra.edu/>). The gorgeous photos are guaranteed to spark a sense of wonder—and maybe a lifelong interest in science!

### Repeat after me

If your kids have trouble listening to you, teach them to repeat what you say. For example, if you ask them to stop playing and come to dinner, have them say "Okay" and restate what you've said: "Okay, I'll stop playing and come to the table."

### Win or lose

Most children like playing games—and they also like winning. If your youngster gets upset when she loses, remind her that she might win next time. If you lose, model good sportsmanship by congratulating your child. "Great game! Let's play again."

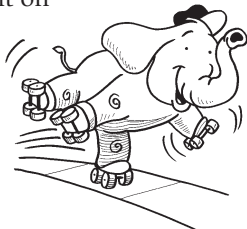
### Worth quoting

"Millions saw the apple fall, but Newton asked why." *Bernard Baruch*

## JUST FOR FUN

**Q:** What is gray, has 16 wheels, and takes up the whole sidewalk?

**A:** An elephant on roller skates!



## Summer brain boosters

Keeping kids' brains active during school breaks is important. But after a long school year, they also need to relax and recharge. Is there a way to do both? Yes!

Here are some suggestions for fun activities that will engage your children's brains.

### Read with your ears.

Listen to great books, like *Treasure Island* and *The Trumpet of the Swan*, on tape. Many libraries offer classic children's books on audiotape or CD. The stories will get your kids excited about reading and rev up their imaginations—and just might make those summer car trips seem too short!

**Drop a line.** Writing personal letters will keep your youngsters' communication skills sharp and help them stay connected to their favorite people during

### Bicycle safety

Thousands of children in the United States are injured every year while riding bicycles. If your kids will be riding this summer, be sure to share these basic safety tips with them:

- Make certain your bike is the right size and in good condition.
- Always wear a helmet that fits properly.
- Wear bright colors or reflectors so other people can see you.
- Ride only in the daytime.
- Avoid clothes or accessories that can get tangled in the bicycle chain (like baggy pants or book bags with long straps).

*Note:* Young children should always be accompanied by a responsible adult when riding a bike. ♥



the school break. *Tip:* If your family goes on vacation, remember to take stamps and an address list with you. Your kids can write and send postcards during your trip.

**Dabble in the arts.** Art helps develop creativity and exercises the spatial and mathematical parts of children's brains. Try visiting a museum or learning a new craft with your youngsters. And keep a supply of crayons, colored pencils, and scrap paper handy at home for doodling and drawing. ♥



# Humor me!

Struggling to get your child to follow household rules? Try a little humor. A lighthearted, playful approach can encourage your youngster to be more cooperative—and make everyone happier. Here are three ideas:

**1** Your child hasn't cleaned up his room. Rather than lecturing him, you pretend to answer your cell phone. Holding



the phone out to your youngster, you say, "It's your room calling. It complains it's suffocating!" Don't be surprised if your child giggles and goes to "rescue" his room.

**2** It's bedtime, but your youngster wants to stay up. You could order him to bed, but instead you tell him the Grumpy Fairy sprinkles children who miss their bedtime with "grumpy dust" that makes them tired and irritable the next morning. Your child may tell you you're silly, but he also might head to bed.

**3** Your youngster hasn't watered the plants. Instead of nagging him, you tape a sign to the flowerpots that says "Waiter! Where's the water we ordered?" You can both enjoy a chuckle while your child gets out the watering can. ♥



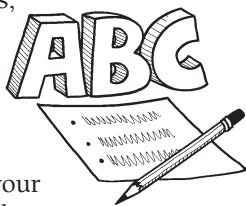
## Q & A Capital letters

**Q:** My child can recite the rules about when to capitalize but tends to forget them when she's actually writing. Is there any way I can help?

**A:** Start by writing the rules of capitalization on an index card. *Example:*

Always capitalize the following:

- the first word of every sentence
- all proper nouns, such as people's and pets' names, as well as the names of places (cities, states, countries, etc.)
- the pronoun "I"



Whenever your youngster finishes a writing assignment, suggest that she use the card to review her work, one sentence at a time. It may take her awhile at first, but she will get faster with practice. Your child should gradually be able to recognize on her own where capital letters are needed. ♥

## PARENT TO PARENT

### "Signs" of politeness

My neighbor's kids have such good manners. They almost always remember to say "please" and "thank you." We're good friends, so one day I asked my neighbor how she had taught them so well.

She laughed and told me that she took a sign language class when she was in high school. I was confused until she explained that she taught her children the American Sign Language hand signs for "please" (rub the palm of your right hand in a circle over your heart) and "thank you" (touch your right-hand fingertips to your lips, then drop your right hand into your open left hand).

When my friend's kids forget to say the right thing, she silently prompts them with sign language. I think I'm going to give her idea a try with my children. ♥



## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Balloon teamwork

Looking for a fun way to teach your youngster a little teamwork? Play this zany balloon game the next time his friends visit.

Get a bag of balloons (the bigger the better), inflate five or six for each person, and knot the ends. Pick one player, and challenge him to hold as many of the balloons as he possibly can. He can hold them in any way, as long as

the balloons don't touch the floor. *Examples:* under both arms, with the knots between his fingers, under his chin.



Next, have another player join the team. See how many balloons the two of them can hold up together. Then, add a third person. Keep going until you run out of people or balloons—which ever comes first!

*Hint:* Try having teammates form a large basket with their arms. ♥

## OUR PURPOSE

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

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