Working Together for School Success

Short Stops

Get going with breakfast

Eating breakfast will help your tween start the day ready to learn. Together, come up with quick and nutritious breakfasts to make at home. Or encourage her to eat a healthy meal in the cafeteria with friends. *Note*: If she receives school lunch at a reduced price or for free, her breakfast will be reduced cost or free, too.

Walk this way

Let your middle grader know it's important to keep his eyes on his surroundings as he walks. He'll avoid serious injury from falling, running into objects, or stepping into traffic. Explain that he shouldn't play electronic games, listen to music, or text while walking—including to and from the bus stop or school.

Conserve resources

Ask your youngster to help your family be more environmentally friendly. Have her research ways you can conserve resources (switch to low-energy light bulbs, recycle more items, take reusable bags when you shop). Then, try to adopt one of her ideas each month.

Worth quoting

"Every strike brings me closer to the next home run." *Babe Ruth*

Just for fun

- **Q:** Why did the boy put honey under his pillow?
- **A:** He wanted to have sweet dreams.



Tween discipline that works

Your middle schooler wants more freedom. You want to keep him safe and set age-appropriate limits. How do you balance his need for independence with the need for rules and consequences? Try these strategies.

Let's review

Go over the rules you have in place and get his input. He'll be happier to comply if he has a say in them. Perhaps he thinks he should be able to go to friends' houses on school nights, and you agree to that for one night a week. Explain your reasons, and be clear you have the final word. Also, lay out consequences so he knows what will happen if he breaks the rules.



Tweens tend to push the limits to see how serious parents are and may argue to get out of consequences. Stay calm and on point ("Nevertheless, we agreed you wouldn't eat in your bedroom"). Stick to the consequence you set (having him wash his bedding to get rid of food

stains). He'll see he can't slide by and will be more likely to follow the rules in the future.



The goal of discipline is to teach your child good judgment. He can learn a lot by reflecting on his actions. Say he breaks a rule, like heading to a social outing without finishing his homework first. Ask what he *thought* would happen. Maybe he didn't think you'd notice. What happened instead? He has to miss an event this weekend as a result. How could he avoid this situation next time? \in

Speak up!

Participating in class can help your tween get more value out of school and learn to express herself. Encourage her to contribute with these tips.

- Find your zone. Suggest that she participate in ways she feels comfortable with and then expand her "toolbox." She might start off commenting on assigned readings she enjoyed. Eventually, she may speak up when she agrees with someone's viewpoint or to offer a different one.
- Mix it up. Class-wide discussions aren't the only opportunity to participate. When your middle schooler works in smaller groups, she could ask and answer questions, make observations, or give opinions. These steps can build confidence for talking in front of the whole class. \in



Middle Years October 2018 • Page 2

Real-world reading

Nonfiction reading is a big part of everyday adult life—at work and home. To help your middle grader learn to pick out and analyze important information, encourage her to read more nonfiction texts now. Here are some easy ideas.

Follow a process

What: Recipes, game directions, how-to manuals

Why: These texts teach youngsters to navigate logical sequences of steps and identify key details.

How: Let your tween read and share directions as family members cook or play a game. Or have her read instructions



as you put together a bookcase or figure out how to operate a new phone or microwave.

Follow the facts

What: News articles. menus, travel guidebooks

Why: Your child will get familiar with the

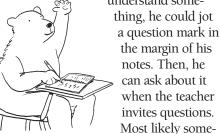
organization of expository text, which seeks to inform or educate readers.

How: Talk about news articles you read and what you learn, and inspire her to do the same. If you order carryout food, have her read menus and place the order. When you visit new places, ask her to scan guidebooks and share facts. She can play tour leader, suggesting sights and activities your family will enjoy. ₹\

Notable notes

Good notes can help your tween remember what was taught in class, create study guides, and review for tests. Share these steps for being an excellent note taker.

- 1. Prepare beforehand. Your child will have an easier time keeping up with the teacher if he has read the assigned handouts or chapters. Why? He'll be familiar with the material and vocabulary.
- 2. Learn each teacher's style. To emphasize crucial material, one teacher may use hand gestures, while another may write phrases on the board. Your middle grader should write that information down and star or circle it.
- 3. Ask questions. If your child doesn't understand some-



one else has the same question and will be glad he spoke up. 😜

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

Resources for Educators, a division of CCH Incorporated 128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630 800-394-5052 • rfecustomer@wolterskluwer.com www.rfeonline.com

ISSN 1540-5540

PURPOS O U R

let Jake spend time with kids I didn't know. I asked him to invite them over, and meeting them in person helped put me

It worried me to

at ease and gave me a

Get to know new friends

his first book rejected by 27 publishers before it was accepted.

her to stay with something when the going gets tough and to overcome problems

You can foster grit in your middle grader by explaining it and pointing out

library books about famous people who persevered. For instance, Dr. Seuss had

Setting up a family challenge can give everyone a chance to be "gritty." Have each person choose something they want to do that might be difficult but is pos-

examples, such as a coworker who learned to read as an adult. Or bring home

When my son was in elementary school, I

sible. The key? No one is allowed to quit! ξ^{α}

Learning to have grit

successful. What is it, and how can I teach

I've heard that kids need "grit" to be

A Grit involves perseverance, courage, and

goals until you see them through. Having pas-

sion will help your child to develop grit, enabling

resilience—basically sticking with tasks or

it to my 12-year-old?

along the way.

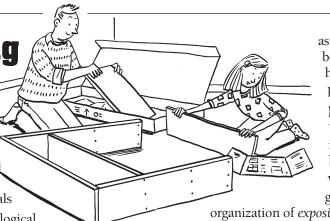
always knew his friends. Once he got to

middle school, he started hanging out with classmates I'd never heard of.

way to connect faces with names. I asked for their phone numbers and their parents' numbers as well. That way, I could contact them if they were with Jake and I couldn't reach him. Calling

> the parents to say hello opened the door in case we ever need to get in touch.

I'm still getting to know Jake's pals. But at least I'm feeling more relaxed about his new middle school social scene. 🖒



© 2018 Resources for Educators, a division of CCH Incorporated