

October 2022 News



Superintendent's News

Fall is certainly in the air! We have had a busy few weeks here with Homecoming week, Parent/Teacher Conferences and all of our fall activities and athletics in full swing! It was wonderful seeing the whole school getting into the Homecoming festivities and participating like they did! The amount of effort that goes into coordinating that week is immense, and I would like to thank the entire staff and community who was involved! This is another example of what makes our school a special place!

As many of you know, the beginning of school is also the time that the school works on setting the budget for the next year as well as setting the tax rate for funding the school operations. Under the leadership of the school board, we have been able to slightly decrease the tax rate percentage for our community. We feel very fortunate to have the community support that we do and will continue to be good stewards of the resources the community provides. Listed below are the tax rates we had last year and the rate that the school board approved at the School Board Meeting on September 12th.

2021 Tax Rate	2022 Tax Rate
1.014941	1.006263

October 13th is the end of the first quarter. I encourage all students to continue working hard and finish this quarter strong. If your student is experiencing any issues, please contact the teachers, Mrs. Pinnt our counselor, or Mr. Hagge the principal. We want to be on the front end of any issues that may be affecting our stu-

dents. These next seven weeks before Thanksgiving represent the largest stretch of uninterrupted school this fall. This is a great opportunity for learning, growth and exploration! I am excited to see what we can accomplish!

As our fall sports teams wind up their seasons, I encourage everyone to try and get out to support them. Playoffs are right around the corner and we wish our teams good luck! I hope everyone has a productive and enjoyable fall season this year! If you have any questions or concerns please contact me by email or phone.

Mr. Clear



- **Monday, October 24—
Celebrate Healthy Feet! Wear
Crazy Socks**
- **Tuesday, October 25—
Celebrate Healthy Heads!
Wear hats**
- **Wednesday, October 26—
Celebrate Healthy Bodies!
Wear Red**
- **Thursday, October 27—Be a
“Jean-us” Wear Jeans**

Principal's Playbook

By Mr. Hagge

Thank you to all of our parents/guardians that attended our parent/teacher conferences this past week. A strong partnership between teachers and parents positively impacts student achievement in many ways. We are very proud of the building upgrades completed over the summer months including: remodeled bathrooms, new classroom carpet, refurbished kitchen/cafeteria and upgrades to our elementary playground to meet our students' needs. Thank you to our district patrons and Board of Education for their commitment to providing our students and staff with a first-class facility to do important work that matters. The first quarter of the school year will end on Thursday, October 13th, I encourage all of our students to continue to apply their focus and energy to their academics, let's finish a good first quarter with strength and use it as a springboard to a great semester. I also want to thank the entire community for supporting our student body during Homecoming week. The student council chose "Defending the Nest" as their theme, with your help they did just that and more. With your continued support I believe we can carry this theme forward throughout the entire school year and soar to great heights.

With Much Hawk Pride,

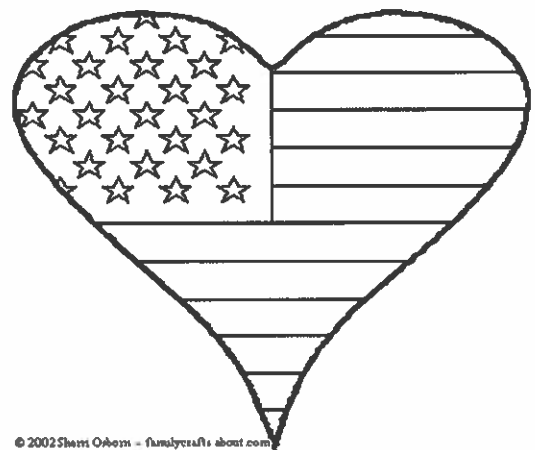
Mark J. Hagge
Hay Springs Principal



GO HAWKS!

Veterans Day

The Americanism Committee would like to invite all Veterans or families of veterans to submit a picture of themselves or a loved one they would like to honor. The pictures will be on display before the Veteran's Day program on November, 10th. If you have a scanned picture you may e-mail it to brad.bounous@hshawks.com or if you have a photo you would like to be scanned please feel free to stop by the office so someone can scan it for you. Please include the name and branch of service.



COUNSELING OFFICE NEWS

Planning for the Future!

On Sept. 13th the Junior and Senior classes attended a college fair at CSC. Students were able to visit with representatives from over 30 different colleges, as well as several military representatives! It was a great opportunity to see the different types of post-secondary options that are available.

On Sept. 14th senior parents gathered to learn about the exciting world of financial aid! We watched a webinar presented by EducationQuest, then spent some time discussing how the information related to our senior students.

On Sept. 21st the senior class participated in Apply2College Day, hosted by Mrs. Beguin! All students completed at least one college application, and many students completed 3 or more! Applying to a college opens the communication between the student and the college, so that the college can learn about the student and decide what types of financial aid they can offer the student.

What should students do after they have applied to college?

- Students should check their emails OFTEN for college correspondence. Students will need to remember their usernames and passwords for each college that they have applied to. Each college will have a 'portal', such as myRED, myCSC, etc, where students can log in to find their list of tasks to be completed. Once families have completed the FAFSA application, schools will let students know what types of financial aid packages that they can offer.
- Seniors should focus on perfecting their personal statements and resumes. It is also important to find at least 3-4 people who can write a positive letter of recommendation (teachers, administrators, bosses, church leaders, volunteer/club sponsors, community members, etc).
- The next major step is to pay attention to scholarship deadlines. Students may receive federal grants (thanks to the FAFSA) and college-specific scholarships based on where they have applied. To cover the rest of the cost of attending college, students should apply for as many scholarships as possible. Many scholarships can be found under the Scholarship link or under the Counselor link on the Hawks homepage.

Important Dates

Oct.1 - The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) opens! All students who are thinking about going to college should fill out the FAFSA. The student and one parent will both need to create an FSA ID before starting the application. Even if families feel that their income is too high to qualify for grants, FAFSA completion is still required to qualify for federal student loans. Also, some colleges require students to file a FAFSA application, even for non-need based scholarships. The application can be found at studentaid.gov.

Oct.2 - UNK Loper Life Roadshow at Gallery 3 in Alliance from 4-6 (students can attend with their families).

Oct.11 - A representative from UNL will be in the counseling office at 11:30.

Oct.11 - A representative from John Deere/21st Century Equipment will be in the counseling office at 2:00.

Oct.12 - Juniors have the option of taking the PSAT/NMSQT. The PSAT is required to enter the competition for the National Merit Scholarship (\$2500) which is given out during the senior year. The test will be given during school hours. If students are interested, they should let Mrs. Pinnt or Mrs. Marx know as soon as possible.

Oct.18 - Juniors and Seniors will spend the morning touring the CSC campus.

Oct.22 - ACT test date

Oct.26 - Andrew Hunzeker from EducationQuest will be holding Zoom appointments in the counseling office for those families who would like assistance with filling out the FAFSA. You can schedule an appointment with EducationQuest at any time, but if you would feel more comfortable doing a Zoom meeting at the school, just let them know that you want an appointment with Andrew on Oct.26th (see the flier for details).

Nov.4 - Registration for the Dec.10 ACT

EducationQuest

educationquest.org

Kearney Office (Call for appointments) - 308-234-6310 or 800-666-3721

Please visit the [Counselor Link at hshawks.com](http://hshawks.com) for more information from the Counseling Office, and please feel free to call me (Mrs. Pinnt) at any time. I am happy to help with any ques-

Remind Information

Remind is an easy way to receive notifications regarding important information right on your phone. Hay Springs Schools has two main groups of remind, Hawk Parent/Student Notices and Hawk Activity Time Changes. Hawk Parent/Student Notices notifies you of information that is geared at the entire school (e.g. late starts, snow days) and Hawk Activity Time Changes is geared at athletic parents and students (e.g. event time changes or cancellations). Please make sure to sign up for one or the other, or both so you don't miss important information!!



DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Monday, October 10th—Oct. 13th-Fire Safety Prevention Week**
- **Tuesday, October 11th—Elementary Fire Hall field trip**
- **Wednesday, October 12th—Soprano/Alto Day @ CSC**
- **Wednesday, October 12th—PSAT Test**
- **Thursday, October 13th—Senior Parent's Night (VB before game, FB @ half-time)**
- **Thursday, October 13th—PINK OUT for Volleyball and Football games**
- **Saturday, October 15th—HS VB PANCO @ Edgemont**
- **Tuesday, October 18th—CSC College Tour (Juniors/Seniors)**
- **Wednesday, October 19th—Chuck Elley Presentation (6-12th grade)**
- **Thursday, October 20th—WCHR Flu and Covid vaccines**
- **Monday, October 24th—October 28th—Red Ribbon Week**
- **Tuesday, October 25th—KG-3rd Fall Concert**

Senior Parent's Night & PINK OUT

October 13th during Volleyball and Football games!



Watch the Announcements and Website to stay up to date on any changes!

Cross Country Preview

By Coach Marcy

Cross country has had a great start to the season. We have two high school boys out, Parker Wellnitz and Mason Albrecht, and three jr high runners, Aubry Anderson, Grant Wellnitz, and Charlie Mehling. These athletes have shown up and worked hard at practice and have been able to compete well at meets. I am excited to see how they improve throughout the season.

So far we have attended three meets. We have seen quite a few personal records also this season which is a great sign that the kids' hard work is paying off! I am excited to see how the rest of the season goes.



High School Volleyball Preview

By Coach Merritt

The Lady Hawks volleyball team is off to a strong start this season currently sitting at 11-4 with a runner-up finish at the Gordon-Rushville tournament and a Championship at the Hemingford Invite. This year's squad is 15 ladies strong including 6 seniors, 4 juniors, 2 sophomores and 3 freshmen. Assistant Coach Krystyn Turman and myself are especially proud of this team and the accomplishments they have so far this season. This squad is very motivated and are looking to finish out the second half of the season with a bang. The Lady Hawks have some upcoming home games after being on the road for most of the first half games, so come out to Lister-Sage and cheer for the ladies. They always appreciate the crowd and student section support.



**A big
thank
you**
for all your
support.

Music

By Mrs. Varvel



Exciting things are happening in the music room! 5th grade beginning band & 4th grade recorders are up and running! The students always show such excitement and passion when beginning these instruments! Hopefully families are hearing them practice at home as this is the only way to get better!

6th, 7th & 8th grade music students have also hit the ground running! These students have weekly playing tests that are posted in classdojo so families can see their progress and have a window into what we are doing in the music room!

Kindergarten & 1st grade classes will be doing a fall musical called Ten Little Ladybugs. The 2nd & 3rd grade classes will be doing a musical called Bunnies. Plan to join us for these fun productions on Tuesday, October 25th at 6:30pm in the auditorium.

Upcoming Concerts:

Tuesday, October 25th 6:30 pm K-3rd grade Fall Concert
 Wednesday, October 12th Soprano/Alto Day Chadron State College
 Tuesday, November 1st PANCO Honor Choir Chadron State College
 Friday, December 16th 7/8 & High School Band & Choir The Night, the Lights & Music
 Thursday, March 9th Elders Wisdom 2nd & 3rd Grade students
 Monday, March 27th PANCO Contest-High School Hemingford
 Tuesday, April 4th 6, 7/8 Spring Concert
 Tuesday, April 18th Pre Contest Concert High School Students
 Wednesday, April 19th District Music Contest Alliance
 Tuesday, May 2nd 7pm 4th & 5th Grade Spring Musical

SPEECH MINUTES

By Mrs. Varvel

The Hawk Speech team has begun having weekly lunch meetings where we discuss the requirements for the different individual events. We had our first meeting at lunch on Tuesday, September 27th. The meeting schedule is as follows:
 Tuesday, October 4th Serious Prose
 Tuesday, October 11th Informative speaking
 Tuesday, October 18th Poetry
 Tuesday, October 25th Persuasive speaking
 Tuesday, November 8th Entertainment speaking
 Tuesday, November 15th Humorous prose
 Tuesday, November 22nd Extemp
 Tuesday, November 29th Program of Oral Interp (POI)

Here is our planned team practices & worktimes:
 Friday, December 2nd 1pm-4pm Worktime
 Friday, December 9th 1pm-4pm Worktime
 Friday, December 16th 1pm-4pm Worktime
 Thursday, December 22nd 1pm-4pm Worktime
 Thursday, December 29th 1pm-4pm Worktime
 Friday, January 6th 1pm-4pm Practice time
 Friday, January 13th 1pm-4pm Practice time
 Friday, January 20th 1pm-4pm Practice time
 Friday, January 27th 1pm-4pm Practice time
 Practices continue on Fridays from 1pm-4pm through the beginning of March.

Here is our tentative meet schedule:

January 21st Alliance Speech Meet
 January 28th Gordon/Rush Speech Meet
 February 24th Gering Speech Meet
 February 25th Hemingford Speech Meet-
Conference Speech:
 TBA Family speech night
 Feb. 27th-March 4th District Speech
 March 17th State Speech-Kearney High



FFA Happenings

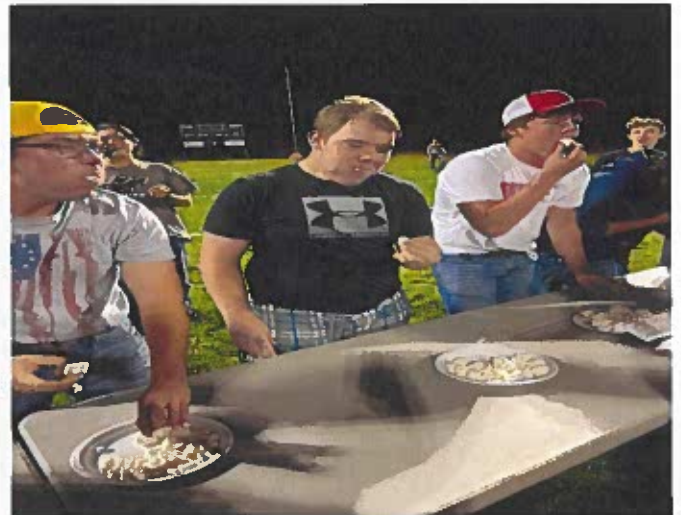
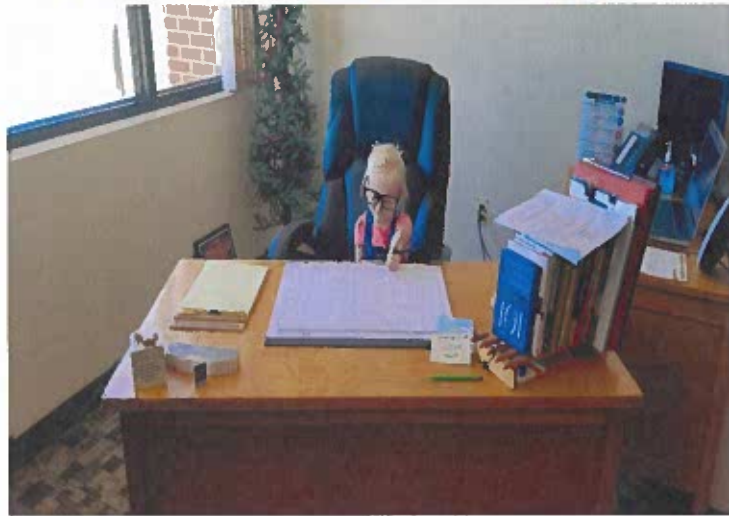
It has been a busy fall already for the members of the Hay Springs FFA Chapter. Several students helped with the fly-in breakfast and kids games over friendly festival weekend in August. September has been busy as well with Area Range Judging on the 14th and EDGE Conference on the 20th, both of which were in Scottsbluff. The 29th of September, five students competed at Chadron at State Range Judging. The month of October is a slower month with no National Convention trip this year. Towards the end of it students will start practicing in the morning for and some in the afternoon for District Leadership Development Events in Chadron on the 16th of November. The chapter looks forward toward another great year learning, growing, and participating in all the conferences and competitions that they attend during these fall months.

4th Grade Bird Banding

4th graders attended the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies presentation on bird banding. While we were there we saw the nets the birds fly into, banding of the birds, weighting of the birds and we got to hold a felt bird that was a model of a real bird. They also got to use binoculars and bird books to identify birds and play a bird survival game. We found out that only around 30% of birds that migrate make it to their destination.



That's a Wrap! Homecoming 2022



VIRTUAL FAFSA

COMPLETION DAY

FOR STUDENTS FROM HAY SPRINGS

EducationQuest Foundation, a free non-profit organization is available to help you complete and file your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

DATE: Oct. 26th 2022

An appointment is needed and call be scheduled by calling EducationQuest at 308-234-6310.

**** You MUST create a studentaid account (username/password) PRIOR to your appointment! Apply at www.studentaid.gov. ONE parent AND the student will each need to create a studentaid account (username/password).**

ITEMS TO BRING TO YOUR APPOINTMENT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- 2021 Parent & student federal tax returns **AND W-2's**
- K-1 Form 1065 (if you have a business partnership)
- StudentAid account (usernames & passwords) for both student **and** parent
- Current value of checking & savings accounts and investment values
- Current value of business or investment farm
- 2021 amount of untaxed income: child support, workers' compensation
- Student driver's license number
- Social Security numbers for parents and student
- Alien Registration Number of eligible non-citizens
- Parents and Student birth dates
- Parents and student e-mail addresses
- Parent's date of marriage/remarriage, separation, divorce, or widow
- 2021 Veteran's non-education benefits
- 2021 housing/food/living allowance for military and clergy



**Western Community
Health Resources**

COVID and FLU shots

Oct 20th, '22 7:00-9:30am Lister Sage

***WCHR will provide COVID and FLU shots for Students, faculty,
and Community on the 20th of October in the Lister Sage
Building form 7am to 9:30am. Contact the School office for more
information.***

**SPONSORED BY
Western Community Health Resources**

Hay Springs Public School Activities

October Activities

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
25	26	27	28	29	30	1 9:00am Volleyball: G/JH @Hemingford High School
2	3	4 General Elementary School Pictures 4:00pm Volleyball: G/JH @Hay Springs High School Main Gym	5 General ML/HS School Pictures	6 8:00am Drama Theatre Day 3:00pm Cross Country: G/JH @Sidney High School 3:00pm Cross Country: B/V @Sidney High School 4:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Hay Springs High School	7 2:00pm Football: JH @Crawford High School 2:00pm Volleyball: G/JH @Crawford High School 4:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Crawford High School 4:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Crawford High School 7:00pm Football: V @Crawford High School	8
9	10 General Fire Safety Prevention Week 4:00pm Volleyball: G/JH @Hemingford High School	11 8:15am General @Cafeteria Elementary Field Trip to Fire Hall 4:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Morrill High School	12 FFA Area Land Judging - Chadron General Highschool PSAT Test - Juniors Music Soprano/Aalto Day @ CSC	13 Football SENIOR PARENTS NIGHT AND PINK OUT 2:00pm Football: JH @Hay Springs High School 2:00pm Volleyball: G/JH @Hay Springs High School Main Gym 4:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Hay Springs High School 4:00pm Volleyball: G/JV @Hay Springs High School 7:00pm Football: V @Hay Springs High School Hay Springs Hawks	14	15 9:00am Volleyball: G/V @Edgemont High School
16	17	18 General Activity CSC College Tour - Junior and Seniors 4:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Hay Springs High School 4:00pm Volleyball: G/JV @Hay Springs High School	19 FFA State Land Judging - Scottsbluff 1:00pm General Activity Chuck Eby Presentation 6-12 grades	20 7:30am - 9:00am General WCHR Flu and Covid Vaccines 5:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Crawford High School Junior Varsity ONLY 5:00pm Volleyball: G/JV @Crawford High School	21 10:00am Football: JH @Cody-Kilgore High School 11:00am Volleyball: G/JH @Cody-Kilgore High School 1:00pm Football: V @Cody-Kilgore High School 3:00pm Volleyball: G/V @Cody-Kilgore High School 3:00pm Volleyball: G/JV @Cody-Kilgore High School	22
23	24 General Red Ribbon Week 1:00pm General Trooper Flick Presentation - Elementary	25 6:30pm Music K-3 Fall Concert	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

OCTOBER 2022



Hay Springs School Cafeteria
 Breakfast is always served with choice of Fruit, Yogurt, and Granola.
 Lunch salad bar is always served with salad, 2 fruits and 3 other items which change daily.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Menus are subject to change.						1
2	3 cereal, fruit, yogurt Breaded Beef Patty, mashed Potatoes, green Beans, Gravy	4 Variety Muffins, fruit, yogurt. Chicken Fajitas, Black Beans, corn	5 Breakfast Burritos, fruit Yogurt, Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Baked Beans	6 Biscuits and Sausage Gravy, Sloppy Joes, French fries	7	8
9	10 Pancake on a stick, fruit yogurt. Chicken Nuggets, Sweet Potato Fries	11 Breakfast Pizza Fruit, Yogurt. Walking Tacos, black Beans	12 Biscuits and Gravy, Fruit,yogurt Spagetti and noodles, breadsticks	13 cinnamon rolls,, yogurt, fruit, Burgers, french fries,Baked beans	14	15
16	17 french toast sticks, Fruit, Yogurt Grilled ham and Cheese, Tomato Soup	18 Biscuits and Gravy, Fruit, Yogurt. Beef Fajits, black beans, corn	19 English Muffins, sausage patty Cheese Hot Dogs, French Fries	20 Vareity Muffins. Fruit Yogurt sliced pork, scalloped potatoes, corn, roll	21	22
23	24 Breakfast Pizza, fruit yogurt Chili and cinnamon roll	25 scrambled eggs, sausage patty, toast Chicken enchilada bake, corn	26 Cereal, Toast, fruit, Yogurt Chicken Breast fillet sandwich, fries, green beans	30 cinnamon rolls,, yogurt, fruit, Burgers, chips,Baked beans	28	29
30	31	NOTES: Choice of 1% White Milk, 1% Chocolate or Skim Strawberry Milk served daily. Alternate Lunch choices are Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich(Mon, Tue, Wed) and Yogurt (Thursday). choice of Chef Salad is available Daily. Menu subject to change without notice.				

Elementary School Parents

Hay Springs Public Schools

make the difference!



A peaceful home environment promotes a sense of well-being

Today's students are facing high levels of stress and anxiety, as the aftermath of the pandemic continues to affect children's mental health.

Here are some simple things you can do at home to support your child's mental and emotional health:

- **Remember the big three:** good nutrition, adequate sleep and exercise. These are the keys to overall wellness.
- **Encourage laughter.** Laughter should be a part of each day. Have everyone share favorite funny shows, movies, jokes and stories.
- **Share good things.** Every day, have each family member report one good thing that happened. Try to do this during a family meal and

write down the responses in a family gratitude journal.

- **Share stress-relief strategies.** Teach your child to take deep breaths, go for a walk or turn on some relaxing music when feeling anxious or stressed.
- **Stay organized.** An organized, clutter-free home creates a more peaceful environment for everyone. It also teaches your child how to take care of belongings.
- **Stay connected.** Listen when your child shares concerns, and offer reassurance. If you become worried about your child, make an appointment with the pediatrician.

Source: R. Chatterjee, "Kids are back in school—and struggling with mental health issues," National Public Radio.

A good night's sleep is crucial for learning



When children don't get enough sleep, it's hard for them to learn in school. That's because sleep

affects a child's ability to:

- **Plan and organize.**
- **Solve problems.**
- **Control mood and behavior.**
- **Focus and pay attention.**
- **Retain information.**

To help your child get the recommended nine to 12 hours of sleep each night:

- **Stick to a schedule.** Enforce a regular bedtime and wake time. Establish times for meals, schoolwork and recreation.
- **Encourage physical activity.** Exercise and fresh air help children sleep better.
- **Set a technology curfew.** Kids should avoid bright screens for one hour before bedtime.
- **Follow a bedtime routine.** Your child could take a bath, enjoy a story and talk about the day. Then, it's lights out.
- **Make your child feel safe.** Put a night light in the room and say you'll peek in periodically.

Source: "Healthy Sleep Habits: How Many Hours Does Your Child Need?" American Academy of Pediatrics.

Talk to your child about the importance of showing respect



Respectful behavior is just as important at school as it is at home. To contribute to a respectful learning environment, students should:

- **Address the teacher by name.** Encourage your child to smile, look the teacher in the eye and say, "Good morning, Mrs. Jones."
- **Be courteous.** Your child should say *please*, *thank you* and *excuse me* to teachers and classmates.
- **Do what's expected.** Everyone in school has a job to do. If the teacher doesn't plan lessons, no one can learn anything. If students don't do their jobs—assignments, listening to the teacher—it makes it harder for everyone to learn.
- **Raise their hands.** Imagine having 30 students in a class, each of whom

wants attention right now. When students wait for the teacher to call on them, they demonstrate self-control and respect for others.

- **Participate in class discussions** on a regular basis.
- **Accept feedback** from the teacher. Teachers want students to learn. That means they have to point out mistakes and areas where students can improve. Your child will be more successful in school by learning to accept constructive feedback in a positive way.

"Respect is one of the most important things you can teach a child."

—Catherine Pulsifer

Are you teaching your child to bounce back?



Some parents want to wrap their children in a protective bubble so they never have to experience failure. Others know that

overcoming disappointments can teach valuable lessons.

Are you helping your child learn from setbacks? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

___ 1. Do you give your child a chance to solve problems rather than jumping in to help right away?

___ 2. Do you encourage your child to think about what to do differently the next time?

___ 3. Are you a good role model? When you fail at something or make a mistake, do you talk about it and about how to fix it?

___ 4. Do you help your child keep disappointments in perspective? "You didn't ace your test, but you earned a higher grade than last time!"

___ 5. Do you show your child how to be a humble winner and a gracious loser?

How well are you doing?

If most of your answers are *yes*, you are helping your child learn resilience. For each *no*, try that idea in the quiz.

Brainstorming is the solution for your child's writer's block!



Some kids don't like to write because they think it's boring. Others find it too challenging. They get frustrated trying

to think of ideas.

You can't force a child to *love* writing. But you can turn a reluctant writer around with brainstorming.

Brainstorming is fun and boosts creativity. It reduces stress and can help your child break through writer's block.

Brainstorming also teaches other skills that help with writing. By creating lists, for example, your child learns to break down complex ideas into smaller components.

The next time your child can't think of what to write about:

- **Make lists.** Here are a few topics to get started: *Things I love. My favorite animals, places, toys or food. Things I know a lot about. Scary characters. Things adults say.*
- **Imagine.** Ask your child some questions that will spark new ways to think about people, events and scenes. "What would it feel like to be a car, a house or a dog? What would life be like if you had four hands?"
- **Use visual images.** Have your child look at a picture and write down what it brings to mind. Or, find something in your house and ask what it makes your child think of.
- **Add action to ideas.** What will happen next? How quickly will it happen?

Elementary School
Parents
make the difference!

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Everyday tasks can strengthen your child's math skills



Most people read and do math every day—although their children may not realize it. Show that math is an essential part of life by involving your child when you:

- **Follow recipes.** When preparing meals, let your child help with weighing and measuring. Discuss sizes, shapes and fractions. Ask questions such as, “How could we double this recipe?” and “When we add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, what do we get?”
- **Go shopping.** Help your child use a calculator to keep a running tally of purchases. Use coupons to inspire math problems. “If we use this coupon, will the item cost less than other brands?” “Which of these items is really the best deal per pound?”
- **Save money.** Ask your child to choose a goal, such as saving for a toy. How much does your child need to save each week? How long will it take to reach the total? Track progress on a chart. Then have fun shopping together!
- **Take a trip.** Before leaving, measure the air pressure in your car or bike tires. Calculate how many miles you'll go. If you are driving, how much gas will you use? As you travel, say a number between 1 and 10. Who can find a license plate with numbers that add up to the number you called out?
- **Start a family project.** Planning to paint a bedroom? Involve your child in figuring out how much paint you will need to do the job.
- **Play games.** There are lots of fun math games you can play together. Try dominoes, Uno and Connect 4.

Here's how to make the most of your parent-teacher conference



Preparation is the key to a successful parent-teacher conference. Here's how to get the most benefit from your meeting:

Before the conference:

- **Make a list** of things you'd like to tell the teacher, such as your child's favorite subjects and activities, difficulties in school, medical needs and any sensitive issues.
- **Make a list** of things to ask the teacher about, such as your child's work habits, attitude, behavior, strengths and weaknesses.
- **Let your child know** you are having a conference. Ask if there's anything you and the teacher should discuss.

During the conference:

- **Be on time.** Teachers have many conferences, and a five-minute delay can throw off the schedule.
- **Listen carefully** and take notes about your child's progress.
- **Be positive.** Remember: You and your child's teacher both want what's best for your child.
- **Make a plan** with the teacher to address any concerns and schedule a time to follow up.

After the conference:

- **Let your child know** how the conference went.
- **Start with positive comments.** Then, talk about any suggestions the teacher made—and how you plan to help your child carry these out.

Q: My first grader is very shy and has a difficult time making friends. I'm worried that this will negatively affect my child in school. What can I do?

Questions & Answers

A: Some children have lots of self-confidence and others do not. While you can't change your child's personality, you can foster more confidence when speaking and working with others.

To strengthen social skills:

- **Role-play together.** Shy children don't always know what to say to another child. Say, “Let's pretend you're at recess. Juan and Megan are playing a fun game that you'd like to join. What could you say?” At first, you might have your child pretend to be one of the other children. You can pretend to be your child. But then change roles.
- **Read books about friends.** Talk about what good friends do—and don't do. Thinking about what makes a good friend may help your child identify someone in class who could be a friend.
- **Schedule a playdate** with a classmate. Some children feel more comfortable with just one other person than they do in a crowd.
- **Focus on your child's strengths.** Use these as a way for your student to meet other children with like interests. Does your child like art? Try an art class at a community center. Is your child athletic? Consider signing up for a youth sports team.
When children practice the skills that they enjoy, they develop self-confidence—which can also help them make friends!

It Matters: Reading

Reading aloud strengthens reading skills



Your child may know how to read independently, but reading aloud is still beneficial. When you read aloud,

you introduce ideas, concepts and vocabulary your child might not get otherwise. Each time you read together, you also add to your child's storehouse of knowledge—which helps with comprehension.

As you read aloud, focus on:

- **Vocabulary.** Define the words your child doesn't know. Together, think of words that have a similar or opposite meaning.
 - From time to time, see if your child can figure out the meaning of an unknown word by how it's used in a sentence. Give examples of how the word might be used in other contexts. For example, note how the word *sign* can be a noun (Look at the stop *sign*) or a verb (Please *sign* your name here).
- **Listening and thinking skills.** After you've read a passage, have your child summarize it. Ask specific questions—What did the main character do? Where did he do it? How did it make his friends feel?
- **Memory.** Don't just start reading where you left off in a book the night before. First ask your child to recall what was happening in the story when you stopped.
- **Word recognition.** Stop reading periodically. Ask your child to read a sentence or two to you. Help your child sound out new words and read the sentences again.

Help your elementary schooler discover the joy of reading

Some children seem to have their noses constantly in a book. But others haven't discovered the joy of reading yet. To encourage reading:

- **Ask your librarian** to recommend high-interest books. There are books that appeal to almost every child. Kids who enjoy adventure may find that they love the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series. Those who like to laugh may enjoy the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series.
- **Keep track** of how many books your child reads. Paste a sticker on a chart for each book. Or, have your child make a paper chain—one link for each book. Can your child make a chain long enough to stretch around a room?
- **Have a fact scavenger hunt.** Make a list of questions that require your child to use different reference materials at the library (without going online). What is the



batting average of a famous baseball player? What is the average temperature at Disney World?

- **Suggest audiobooks.** There are wonderful recordings of favorite books—many may be available for free from your public library. Some-times just hearing the words in a book can encourage a child to go back and read it later.

Make sure your child is on the road to reading success



Ask any educator to name the single most important thing parents can do at home to help children learn and do well in school and they will likely say, "Encourage your child to read!"

To make reading a priority:

- **Create a reading nook.** A cozy reading spot can make reading more appealing.
- **Take advantage of the library.** Each week, browse and let your child check out new books.
- **Start a family book club.** Set aside one night each week to talk about something you've all read. Better yet, do it during dinner—you'll get the benefit of one another's company and a good discussion.
- **Let your child see you reading.** Kids who see their parents read are more likely to want to read themselves.
- **Talk with the teacher.** Ask about your child's reading progress and strategies you can use at home to strengthen reading skills.