

# APPLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL

## Wildcat News



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### FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Nov. 20 School Committee Meeting, 5pm
- Nov. 22-24 Thanksgiving Break
- Nov. 29 Makeup Fall photos and group photos
- Dec. 1 No school, 1<sup>st</sup> trimester ends
- Dec. 1 Basketball @ Vinalhaven
- Dec. 2 Benefit Supper 5-7pm at AVS
- Dec. 4 Basketball @ Searsport
- Dec. 5 Wildcat Ambassadors Meeting, 5:30-6:30
- Dec. 6 Basketball photos, 1:40
- Dec. 7 Basketball photos, snow day
- Dec. 8 Progress Reports go home
- Dec. 9 Holiday Craft Fair, 9-2

**PLEASE NOTE:**

No students are to be dropped off before 8:10, unless prior arrangements have been made.

### The Great Turkey Trot Returns!

Mark Your Calendar: Tuesday, November 21, 2023

Race Schedule:

- 2:00 PM: Grades 1-4
- 2:15 PM: Pre-K & K run from soccer goal to soccer goal (with a "special guest")
- 2:25 PM: Grades 5-8

For Students:

Ensure you're dressed appropriately for the weather and ground conditions. If it's wet, please wear boots! Come prepared!

For Families:

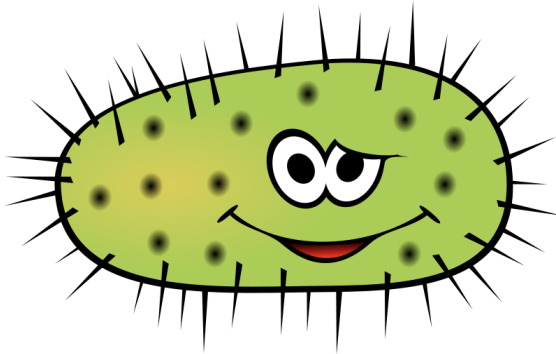
We encourage you to join us and cheer for all the participants. Your support will make this day even more memorable!



## Health

### Helpful Tips for Staying Healthy:

1. Frequent hand washing is the BEST way to prevent and combat the spread of germs! Wash hands often with soap and water or hand sanitizer (if soap and water is not available).
2. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use an elbow or arm if no tissue is available.
3. Do not share drinks, food, or unwashed utensils.
4. Get plenty of rest, eat healthy foods, and drink lots of water and healthy drinks.
5. Avoid people that are sick and stay home when you are sick.
6. Disinfect surfaces that are prone to germs.



## Benefit Supper

We will be having a benefit supper for our AVS staff member, Missy Darling, who's been diagnosed with cancer. The supper will be December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5-7pm, at Appleton Village School. Pizza, salad, and soft drinks will be served. \$5 for adults, \$3 for kids, \$15 for families. Raffle tickets will be sold at the benefit on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, and at the AVS craft fair on December 9<sup>th</sup> for various gift baskets. The drawings for the gift baskets will be on December 18<sup>th</sup>. You do not need to be present to win. The baskets will be displayed at both the benefit dinner and the craft fair.



SPIRIT WEEK...Grade 5 certainly has spirit!



SIMPLY SECOND

Second Grade friends were invited to perform the Pledge of Allegiance in sign language for our Veterans Day celebration. They did a fabulous job signing for a large group of people! We also colored and signed papers. When we finished our signing, we had the opportunity to pass out our papers to the Veterans and say thank you. Thank you to all our Veterans. We appreciate you!!



**Annual Veterans Day Celebration**

Appleton Village School's hats were off as we welcomed over 20 local veterans into the building to honor each one of them for their military service. From fathers to grandfathers, women veterans, and friends of friends, the veterans spanned multiple generations and age spans. As always, it was a sight to behold as Pre-K practiced their cutting and gluing skills to create beautiful flag-inspired art. Kindergarten through 5th grade sang patriotic songs with a lively beat. Second graders practiced their signing skills by signing the Pledge of Allegiance for the veterans and middle school students soaked up the words and stories shared by the veterans during individual and group interview opportunities. To wrap the day up, students in 7th grade served the veterans and their spouses a delicious meal of Shepard's Pie created by the incredible Pat and Seth in the kitchen. Overall, it was a day to remember!

**Literary Connections shared with Middle School Students:**

6th Grade:

\* *The Poppy Lady: Moina Belle Michael and Her Tribute to Veterans* by Barbara Elizabeth Walsh

\* *In Flanders Fields: The Story of the Poem* by John McCrae

7th Grade:

\* *America's White Table* by Margot Theis Raven

8th Grade:

\* *Tucky Jo and Little Heart* by Patricia Polacco

**Life Skills Taught and Practiced with Middle School Students:**

\* *Phone Communication Skills*

\* *Friendly Letter Writing*

\* *Addressing an Envelope*

\* *Interviewing Skills: Asking and Responding to Appropriate Questions*

\* *Active Listening Skills*

\* *Summarizing information*

\* *Creating a welcoming environment*

\* *Serving food*

\* *And many more*



*cont. on next page...*



Sunrise / Ms. Scott

The halls of AVS continue to be filled with students who are happy, healthy, and helpful. I can't tell you how delighted I am when I hear, "I can go with you", or when I am thanked by students at the end of class or asked, "How are you doing", or told to have a fantastic day. On another note, I am always happy to talk to parents regarding their children and the wonderful work that they are completing. Thank you, parents, for sending an incredible group of students to our school!



Enjoy your holiday break with family and friends.

### Pre-K News

We are moving right along through our investigation of all things Fall. In one of our fun lessons, Pre-K explored different kinds of pumpkins. We took turns holding, tapping, smelling and looking at our big classroom pumpkin and at one of our little pumpkins.

The children shared what they thought the pumpkins felt like on the outside and what they thought might be on the inside. The children created a class word list for each pumpkin with wonderful adjectives such as "slimy", "gooey" and "heavy." Once I cut the pumpkins open, we again took turns looking and feeling and checking our predictions about them!

We explored the way the pumpkins were the same and different. The big pumpkin had seeds that were big and the little pumpkin had seeds that were little. The big pumpkin was heavy and the little pumpkin was light. Both pumpkins had light colored seeds that were the same shape!

We brainstormed what the parts of the pumpkin could be used for; planting seeds for more plants, eating seeds, feeding seeds/pumpkin to animals and eating pumpkin that we cook.

Later, the pumpkins went into the sensory table for further investigation and for pretend play with our woodland animals. The pumpkin was also discovered to fit together like a puzzle and animals could hide inside!



## Author Visit

*Tim Caverly*

Tim Caverly, Maine Guide and Author, visited grades 3-5 this week!  
He brought his wife, Susan, and their dog, Sandy, too.  
Students were fascinated by his stories of the Allagash, and more!



Fantastic author visit...when 43 students can sit mesmerized and listen intently for 55 minutes, you know something special is happening! Thank you, Partners!!

FMI visit <https://allagashtails.com/>

### **Fall Photo Re-Take Day**

A Strawbridge photographer will be here Wednesday, November 29 to take photos of students and staff who were absent on the original Fall Photo Day.

Re-takes are also offered to any parents wishing to have another photo taken of their child. To do so, the original package needs to be turned in to the photographer at the time the re-take occurs.

They will also be taking group photos of each class.

If you have questions, contact the school office at 785-4504.

## **Navigating the Digital Terrain: Supervising Your Child's Smartphone Usage**

Dear Parents,

Students are not allowed to use cell phones during school hours.

In the current digital era, smartphones play an integral role in our lives. They serve as a key conduit of communication, learning, and entertainment for our children. It falls upon us, as parents, to supervise our children's smartphone usage to ensure their safety and welfare.

### **Grappling with the Smartphone Age**

Smartphones unlock a realm of exciting possibilities, but they also carry inherent risks. Cyberbullying, access to unsuitable content, and excessive screen time are a few prevalent issues. Comprehending these challenges marks the first step towards effective supervision.

### **Setting Transparent Rules**

Institute precise and consistent regulations about smartphone usage. These might encompass time limitations, app usage regulations, and online interaction etiquette. Convey these rules to your child and articulate the rationale behind them.

### **Promoting Candid Conversation**

Encourage your child to maintain open communication about their digital experiences. Invite them to voice any concerns or obstacles they face online. This conversation fosters trust and enables you to steer them through any issues they encounter.

## **Keeping Pace with Children: A Primer on Parental Controls for Children's Mobile Phones**

Today's digital age has given children access to a world of information at their fingertips. However, the same technology also poses certain risks. Here's where parental controls come into play. They help to establish a safe digital environment, allow for productive use of technology, and keep pace with children's tech use.

### **Understanding Parental Controls**

Parental controls are software and tools which allow parents to set controls on their children's mobile devices, online activities, and other digital media. They provide a way for parents to monitor and limit what their child can see or do on their mobile device.



### **Why Use Parental Controls?**

Parental controls are essential for a number of reasons:

1. **Online Safety:** Protect children from inappropriate content and potential online predators.
2. **Time Management:** Limit screen time and encourage healthy, balanced lifestyle habits.
3. **Privacy Protection:** Prevent personal information from being shared unknowingly.
4. **Content Filtering:** Block harmful or distracting websites and apps, ensuring educational and age-appropriate content.

### **Implementing Parental Controls**

Implementing parental controls on a child's cell phone is a multi-step process that can help ensure safer and more appropriate use of technology. Here are the steps to consider:

1. **Understand the Device:** Familiarize yourself with the phone's features and operating system (Android, iOS, etc.). Different systems have different built-in parental controls.
2. **Establish Clear Guidelines:** Discuss with your child how they are allowed to use their phone. Set rules about when and where they can use it, what apps they can download, and who they can communicate with.
3. **Activate Basic Controls:** Most smartphones have built-in parental control settings. These can restrict access to certain apps, limit screen time, and monitor usage.
4. **Sign Up for a Parental Control Service:** If you want more control and monitoring abilities, consider subscribing to a parental control service. These can provide features like location tracking, internet filtering, and detailed usage reports.
5. **Install Parental Control Apps:** Install the app associated with your chosen service on your child's phone. Follow the app's instructions to set up the controls you want.
6. **Regularly Review Usage:** Regularly check your child's usage reports to ensure they're following the rules. Discuss any issues or concerns that arise.
7. **Maintain Open Communication:** Keep the conversation about phone usage ongoing. This can help your child understand the reasons for the controls and encourage them to use their phone responsibly.

Remember, parental controls are a tool to help guide your child's digital behavior, not a replacement for regular conversations.

APPLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL PRESENTS

**HOLIDAY  
CRAFT FAIR**

DEC 9TH  
9AM - 2PM

**MUSIC** ✦ **SHOPPING** ✦ **FOOD**

737 UNION ROAD, APPLETON

Interested in having a table?  
Contact Holly Billings at [holly.billings@fivetowns.net](mailto:holly.billings@fivetowns.net)



# YOU'RE INVITED!

## CHILLS Alumni Basketball Game

Friday

November 24th

5:30pm-8:30pm

CHILLS Gym

Join us for a fun night of games, prizes, concessions, and more!

### Here are the details:

- **WHO:** The whole community!
- **WHAT:** CHILLS Alumni Basketball Game
- **WHEN:** Friday, November 24th, 5:30-8:30pm
- **WHY:** To kick-off the CHILLS Basketball season!
- **WHERE:** Camden Hills High School Gym



## 2023-24 Mid-Coast Wrestling Club

### Youth Wrestling Program

Who	:	Any interested boys or girls grades K-4. Kids will be separated by age and weight.
When	:	Tuesday and Thursday 6:15 to 7:30 starting November 28 <sup>th</sup> 2023 through March 2024.
Where	:	Camden Hills Regional High School Wrestling Room
Cost	:	\$20 per participant for MANDATORY USA Wrestling Card (sign up and pay at practice).

MCWC's Youth Wrestling Program offers a fun, easy, and affordable opportunity for area youth to try the sport of wrestling. This is a good way for kids to burn off the energy that sometimes gets bottled up during the short days of winter!

Some participants may choose to attend with the club the numerous youth tournaments around the state. Tournaments are usually on Sundays. Our own MCWC Maine Youth Opener is on Sunday January 14<sup>th</sup>!

Wrestling shoes and headgear will be required equipment after the first two weeks of practice. We have some shoes that wrestlers can borrow. Uniforms (singlets) for competition are available to order and or we have some inventory for kids to borrow.

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY. Wrestling is a safe sport (fewer serious injuries per participant than soccer or basketball) that kids of all shapes and sizes can be successful in. Please come and give it a try!

To keep up with team information flow join the Mid-Coast Youth Wrestling Facebook Group. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/362083737515834>

For more information, contact:

Head Youth Coach  
Cody Laite : 899-6349  
[cody.laite@hotmail.com](mailto:cody.laite@hotmail.com)

MCWC Program Administrator  
Aaron Henderson : 522-5252  
[ajhendo66@gmail.com](mailto:ajhendo66@gmail.com)

## 2023-24 Middle School Pre-Season MCWC Wrestling Program

- Who : Any interested boys or girls grades 5-8 attending CRMS, LCS, AVS, HES or living in the Fivetown area and attending a private school or a home school.
- When : Tuesday and Thursday 6:15 to 7:30 starting December 5<sup>th</sup> 2023 through January 11<sup>th</sup> 2024.
- Where : Camden Hills Regional High School Wrestling Room
- Cost : \$20 per participant for MANDATORY USA Wrestling Card (sign up and pay at practice).

The Mid-Coast Wrestling Club (MCWC) Middle School Pre-Season Program offers a fun, easy, and affordable opportunity for Fivetown area youth to try the sport of wrestling and get ready for the Pine Tree League Wrestling Season, which starts on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Some participants may choose to attend our own MCWC Maine Youth Opener Youth Wrestling Tournament, which is on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. The following week the Pine Tree Wrestling League season starts and CRMS practices will begin. Fivetowns area children are usually able to join this team, numbers permitting.

Wrestling shoes and headgear will be required equipment after the first two weeks of practice. We have some shoes that wrestlers can borrow.

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY. Wrestling is a safe sport (fewer serious injuries per participant than soccer or basketball) that kids of all shapes and sizes can be successful in. Please come and give it a try!

To keep up with team information flow join the CRMS Wrestling Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1724273864568515>

For more information, contact: Aaron Henderson : 522-5252  
[ajhendo66@gmail.com](mailto:ajhendo66@gmail.com)



## NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL LUNG CANCER AWARENESS MONTH!

Holiday season is on the horizon, and there are so many things to be thankful for. Family gatherings, fun memories, and celebrations also mean spending on gifts, treats, and travel. It's a great time of year to save money and valuable time by kicking tobacco's butt!

For more than 40 years, the American Cancer Society has hosted the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday of November. You'll be joining thousands of people who smoke or vape across the country in taking an important step toward a healthier life and reducing your cancer risk. Take back your freedom on November 16, joining thousands who will start a tobacco-free life as part of the Great American Smokeout.

Mainers can get free quit coaching and 12 weeks of free nicotine gum, lozenges or patches, through the Maine Quit Link (1-800-QUIT-NOW or [mainequitlink.com](http://mainequitlink.com)). People under age 18 can use MyLife MyQuit (Text "Start" to 36072 or [mylifemyquit.com](http://mylifemyquit.com)).

### This Fall Carve Out Time



- Quality Family Time,
- Family Bonding Activities,
- Discussions about Mental Health, Emotional Wellness, & Substance Use.

Resilience starts at home!



Email us to sign up for our monthly updates and school newsletters!  
[jlovley@penbayymca.org](mailto:jlovley@penbayymca.org)

# Helping Children Learn<sup>®</sup>

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School  
 Appleton Village School



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

November 2023

## Expand world knowledge during Geography Awareness Week

Knowing where a place is on a map gives your child information for understanding more about it. But geography is about much more than maps. It's about how places shape people, and how people shape places.

November 13-17 is Geography Awareness Week. Help your child celebrate and learn about the world's places and people with some of these activities:



- **Locate the news.** When you and your child hear a news story about an unfamiliar place, locate it on a map. Then, together, look up and learn a few facts about the location and the people who live there.
- **Take a virtual trip.** Search online for pictures and information about a country you and your child would like to visit. Together, research cultural, historical and natural things to see and do there.
- **Make community connections.** Help your child discover why your town is located where it is. Who first settled there? When and how did they arrive? How does your location affect what jobs people do there (agriculture, tourism, etc.)? How is your town connected to the rest of the world (by roads, airports, rivers, etc.)?
- **Make maps.** Have your child draw maps of the routes from your home to school, a store or a friend's house. When you travel to those places, follow the maps.



## Show the many purposes of reading

Your example is one of the best teachers around. So, to build your child's enthusiasm for reading, demonstrate the many things *you* gain from doing it. Let your child see you reading often. As you do, explain that you are:

- **Reading to learn.** "I am trying to figure out how to fix this leaky faucet. This article explains what to do."
- **Reading for information.** Show your child how you read a bus schedule in order to decide when to leave the house, or search online or in a cookbook to find a new way to prepare zucchini.
- **Reading for enjoyment.** Show that reading is a fun activity that's not just for school or work.
- **Reading to pass time.** Bring something to read wherever you go. Any time you and your child have to wait, read aloud together, or share a nugget from a book or article you are reading that might interest your elementary schooler.

## Give your child's social skills room to develop

Sometimes, children need a sympathetic ear more than a solution. In the case of friendship issues, the best way to help is often to take a step back. If your child comes to you with a friend problem, listen closely. Say things like, "That sounds frustrating. What did you do next?" This says that your child can act to affect the outcome. Then give your child a chance to figure out a solution.

## Promote physical activity

Regular exercise helps children stay healthy and do better in school. But research shows that as early as age seven, children's physical activity levels start to decline. To help keep your child fit and learning well:

- **Play active games.**
- **Have contests.** See who can do the most jumping jacks in 30 seconds.
- **Climb stairs.** An average stair is 7.5 inches tall. How high can your child climb?



Source: I. Lounassalo and others, "Distinct trajectories of physical activity and related factors during the life course in the general population: a systematic review," *BMC Public Health*.

## Be clear about cheating

Elementary schoolers are often confused about cheating. They believe it is wrong, but they also think it might be OK in some situations. Make it clear to your child that:

- **Cheating** is *always* wrong.
- **Your love** doesn't depend on grades.
- **It is never OK** to cheat in order to help a friend. Role-play ways your child can say *no*.



# Helping Children Learn

Elementary School  
November 2023

## Q&A How can I help my child face challenges with confidence?

**Q: My third grader's response to new challenges is to say "I can't" before even trying. This lack of self-confidence is new this year. What should I do?**

**A:** Several factors may be combining to lower your elementary schooler's self-confidence. For example:

- **Your child may be afraid** of making mistakes. Adults tend to point out things kids do wrong more than things they do right. Fault-finding can lead children to doubt their abilities.
- **Your child may feel the need** to be perfect. Children who feel this way may give up rather than attempt to do a task they aren't sure they can do with 100 percent accuracy.
- **Your child may be suffering** from comparisons. Kids who feel they can't measure up—especially when adults compare them to others—often stop trying.
- **You may be "overdoing"** for your child. When parents do tasks kids can do for themselves, the kids get the message that they are not capable.

To provide a self-confidence boost, explain that everyone makes mistakes and they help us learn. Praise the things your child does well. Show that you believe your child is a capable person, and eventually your child will believe it.



## Parent Quiz

### Are you fostering community spirit?

Your child is a member of many groups—your family, the school, the larger community. Are you promoting the attitudes and skills a responsible group member needs? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you talk** with your child about school and family rules and why they are important?
2. **Do you teach** your child that it is essential to honor commitments and promises?
3. **Do you volunteer** as a family to help others in your community?
4. **Do you model** fair play and sportsmanship when you play games or watch sporting events with your child?
5. **Do you make** it clear that the person responsible for

your child's behavior is your child?

#### How well are you doing?

More *yes* answers mean you are teaching your child how to work as part of a group. For each *no*, try that idea.

*"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much."*  
—Helen Keller

## Encourage positive behavior

A large part of discipline should happen *before* your child misbehaves. Experts agree that to motivate good behavior, it helps to:

- **Create a loving,** respectful relationship with your child.
- **Praise what your child** does right.
- **Prevent repeated misbehavior** by making changes. A child who is always cranky and slow in the morning, for example, may need an earlier bedtime.

## Support science success

Boosting your child's scientific know-how isn't complicated. Here are two easy ways to build science skills:

1. **Use science tools** together. Measure things with rulers. Use the scale at the market to weigh produce. Consult a compass to find out what direction you are walking in.



2. **Encourage questions** and look for answers. If your child asks, "What makes rain fall out of clouds?" say, "Let's find out!" Then help your student find the answer online or at the library.

Source: M.E. Ennes and others, "Children and Parents' Perceptions of Access to Science Tools at Home and Their Role in Science Self-efficacy," *Research in Science Education*, Springer.

## Model values in action

When it comes to values and attitudes, you are your child's role model. Show your child what these school success traits look like:

- **Honesty.** Tell your child the truth. Admit your mistakes.
- **Dependability.** Live up to commitments to your child and others.
- **Fairness.** Get all sides of a story before passing judgment.

### Helping Children Learn®

Published in English and Spanish, September through May.  
 Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.  
 Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.  
 Editor: Alison McLean.  
 Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.  
 Copyright © 2023, The Parent Institute®,  
 a division of PaperClip Media, Inc.  
 P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474  
 1-800-756-5525 • www.parent-institute.com



# Helping Students Learn<sup>®</sup>

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School  
 Appleton Village School



MIDDLE SCHOOL

November 2023

## Help your middle schooler study smarter for end-of-unit tests

If your middle schooler tends to study randomly the night before a big test, it's time for a more organized approach.

Help your student develop a system for studying an entire chapter or unit. Several days before the test, have your child:

1. **Divide the material** into sections.
2. **Start by reviewing** the first section and any related notes or handouts. Your child may be tempted to race through and finish the whole unit, but it's more effective to study one section at a time.
3. **Imagine what questions** the teacher might ask about the material in that section. If no questions come to mind, your child should review the material again. Have your child jot down each question on a separate index card and write its answer on the back of the card.
4. **Proceed section by section.** If one section is particularly long or tricky, or if your child can think of several questions the teacher may ask about it, suggest breaking that section down into smaller parts.
5. **Identify new words and terms.** Now your child can go back through the material and look for unfamiliar terms and make cards for them.
6. **Study the cards** in short sessions for several days. You can support the effort by offering to use the cards to quiz your child.



## Share strategies for managing stress

Middle schoolers have a lot going on—in school, in their bodies and in their minds. They can easily become overwhelmed, anxious and stressed. And when students' anxiety goes up, their grades can go down.

Talk with your middle schooler about ways to manage stress. Your child could:

- **Write in a journal.** Writing can help your child clarify thoughts and feelings. It's also a helpful tool for solving problems.
- **Have fun with a friend.** They could take a walk or do something that makes them laugh, such as making a funny video.
- **Work on a hobby** (other than playing games online). Focusing on an enjoyable creative activity reduces stress.
- **Stretch and breathe.** Slow, gentle stretches and deep breathing can help children calm down when feeling overwhelmed.
- **Take a short power nap.** Getting adequate sleep is vital for stress reduction.

## Promote complex thinking

Your child is learning to evaluate, support answers with evidence and solve problems. To boost thinking skills, ask questions like:

- **Why do you like it?** It's not enough for your child to say something is a favorite. Ask your student to name characteristics that make it better than other things.
- **Which should we get?** Ask your child to research an item your family needs to buy. Which brand would be the best choice? Why?
- **How could we** do this better? For example, ask your child to brainstorm ways your family could save money on an electric or water bill.



## Volunteering is empowering

Volunteering helps children develop skills and understand that *they* can make a difference. Any volunteer work is valuable, but research shows that work that helps strangers, rather than friends or family, may have the biggest effect. In one study, it improved kids' feelings of self-worth for over one year.

Source: L.M. Padilla-Walker and others, "Longitudinal Change in Adolescents' Prosocial Behavior Toward Strangers, Friends, and Family," *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, Wiley.

## Instill strong writing habits

Help your child get into three habits that improve writing:

1. **Reading widely.** The more students read, the more examples of solid writing they see.
2. **Reading written work** aloud. This helps students catch repetitive, clunky or ungrammatical phrases, so they can fix them.
3. **Revising.** After writing a first draft, your child should rearrange, expand or clarify points that need it.



# Helping Students Learn

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School



## Q&A How can I get my child to tell me what's going on?

**Q: My seventh grader is clearly upset about something, but won't tell me what it is. I want to help, but I don't want to be pushy. What should I do?**

**A:** Reluctance to discuss problems with parents is common among adolescents. But when an issue drags on for days or weeks, it can affect health and schoolwork. So although it's likely that whatever is troubling your child is minor, you should keep trying to find out what it is.



To encourage your middle schooler to share:

- **Be direct.** Say to your child, "I feel like there's something you're not telling me. I want you to know I care about you and I'm here for you no matter what. You can talk to me about absolutely anything. It's my job to help you figure things out."
- **Set clear expectations.** "I respect your privacy and the fact that you want to handle things on your own, but I need you to tell me what's wrong. You can have a little more time to think it over by yourself, but then let's try to figure this out together after dinner tonight."
- **Enlist support.** If your student still refuses to talk, contact a pediatrician, school counselor, coach or other trusted figure in your child's life. Work together to discover and help your child manage whatever is going on.

## Parent Quiz

### Are you helping your student build a strong learning foundation?

In middle school, students begin to have more choices about the direction their education will take. Are you helping your child make choices that support academic achievement? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you encourage** your child to choose challenging classes—especially in subjects of interest?
2. **Do you discuss** the importance of reading, and urge your child to read every day?
3. **Do you follow** news stories together and build your child's awareness of current events?
4. **Do you encourage** your child to study a foreign language, starting in middle school if possible?
5. **Do you talk** about ways your child's interests might mesh with future classes or a career?

#### How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are helping your child prepare for the future. For each no, try that idea.

*"The future is not something we enter. The future is something we create."*  
—Leonard L. Sweet

## Help your child work with a changing body

The physical changes your child is going through are the biggest since infancy. Impulses that typically go with these changes (to fidget, snack, etc.) can be a distraction during study time. If your child frequently:

- **Gets up to move around,** suggest that your middle schooler try to work standing up. Or your child could study flashcards while walking around.
- **Wiggles and squirms,** encourage regular stretch breaks to ease "growing pains."
- **Stops to make a snack,** stock up on sliced raw veggies your child can grab at the start and munch on while studying.

Source: P. Lorain, "Squirring Comes Naturally to Middle School Students," National Education Association.

## List-making can help your child solve problems

Your child is facing a dilemma. "Should I do this, or not?" What if there was another choice?

To help your middle schooler explore all the options when problem-solving, suggest making a list, then narrowing it down to the three most sensible solutions. The list-making process reinforces that there are usually several ways to solve a problem.



## Review elements of respect

Respect involves many things. Explain that showing respect means your child should:

- **Think before acting,** and ask questions like, "Would I like to be treated this way?"
- **Disagree politely.** Talk about the need to choose words and tone carefully.
- **Treat property with care,** and return borrowed items on time and unharmed.

### Helping Students Learn®

Published in English and Spanish, September through May.  
 Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.  
 Publisher Emerita: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.  
 Editor: Alison McLean.  
 Translations Editor: Victoria Gawola.  
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