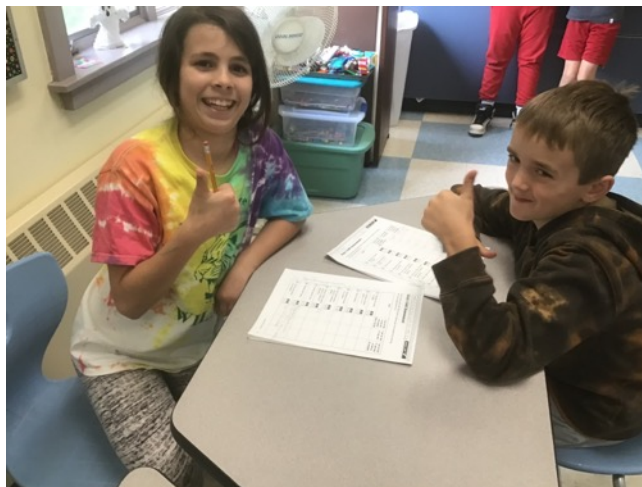


APPLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL

Wildcat News



Simply Second
Page 5



Fourth Grade
Page 6

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Nov. 3 Grade 7 and 8 HAL dance, 7-9pm
- Nov. 7 Lockdown drill
- Nov. 8 Veteran's Day Celebration
- Nov. 9 11:30 release, P/T conferences
- Nov. 10 No school
- Nov. 20 School Committee Meeting, 5pm
- Nov. 22-24 Thanksgiving Break
- Nov. 29 Makeup Fall photos and group photos
- Dec. 1 No school, 1st trimester ends
- Dec. 1 Basketball @ Vinalhaven

PLEASE NOTE:

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

Parent-Teacher Fall Conferences

Students will be dismissed at 11:30 on November 9th for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Conferences will be done remotely via Zoom. Middle school families: please choose your homeroom teacher when you schedule your conferences. Our Art, Music, Spanish, School Counselor, G/T and Title I teachers are available for conferences as well. Home room teachers are offering only one meeting per student. Teachers will send the ZOOM link to both parents if requested. The sign-up link below is now active. Please use it to sign up for an appointment. On the day of your conference, your teacher will send you a Zoom meeting link.

https://www.ptcfast.com/schools/Appleton_Village_School

LOCKDOWN DRILL

The morning of Nov. 7th we will be having a lockdown drill practice. Our plan is to do the drill as soon as attendance is taken. PLEASE HAVE YOUR STUDENT(S) HERE ON TIME. During the drill, no one will be admitted into the building and the phones will not be answered. We appreciate your help in this important practice.

From Nurse Sandy:

We continue to experience many different types of illnesses in our school community this week. A reminder, students **must** stay home from school for 24 hours fever-free (after their last dose of fever-reducing medication) and 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting. If your child has a rash with an unknown cause, please check with your child's pediatrician before sending your child to school. Based on your child's demeanor, ask "Is my child able to learn?" If the answer is no, please keep your child home.

SUBJECT: THE POWER OF PRESENCE: WHY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Dear Parents,

We hope this letter finds you well. Today, we want to take some time to talk about the importance of regular school attendance. Maine has strict attendance regulations. When a student is absent for any reason for 10% of the time they have been in school, the state labels the student as chronically absent.

Academic performance is directly tied to attendance. Our classrooms are interactive and dynamic, and each day's learning builds on the last. When students miss a day, they miss out on key explanations, discussions, and activities that help them understand and remember new information. Plus, making up for lost time adds extra stress.

School isn't just about academics—it's also a place where kids learn social skills. Interacting with peers, participating in group work, and navigating social situations are all crucial parts of personal development. Absences mean missed opportunities to build these abilities.

Regular attendance also builds responsibility and discipline. By showing up each day, students are practicing how to honor commitments. This is an important life skill that will benefit them far beyond their school years.

As parents and teachers, we can help our students understand the value of regular attendance. Here are a few tips:

- Maintain a regular sleep schedule to ensure students are well-rested.
- Reinforce the importance of school and make sure your child understands why it's a priority.
- Communicate with your child's teacher if there's an ongoing issue preventing regular attendance.

In conclusion, we want to re-emphasize that regular school attendance is crucial—not just for academic success, but for personal growth and the development of life skills. We appreciate your support in ensuring your child attends school regularly.

Lastly, we invite your thoughts and suggestions on this topic. Feel free to contact the school with your thoughts.

Thank you,
Susan Stilwell

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I'm writing to discuss the importance of healthy food and drink choices for school. We are committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle for our students, and this extends to what they bring to school for lunch and snacks.

Here are some guidelines to keep in mind:

- Fruits and vegetables: These are always a good choice. They provide essential vitamins and minerals.
- Protein: Foods like lean meats, eggs, or beans help keep energy levels up throughout the day.
- Whole grains: Foods like whole grain breads, rice, or pasta are great for sustained energy.

Please try to limit sugary snacks and drinks. While they might be tempting, they can lead to energy crashes later in the day. Reminder any drinks that contain caffeine are inappropriate for a Pre-K -8 School.

Remember, water is always the best choice for hydration. If your child doesn't like plain water, consider adding a slice of lemon or cucumber for some flavor.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

Appleton Village School

A REMINDER FROM THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The sheriff's office stopped by to ask us to remind parents of state law regarding children riding in a vehicle. The law states that a child must be 12 or older to ride in the front seat, regardless of the child's size. It also states that a child must be in a booster seat in the back seat until they are 8 years old AND 80 pounds AND 4'9".

They take notice!



SPEAKING SPANISH

How many times have you asked your child "What did you do at school today? What did you do in (Spanish, ELA, Art, Math, etc.) class?" and gotten a response like "Nothing. I don't know. I don't remember.", etc.??? Or asked, "How was school?" and heard "Good", or "Boring"?

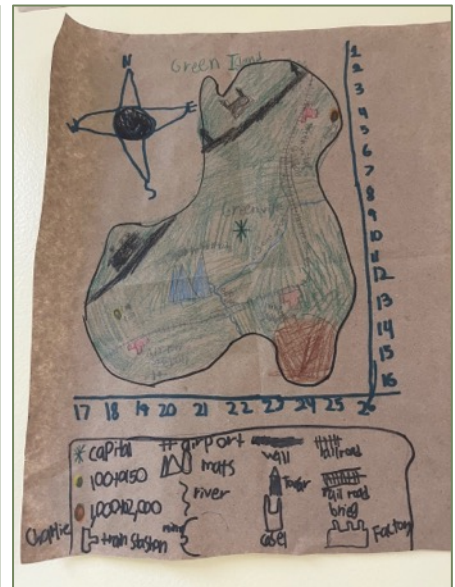
I have the solution! Check Seesaw every week for Spanish updates! Each week I take a few minutes to give you SPECIFIC QUESTIONS to ask your child about Spanish class, so you get some answers. PLEASE take 5 minutes each week to check Seesaw messages. If you are not sure how, please reach out. I do this by Friday afternoon but try to post on the last day of the week that your child has Spanish. Here are the days each grade has class:

- PreK: Wed.
- Kinder & 1st: Thursday
- 2nd and 3rd: Friday
- 5th and 6th: Wednesday & Thursday
- 7th: Thursday & Friday
- 8th: Wednesday and Friday

Thank you! ¡Gracias!
- Señora Karod

Grade 5 News ~Mrs. King

Recently fifth graders have been playing "Multiplication War" with playing cards. This is a great way to practice times facts and have some fun. In Social Studies we have completed our mythical country maps. Check out a couple of the examples. All of the maps are on the wall here at school. Have a look!



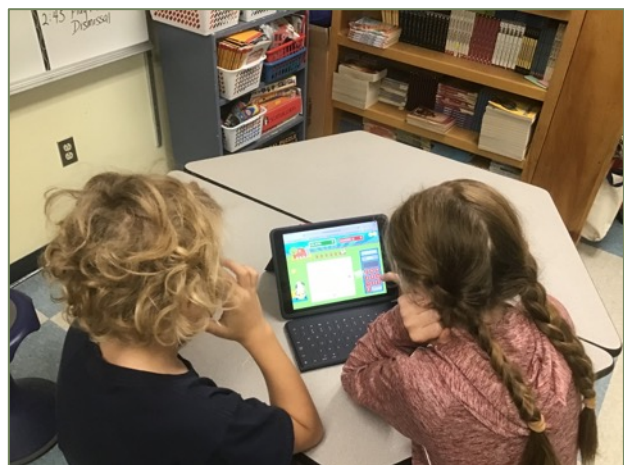
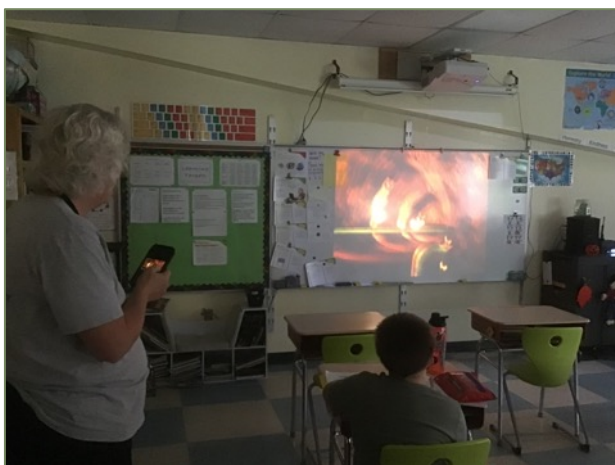
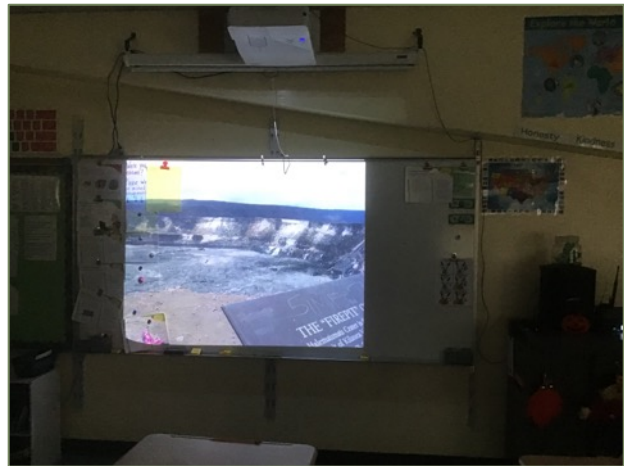
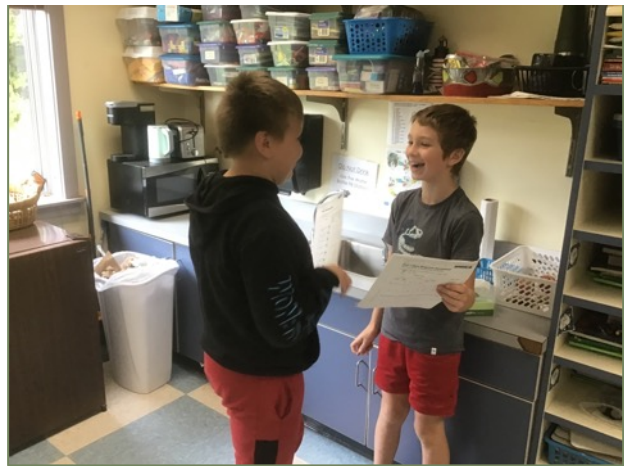
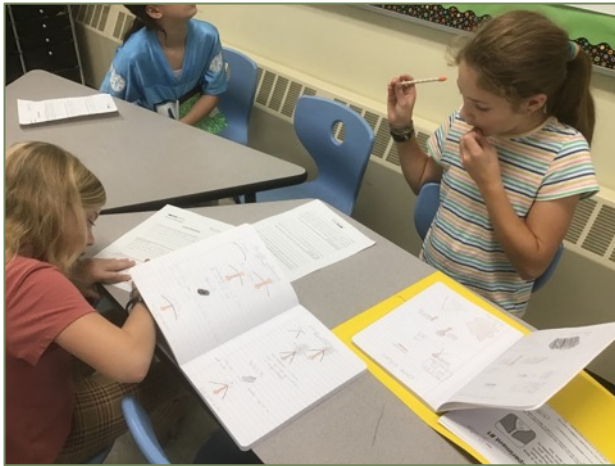
SIMPLY SECOND

BIG BUDDIES LITTLE BUDDIES!! The second graders had a spooktacular time decorating pumpkins, reading Halloween books and coloring pumpkins with their 8th Grade Big Buddies. Thank-you Big Buddies for a boootiful time together and thank you for our creative Halloween cards. You are the best!!



4th Grade News

Fourth graders have been practicing math skills using some of our online Everyday Math Games. Students play Rugs and Fences to practice finding perimeter and area for rectangles and play Factor Captor to find factors of numbers. In science, we completed our second lesson on volcanoes, and students drew some wonderful scientific illustrations to exhibit their learning. We also had a surprise visit from Mrs. Stilwell who shared photos from her trip to Volcanoes National Park in Hawaii. Lastly, fourth graders celebrated their progress in math by meeting with classmates and sharing the skills they were most proud of from unit one. I look forward to sharing all of this hard work with parents next week at parent/teacher conferences!



Pre-K News

There was an adorable group of magical and spooky creatures in Pre-K on



Halloween! In addition to sharing several Halloween picture books, making collage monsters and building haunted houses out of various block materials, we worked together to pick and count "pumpkins" in a "pumpkin patch."

We began with ten pumpkins along a ribbon vine. I then started us chanting and the children joined in..."Who stole the pumpkin from the pumpkin patch? W. stole the pumpkin from the pumpkin patch! Who me? Yes, you! Couldn't be! Then who? (The child whose turn it was picked a pumpkin and we re-counted.) "A. stole a pumpkin from the pumpkin patch! Who me? Yes, you! Couldn't be! Then who?" We carried on until each child had a turn to pick and we counted down to zero, then added back one by one to ten again!

Third Grade & Eighth grade News!

*Fun filled field trip to Beth's Farm,
with a visit to the corn maze and haystack!*

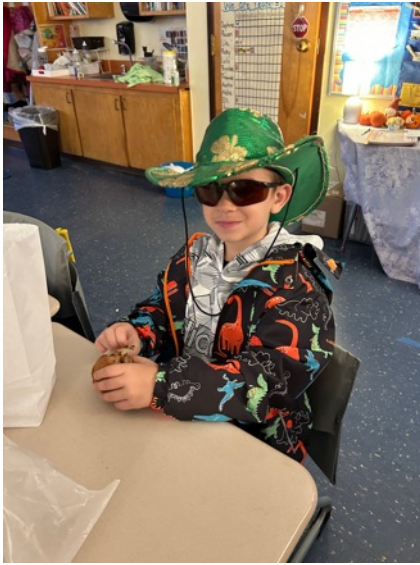


Kindergarten

Kindergarten wants to send a big "THANK YOU" to Mrs. Eaton for coming to visit and read a story. We are looking forward to having her visit and read to us again.



Spirit Week fun in First Grade!



Matching Princesses and Jack-O-Lanterns

Sunrise / Ms. Scott

Once again, the 1st through 5th graders will be experiencing the excitement of LEGOs. This is such an educational and cool happening. The Appleton Village School was a recipient of a grant which has allowed this fantastic opportunity to be part of your child's education. Soon the schedules will be set, and the work will begin. Each of the LEGO unit plans gives your children fun, unique, and challenging opportunities. I started these enriching activities last year and was so excited to watch the students as they learned the basics of building and programming. In order to be successful, they needed to work as a team and while applying engineering design skills they were developing effective problem-solving skills. I have been asked by many students, "When will we be starting the LEGO classes". I am as excited as they are.



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 2nd, 5-7pm, at Appleton Village School. Pizza, salad, and soft drinks will be served. \$5 for adults, \$3 for kids, \$15 for families. There'll be a silent auction as well. We are looking for monetary donations, so we may purchase all the food together, ahead of time. Please contact val.rose@fivetowns.net, or stop by the school to leave donations in the office.



Autumn in the Art Room



1st grade artists used tempera paint to create spooky pumpkin patches. Artists learned about mixing colors with black or white to create shadows and highlights.

3rd grade artists used tempera paint to depict scenes of autumn leaves. Artists learned about mixing analogous colors (red, orange and yellow) to create a variety of shades of orange.



6th grade artists used pencil, sharpie and markers to create drawings of shoes. Artists learned about drawing from observation, contour drawing, and using pattern and color.



Wildcat Soccer

Battle of the Undefeated

On a rainy Saturday night in Warren, Maine, the two Busline League undefeated teams met at The Pitch for what would be a historic game. The Appleton Village School Wildcats faced off against the South Bristol Mariners for the Busline League Small School Championship. Fans from both schools filled the Pitch to watch these two teams battle it out.

The AVS Wildcats got on the score board first with an impressive goal from Carter Campbell putting the Wildcats up with an early lead. A hand ball in the goal box gave South Bristol a penalty kick. Despite Maddie Fuller diving for the ball, South Bristol tied the game 1 to 1. The remainder of the first half the game was tied 1-1, making it anyone's game in the second half. Leo Veitze came out in the second half and made an amazing shot on goal, putting the Wildcats up 2-1. It was a tough battle with both teams moving the ball very well. However, the Wildcats came together as a team with Margaret Garrigan, Carter Campbell, and Leo all working together to make the score 3-1. South Bristol did not give up and they were putting pressure on the Wildcats defense. This led to a header right out of goalkeeper Maddie's hands, bringing the score 3-2. The Wildcats, led by their marvelous coaches, saw that the time was slowly draining, and they moved to a more defense style of play. Natalia Davis, Taylor Sewall, and Cooper Deane led the defense in an impressive night of clearing the ball and cutting the time down on the clock. It looked like the Wildcats had it in the books, but with 1:03 left on the clock, South Bristol made a shot on the goal and time froze. What is going to happen? Our goalie, Maddie, made a tremendous save! That save secured the win for the undefeated AVS Wildcats.

13-0!!



AVS XC Championships

The Wildcats traveled to Great Salt Bay last week to compete against 13 schools and over 200 runners for the Busline League Championships. The Girls Team finished 5th overall and the Boys Team finished 8th!

In the girls race Ily Darling and Margaret Garrigan finished with the top 25 runners with only a minute separating that field of runners! Finishing strong behind the lead pack in consecutive order were:

Whitney Pearson, Olivia Davis, Cayden Skafidas, Taylor Brown, Emily Scott, Abigail Garrigan, Natalia Davis, Annabelle Darling, Zofia Saucier, Ava Salami, Helena Mercado, and Caitlin Bocko.

In the boys race Des Costigan finished in the lead pack with 18 other runners and only a minute separating those runners! Finishing strong on the season in consecutive order: Giovanni Sinclair, Silas Pearson, Zander Darling, and Charlie Bissonnette.

What an amazing season, Congratulations Wildcats!!



TRUNK OR TREAT



A Message from your Wildcat Ambassadors!

Your Wildcat Ambassadors would like to officially welcome you to the 2023/2024 school year. We had our first successful event with Trunk or Treat, where many came out dressed to scare!

At Appleton Village School, we recognize that our students are our most important resource and believe that every parent and teacher here are part of the magic. We need volunteers like you to support our program and keep it alive!

We make it easy to get involved and welcome any level of support. If you are interested in serving as a volunteer in our group, you can email, Beth Grierson (egrierson1982@gmail.com) directly or come to the next schedule meeting December 5th at 5:30 in Ms. Billings classroom.

REASONS TO GET INVOLVED

- **Make Our Children's Education Better**

- AVS parents can have a direct impact on our children's education. Our efforts have been able to provide our school with new bleachers, a contribution to the Kiln, musical instruments, a new water fountain and money towards microscopes!

- **Make Meaningful Connections**

- Being an active member of the Wildcat Ambassadors team is a great way to meet people, make friends and new connections by coming to the meetings, attending events, and/or volunteering.

- **Have a Direct Impact on School Spirit and School Pride**

- We work hard to encourage school spirit and pride throughout the year. We want to bring back our Movie Nights, Dodgeball Tournament & Kickball – but we need HELP.

We've heard your feedback and are pleased to offer a new shopping experience with our Apparel Store! Shop before November 15th to guarantee delivery for the holidays. Go Wildcats!

Stay updated on events and news – join us on Facebook! (Wildcat Ambassadors- AVS)





APPLETON VILLAGE
SCHOOL

WILDCATS

Show your Appleton Pride
with shirts, hoodies,
and MORE!



Find items like these and more at:
https://stores.inksoft.com/appleton_village_school/



GET YOURS TODAY!

Online Store
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WREATH AND GNOME SALE

Sale Dates are from
Nov. 1st - 10th

Available for pickup between
Nov. 27th - Dec. 1st

\$20

Undecorated
Wreaths

\$25

Decorated
Wreaths

\$40

Gnomes
(Only 15)

Made with PosterMyWall.com

FMI - jessica.davis@fivetowns.net



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

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). People under age 18 can use MyLife MyQuit (Text "Start" to 36072 or 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

Helping Children Learn[®]

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

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

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®

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Helping Students Learn[®]

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

MIDDLE SCHOOL

November 2023

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®

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