

PRESCHOOL PRESS



A Publication of the Anchorage School District STeP Center and the Early Childhood and Elementary Special Education Department

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In This Issue. .

In this issue of Preschool Press you will find articles for parents of preschool children on the following topics:

Parent Conferences

More Community Resources

The ARC
Stone Soup Group
VOA
Catholic Social Services
Municipality of Anchorage
ChildCare Connection: Parenting
Classes

9 Ways to Boost Your
Child's Attitude Before the
Bus Arrives

Special Education
Community Forum

Halloween Safety Tips

About The Preschool Press

This publication is designed for preschool families in the Anchorage School District. It is mailed each month. E-mail subscriptions are also sent out so if you wish to receive this mailing, contact: loutrel_barbara@asdk12.org or call 742-3868.

Past Copies of the Preschool Press can be found on www.asdk12.org/dept/step

Parent Conferences

Parent Conferences are November 8th and 9th. Here are some tips for having a successful conference (taken from the ASD website: <http://www.asdk12.org/parents/conferences.asp>).

Before the conference

- * Decide what you want to ask the teacher and write the questions down.
- * Consider making a list for your child's teacher of things that will help create a better understanding of your child; for example, family conflicts, feelings about school, hobbies, special health problems.
- * Ask your child some questions: what's her favorite thing to do at school what's her least favorite? What do you want me to tell your teacher?
- * Be on time. Write down the time of your appointment and arrive promptly. If you can't make the conference as scheduled, call and notify the teacher.

During the conference

- * If you have a specific point to discuss or have a complaint, listen to the teacher's point before criticizing.
- * The teacher may have some questions too -- not trying to pry into your personal life, but only to obtain information that will help her or him to work better with your child.
- * Before you leave develop an action plan. If need be, set up a way to check on your child's progress. You and the teacher can decide how best to stay in touch. Finally, follow through with the plan.
- * Leave promptly to allow other parents to have as much time as you had with the teacher. If you feel the need to continue, schedule another conference with the teacher.

More Resources



The ARC: *The Arc of Anchorage is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting community integration and quality of life for children and adults who experience developmental disabilities, behavioral health issues, or deafness. They provides information about the services available and can connect people with the resources they need. They also help families apply for funding from the State of Alaska and help find solutions during crises and emergencies. Contact: 277-6677*

Stone Soup Group : *The Stone Soup Group is a statewide collaboration located in Anchorage, Alaska, aimed at improving services for families who have children with developmental disabilities. They are a wonderful resource for “one-stop shopping”. They have information on the following programs: Medicaid, Denali KidCare, TEFRA (Try this if your child does not qualify for Medicaid), Medicaid Waivers, Division of Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities (DMHDD), HCP-CSN (The Health Care Program for Children with Special Health Care Needs) , SSI, Native Health Services, AIAska Shriners, and other Civic groups/programs Contact: 561-3701*

VOA: Grandfamilies Project: *Are you or do you know a grandparent raising at least one grandchild? More and more grandparents are finding themselves in the role of primary parent for their grandchildren, but many do so without adequate resources of money, energy, or support systems. Respite Care is available for any grandparent raising grandchildren within Alaska. These funds are limited and are available on a first come, first serve basis. If you are interested in receiving a respite scholarship, please contact Teresa Dickson at 1-888-522-9866 statewide or 522-9866 in Anchorage.*

Catholic Social Services: *Catholic Social Services' services include: Emergency shelters: Brother Francis Shelter Anchorage, Clare House, Teen Homes: McAuley Manor (for girls), Charlie Elder House (for boys), Emergency Outreach, Pregnancy Support Services & Adoption, Services for Developmental Disabilities, Refugee Resettlement, Parenting Support. Phone 907-277-2554*

The Municipality of Anchorage offers Therapeutic swim classes for Preschoolers ages 3-5 years who experience a disability. Call Jeff Matthis for more information 343-6981 or 343-4502.

Childcare Connection: Positive Parenting Support Classes: *Parenting is one of the most rewarding yet challenging jobs. Child Care Connection is dedicated to supporting and empowering parents throughout this process. They offer weekly parenting support classes that educate parents about child development and enable parents to network with other parents.*

Fall Parenting Classes: *Class topics are designed to build on each other, so participants are encouraged to attend the entire series. You must pre-register to attend the classes. Class size is limited. Call for cost of classes.*

Oct. classes focus on ages 0-4; (first class already happened on Oct. 16th)

10/23/06: Positive discipline, Preventing accidents, Setting rules

10/30/06: Choices & Consequences, The power of encouragement, Self-Care

Nov. & Dec. classes focus on ages 5-12.

11/6/06: Parenting styles, Mutual respect, Self-care, Drugs, sexuality, and violence

11/13/06: Emotional Intelligence, Active communication, The think-feel-do cycle

11/20/06: Teaching responsibility, Effective non-violent discipline, “I” messages, Logical consequences

11/27/06: Why children misbehave, The 4 goals of behavior

12/4/06: Success & failure cycles, The BANK method of encouragement, Stimulating independence

12/11/06: Parents influencing events, Family meetings

For more information, please call 563-1966



9 Ways to Boost Your Child's Attitude Before the Bus Arrives

by Jackie D Igafo-Te'o
Bridges 4 Kids website
<http://www.bridges4kids.org>



1. Plan Ahead

Does your child always lag behind in the morning because s/he can't find matching socks or their homework? Start preparing for morning the night before. Lay out clothing (down to socks and shoes), sign all papers, pack lunch and put it all by the door. This may sound simple but it really does cut down on morning anxiety. If your child is on medication, use a pill organizer so that you can tell if they have already taken their morning meds. A hectic morning could result in double-dosing. Avoid this at all costs. Also, keep pictures handy if your child needs help with sequence of activities in the morning.

2. Get a Good Night's Sleep -

A good night's sleep can never be underestimated. Parents, this goes for you too. Lack of sleep can cause problems related to health, performance on the job AND stress at home. Be firm. Set a reasonable bedtime and then let them EARN a later bedtime based on their daily performance. For example, base bedtime could be 9:00 p.m. If the child does well that day at school and at home (no bad reports, no time outs) then they can extend to 9:30 as a reward. They may go from complaining about 9:00 p.m. to actually APPRECIATING 9:30 as an alternative.

3. Rise and Shine: Parents -

Learn to embrace the morning. Wake up an extra 15 minutes early and make yourself some coffee. Go sit on the porch in the morning air and breathe in the fresh air. A slow start may give you more patience and tolerance to deal with whatever comes your way.

4. Rise and Shine: Kids -

For young children you need to use a little more creativity. There was a time when getting my kids up was like awaking a couple of beasts in a cave. They'd whine "No, I'm tired" or "I just went to sleep..." or "I hate morning!" and the list goes on. One day I thought I'd add a little spice to morning. I was going to let them control the process. My children all LOVE music so I cranked up the stereo and within 5 minutes they were all up and singing along. It was like a miracle! Now every morning we do the same ritual. Loud music CAN be good for the soul. When my kids were younger I would sing to them until they woke up. "Rise and shine lazy, sleepy head. Get your lazy bones out of the bed!" I picked a goofy song from my own childhood (Patch the Pirate) that they would surely find reason to smile about.

5. Time to Get a Grip -

Even kids need time to adjust to a new day. Don't wake them up with only 15 minutes to spare! This is a recipe for disaster. We usually make some time for ourselves as parents - even if it is while we drive to work. Remember that kids need time to prepare for the day, too.

6. Talk to Them - Use the extra time that you save from preparing ahead of time to talk to your children. Ask them what they are doing at school that day. Get to know their schedule and their morning rituals. If your child is nonverbal, speak to them as if they're going to speak back. This will help to open the channels of communication between you and will model good communication skills for your child. Again, pictures also aid in communication.

7. Laugh with Them - Tell them something funny. Even if it is something silly like reading the comics on the cereal box, in the paper, or telling them something that happened to you the day before - let them know that you still can laugh. We love it when our 10-year-old son, Michael, laughs. Michael has Autism and loves tickle fights. His sister says that "he laughs so hard his eyes disappear!" Laughter is something that we can indulge in and doesn't cost us a thing.

8. Feed Them - Remember: garbage in = garbage out. Breakfast is the most important meal of your day. Don't skimp or skip. Your child needs nutrients in order to learn. Read the boxes or make a hot breakfast. Make sure that there is something of value to your child's health contained in your breakfast choices.

9. Hug Them - If your child is getting older and maybe a little less "touchy-feely", don't let that stop you. Never let your child leave your home without some type of physical interaction. Hold on for a few seconds longer each morning. Tell your child that you love him/her. A hand on the shoulder, a high-five, a kiss and smile - whatever works for you and your child. Make that important contact. You never know what a day will bring.

Send them out that front door feeling like they can conquer anything. Feed their mind, body and soul each and every morning. Only time will tell just how big of an impact that you can truly make just by making a few small changes before the bus comes.



Don't forget!

FREE!

Special Education Community Forum

Sponsored by The ASD STeP Center with collaboration from Stone Soup Group

"Supporting the Special Needs Child in School and at Home"

Come join us over a cup of coffee for our first Saturday disability information workshop this year. Learn about different disability topics, join discussions, and have the opportunity to earn credit for certification programs, salary advancement or training requirements.



Saturday, October 28, 2006

Wendler Middle School

8:30am to 1:00pm



Keynote: Advocacy & Collaboration: Opening More Doors for Your Child
Breakout sessions will include topics on Autism (Making Friends), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Using Pictures to Enhance Your Child's Understanding, ADHD, and Bullying.

Sponsored by the ASD STeP Center in collaboration with Stone Soup Group
Free childcare provided by calling 24 hrs. in advance: 742-3872

Preschoolers should always be accompanied by an adult while participating in Halloween activities.

- o Carry a flashlight
- o Walk, don't run
- o Stay on Sidewalks
- o Obey traffic signals
- o Stay in familiar neighborhoods
- o Don't cut across yards or driveways
- o Wear a watch you can read in the dark
- o Make sure costumes don't drag on the ground
- o Shoes should fit (even if they don't go with your costume)
- o Avoid wearing masks while walking from house to house
- o Carry only flexible knives, swords or other props
- o (If no sidewalk) walk on the left side of the road facing traffic
- o Wear clothing with reflective markings or tape
- o Approach only houses that are lit
- o Stay away from and don't pet animals you don't know

<http://www.sosnet.com/safety/halloween.tip.html>

Halloween Safety Tips

