

Parenting Matters Foundation Presents

# Kindergarten Parenting Matters™



A TOOLKIT FOR PARENTS  
OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN



Published by the Port Angeles School District  
(360) 457-8575 - [www.portangelesschools.org](http://www.portangelesschools.org)

Volume 3, Issue #5  
January 2011

## PRaise . . . DOES IT WORK?

What's the difference between praise for being smart and praise for working hard? From recent research it sounds like a lot.

Children who are repeatedly told they are smart are less likely to put as much effort into really trying harder. It is as if they are worried that if they fail at the next level, people will know they aren't as smart or that because they are smart, they don't need to try harder. Meanwhile, children who are praised for their effort work even harder the next time around.

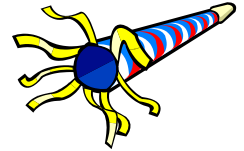
Many people aren't convinced. But give it a try. See if you can stress good work rather than how smart your child is. See if it works. Bronson, P., and Merryman, A., *Nurture Shock: New Thinking About Children*, Twelve, 2009.

*"You can spot the kids who get overpraised at home. Their parents think they're just being supportive" but kids just feel so much pressure.*

*Nurture Shock: New Thinking About Children.*



## What's a Resolution?



Yes, most people break their New Year's Resolutions. And yes, in a way resolutions are kind of silly but they can be kind of fun, too.

Talk with your kindergartner about making New Year's Resolutions. Have him understand that they are something he would like to see happen in the coming year. It is a way he tries to do something better.

Give him some examples or tell him if you made any resolutions. See what things he would change about this past year or what he would like to do differently in the new year. Actually, one of the best things about resolutions is they can make him think. That is always a good thing to do and worth celebrating.



Have crayons, pencils, pens, and paper around the house. Encourage your child to draw, write notes, send letters to his aunt and just have fun. All of this helps him be creative and develop his motor skills.

## Maintenance and Operations Levy 2/8/11

The Port Angeles School District Board of Directors unanimously passed a resolution to place a maintenance and operations (M & O) levy vote on the February 8, 2011 ballot. The existing previous levy is set to expire in December.

The maintenance and operations levy helps support staffing, student transportation, athletics, music programs and student activities, equipment, vocational education and maintenance. School maintenance and operations levy is the local community's share since the legislature only provides 65% of the cost of the cost of educating our children.

For more information visit Levy News online at [www.portangelesschools.org](http://www.portangelesschools.org). Questions, comments and suggestions may be sent to [levy@portangelesschools.org](mailto:levy@portangelesschools.org) or by U.S. Mail to Superintendent, Port Angeles School District, 216 East Fourth Street, Port Angeles, WA



# A Great Time for Learning

Your child learns a tremendous amount in kindergarten. Just take a look at some of his progress.

- \* He begins to see himself as a reader.
- \* He understands that print goes from left to right and has meaning.
- \* He can say letters and point to letters of the alphabet.
- \* He knows all the consonant sounds and may know the vowel sounds.
- \* He recognizes simple words like *the, and, it, and is*.
- \* He starts to read signs, food packages, and other everyday items.
- \* He likes being read to and has favorite books and stories.
- \* He produces rhyming words.
- \* He can write his own name.

[www.readingfoundation.org/parents/schoolage.jsp](http://www.readingfoundation.org/parents/schoolage.jsp)

## Thinking Differently

By the time your child is 5 or 6, her thinking begins to change. By this age, she is thinking more about others. For example, she probably knows that what she would like for a present isn't the same thing her father would like. She is also more flexible in her thinking. She can figure out a couple of ways to build something. She now understands that she can divide things. Look for ways her thinking is changing. This is an exciting time for learning. Gullo, D. F., (ed), *K Today*, NAEYC, 2006.



## Her School Routine

When you hear your kindergarten student talk about school, it probably sounds like nothing but fun. It certainly is that but remember, play, crafts, stories, creativity, music and activities are the basis for her learning. Let her show you what she is doing, be excited with her progress, and enjoy her enthusiasm for learning.



## Keeping Your Child Healthy

The best way to keep your child healthy is to teach him to wash his hands thoroughly and often.

This helps him stay free of flu, H1 N1 and most other winter ills.

## Monkey See, Monkey Do

You are the superhero to your five or six-year-old. What he sees you doing is what he will want to imitate. Keep your bad habits in check especially when the spotlight is on you.

### Remember:

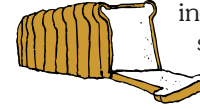
- Smoking – It isn't that cool anymore.
- Swearing – Do you want to hear it coming back at you some day?
- Jaywalking – It is dangerous and illegal.
- Lying - Everyone gets caught.
- Any kind of prejudice - Is a bad habit.
- Arguments - Arguing with your partner threatens your child's security. Make sure you make up in front of him if you do argue so he knows everything is okay.
- Stealing - It's wrong.
- Overdrinking/Overeating - They are both bad and dangerous.
- Fighting with others (coaches, teachers, police) – Show him how to write a respectful letter instead, stating your disagreements.



Inoue, M, *Setting a Good Example*, [www.divine.ca](http://www.divine.ca)

## Learning at Home

One of the things your child will learn in kindergarten is the sounds of letters. Emphasizing individual letter sounds at home, as they are taught in school,



will help her learn faster.

For instance, if she is learning the sound of the letter B, try tossing bread balls into a basket, baking bread dough in the shape of a B, or adding berries to her breakfast cereal. It doesn't have to be this



elaborate; just make it fun to pay attention to the important letter B. Simple fun activities help her begin to associate letters with sounds and then with words. Any help you can give makes a difference.

*Ambulatory Pediatric Association*, [www.ambpeds.org](http://www.ambpeds.org)



**I**f you have any questions, call the Port Angeles School District at (360) 457-8575 or Parenting Matters at (360) 681-2250 or e-mail us at [info@parentingmatters.org](mailto:info@parentingmatters.org) Editor: Cynthia Martin, Ph.D.



Parenting Matters Foundation Is A Partner Agency of United Way of Clallam County

# Want Your Child to Succeed in School? Learn How to Help Him With Reading

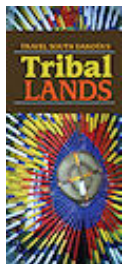
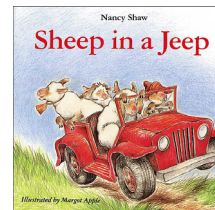
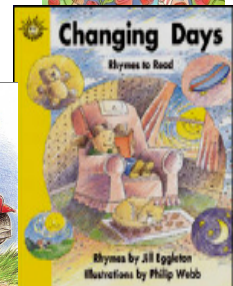
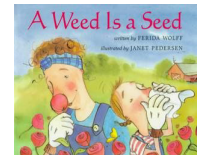
We know that your role is an important one as your child learns to read. With that in mind, here are this month's hints on ways you can help. When you understand what we are trying to do in Port Angeles Schools, you can help your child learn faster by doing some of the same things at home. Reading is such a basic and important skill for your child to master. We need to work together to help him be most successful.



Phonics instruction for your kindergarten student is not the only method we use to teach reading, but it is an important part. It goes along with learning the alphabet, listening to stories, reading out loud, and writing. At home, you can help with this by having her take words apart and then put them back together. Help her separate the sounds in words, listen for the beginning and ending sounds, and put separate sounds together. Rhyming books are a great way for her to become familiar with the sounds and combinations of letters. Listen to her read and you will get an idea of what we are doing at school. If it isn't clear, call your child's teacher. We want to do this right.

Armbruster, B. B., Lehr, F., & Osborn, J., *A Child Becomes A Reader*, Partnership for Reading, Spring 2003.

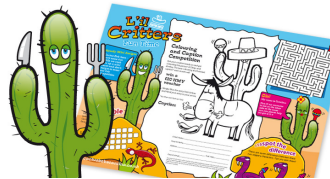
Armbruster, B. B., Lehr, F., & Osborn, J., *Put Reading First*, Partnership for Reading, September 2001.



## VARIETY

It's good to mix up the information and books your child is reading. Different reading sources will give your child a wider beginning of knowledge, vocabulary and comprehension. Find books with different topics. Visit museums and pick up brochures about the displays. Check covers of different books. Is the content good, are there pictures, are they organized differently so it teaches him different styles of researching? Try to find reading material that is large and simple and easy to read so that it doesn't discourage him. The information doesn't need to be difficult, just try to give him information in as many different packages as you can.

*A Quick Guide to Selecting Great Informational Books for Young Children*, [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)



## TV Limits

The American Association of Pediatrics' guidelines say children older than 2 should watch no more than 1 to 2 hours a day of quality programming. How does your television policy fit? The beginning of the new year is a great time to rethink your TV rules.

[www.kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv\\_affects\\_child.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/tv_affects_child.html)



**“Parents have become so convinced that educators know what is best for children that they forget that they themselves are really the experts.”**

- Marian Wright Edelman

## Try Some Cleaning Routines

**In the dining room:** Have your child carry her dirty dishes and silverware to the sink when she is finished eating.

**In the bathroom:** Have her finish brushing her teeth by rinsing out the sink and putting the toothbrush and paste where it belongs.

**In the bedroom:** Encourage her to turn socks, pants and other clothes right-side out before putting them in the laundry. It really saves time.

You are teaching her about being responsible and organized.

## A Great New Year's Resolution

Did you know that children whose parents are involved in their education have better grades, a better attitude toward school, and more appropriate school behavior than those with less involved parents? Consider trying a few of these tips - and make a big difference!

**Tip 1: Get involved** - Visit your child's classroom when you bring her to school. See if your school offers any workshops for parents, and arrange to go!

**Tip 2: Check on homework** - Talk to her each day about homework. Help her manage the workload (even when it is small) by dividing assignments into smaller parts. Give her a good place to study-away from TV, phone, or loud music. Do not use homework as a punishment; include it as part of the daily routine. Check to see if you are supposed to help her with her work. Should you be helping her find letters of the alphabet?

**Tip 3: Make home a good place for learning** - Praise her efforts and encourage her. Be a role model for getting work done before play. Establish a homework routine-same time, same place, every day. Most importantly, read to her or have her read to you every day. In kindergarten, reading may be her main homework.

Liontos, L. *New Year's Resolution: Help Your Kids Do Great In School*, 2007, [www.readingrockets.org/article/12868](http://www.readingrockets.org/article/12868)

## Almost Worth Not Learning

One study suggested that some kids may resist learning to read by themselves because they fear they will lose the close contact of story time with the parents. Reassure your child that you will continue to read with her 20 minutes a day and then she can read to you 10 minutes after that!

Healy, J., *Your Child's Growing Mind*, Doubleday, 1994.



## Allergies

When your child brings a friend home from school, be careful what you serve for snacks. Even if your child doesn't have allergies, many children do have them and the number is rapidly growing. Over 11 million Americans suffer from them. The most significant are allergies to peanuts. Some of these will be outgrown, but others may linger.

Kalb, C., "Fear and Allergies in the Lunchroom," *Newsweek*, November 5, 2007.

## STORY ART AND READING SKILLS

Each time you read to your child, try extending the story by having him work on an arts and crafts project related to the story, such as making character puppets or draw a picture that represents a story event. Projects such as these can help build reading comprehension and sequencing skills, which are an important part of understanding what we read.

*Is Art Frivolous?*, [www.earlychildhoodnews.com](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com)

## Child Learn In Kindergarten?

What will My

By now your kindergartner is settled into kindergarten and learning lots of interesting facts she loves to share with you. While she is in kindergarten we must not overlook the general simple skills, so here is this month's list.

### General Skills

- ✓ Learns to tie her shoes.
- ✓ Zips up her clothes.
- ✓ Learns basic colors.
- ✓ Learns to recognize her name in print.
- ✓ Is able to color, print, draw, and cut with control.
- ✓ Follows directions of several steps and follows routines.

- ✓ Learns to work independently.
- ✓ Takes part in other school activities, (music, gym, library, computer).

