

Making A Good Start for the Third Quarter

Please help us keep working with your child as the third quarter moves forward.



- **Bring your child to school on time.** The staff is outside greeting students until 8:10 a.m. If you arrive at school after that time, you need to park your car and escort your child into the building. For safety reasons, students cannot arrive at school before 7:55 a.m. (including patrols) unless you have made special arrangements with a teacher. We do not have staff on duty prior to 7:55 a.m. to supervise children.
- **Check agendas daily for information and homework.** The agendas are an important part of our home/school communication program. It is also a great habit to develop with your child.
- **Use the Kiss & Ride name cards when picking up your child.** This is a big help to us and keeps the line moving. We greatly appreciate all the parents/guardians that always display their child's name.
- **Get organized the night before school.** It is the student's responsibility to bring lunches, homework and instruments to school. Help your child plan what they need for the next day in the evening.
- **Read with your child everyday.** The best way to become a good reader is by reading. Put aside some time every evening to enjoy a good book together.

☺ Theresa Carhart

Hayfield Elementary School
7633 Telegraph Road
Alexandria, VA 22315
Main: 703-924-4500
Attendance: 703-924-4545
Web: www.fcps.edu/HayfieldES

It's Time for National School Counseling Week...

National School Counseling Week is February 1-5. School counselors support the academic, emotional and social growth of all students through classroom guidance lessons, individual counseling, small group counseling, parent consultations and support programs.

One frequent question we receive from parents is "how do I improve my child's self-esteem?" The following information can help guide you.

Tips for Developing Healthy Self-Esteem in Your Child

Most parents are aware that their child's feelings of self-worth are linked to social and academic success. But, sometimes parents are unaware of how easy it is to damage their child's self-esteem without even realizing it.

1. Help your child feel special and appreciated.

Research indicates that one of the main factors that contributes to a child developing hope and becoming resilient is the presence of at least one adult who helps the child to feel special and appreciated; an adult who does not ignore a child's problems, but focuses energy on a child's strengths. One way for you to do this is to set aside "special times" during the week alone with each one of your children. If your child is young, it is even helpful for you to say, "When I read to you or play with you, I won't even answer the phone if it rings." Also, during these special times, focus on things that your child enjoys doing so that he/she has an opportunity to relax and to display his/her strengths.

2. Help your child to develop problem-solving and decision-making skills.

High self-esteem is associated with solid problem-solving skills. For example, if your child is having difficulty with a friend, you can ask him/her to think about a couple of ways of solving the situation. Don't worry if your child can't think of solutions immediately; you can help him/her reflect upon possible solutions. Also, try role-playing situations with your child to help demonstrate the steps involved in problem solving.

3. Avoid comments that are judgmental, instead framing them in positive terms.

For example, a comment that often sounds accusatory is, "Try harder and put in more of an effort." Many children do try hard and still have difficulty. Instead say, "We have to figure out better strategies to help you learn." Children are less defensive when the problem is cast as strategies that must be changed rather than as something deficient with their motivation. This approach also reinforces problem-solving skills.

4. Be an empathetic parent.

Many well-meaning parents, out of their own frustration, have been heard to say such things as, "Why don't you listen to me?" or "Why don't you use your brain?" If your child is having difficulty with learning, it is best to be empathetic and say to your child that you know he/she is having difficulty; then you can cast the difficulty into a prob-

(Continued on page 2)

Here's What's Coming Up...

February 5	AAP Level IV Referrals Due
February 9	PTA Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.
February 10	GEMS 3:00 p.m.
February 10	Rescheduled Winter Concert 6:30 p.m.

(Continued from page 1)

lem to be solved and involve your child in thinking about possible solutions.

5. Provide choices for your child.

This will also minimize power struggles. For example, ask your child if he/she would like to be reminded five or ten minutes before bedtime to get ready for bed. These beginning choices help to set the foundation for a feeling of control over his/her life.

6. Do not compare siblings.

It is important not to compare siblings and to highlight the strengths of all children in your family.

7. Highlight your child's strengths.

Unfortunately, many youngsters view themselves in a negative way, especially in terms of school. Make a list of your child's "islands of competence" or areas of strength. Select one of these islands and find ways of reinforcing and displaying it. For example, if your child is a wonderful artist, display his artwork.

8. Provide opportunities for children to help.

Children seem to have an inborn need to help others. Providing opportunities for children to help is a very concrete way of displaying their "islands of competence" and of highlighting that they have something to offer their world. Involving your child in charitable work is just one possible example. Helping others certainly boosts your child's self-esteem.

9. Have realistic expectations and goals for your child.

Realistic expectations provide your child with a sense of control. The development of self-control goes hand-in-glove with self-esteem.

10. If your child has a learning disability, help your child to understand the nature of his/her problem.

Many children have fantasies and misconceptions about their learning problems that add to their distress (for example, one child said he/she was born with half a brain). Having realistic information can give your child a greater sense of control and a feeling that things can be done to help the situation.

February is Children's Dental Health Month

The two major oral health diseases are tooth decay (dental caries) and gum (periodontal) disease. Both diseases are influenced by nutrition and diet. Nutrition plays an important role in the development of teeth and oral tissue. Dental caries result from the interaction between the tooth, oral bacteria, and dietary carbohydrates (sugar and starch).

Plaque is a sticky film of bacteria that forms on our teeth and turns the sugars and starches in our foods into acids. These acids act on the tooth enamel and cause tooth decay. If high-acid producing or sugar foods (raisins, cookies, cakes, potato chips) are consumed, they should be eaten with meals, not as snacks. Cheeses, popcorn, raw fruits and vegetables are low-acid producing foods and make healthy snacks.

To prevent dental disease, remember to:

1. Brush teeth after every meal with fluoridated toothpaste.
2. Floss teeth daily.
3. Visit the dentist and dental hygienist regularly.
4. Eat a nutritionally balanced diet.
5. Avoid foods that stay in the mouth a long time and stick to teeth (raisins, hard candies, and caramels).



The Annual SCA Food Drive Is Underway

The Hayfield Elementary SCA is sponsoring our annual food drive from February 1 through February 26. The SCA is encouraging students to bring food items in non-breakable containers to school such as cans, bags, boxes or plastic containers. Non-perishable items are needed, particularly sugar, oil, pancake mix and syrup, mayonnaise, ketchup, coffee, jelly, mustard, baby food, baby formula, diapers (sizes 3, 4, and 5), laundry supplies, dishwashing detergent, cleaning supplies, and personal hygiene supplies. Students should bring any donations to their classrooms.

The SCA appreciates any donations for our food drive. The donated items will benefit local families in need.

Don't Forget the Hayfield Elementary Post Office

SCA is sponsoring a "mini post office" as one of our school service projects. This year's post office runs from now until spring break in late March, where students may write letters to their friends and teachers. They will address the letters, attach a 1¢ stamp that they purchase from their classroom teachers, and place it in their classroom bins for pickup. Classrooms have mailboxes outside their doors for mail collection as well as the office, library, and several other areas in the building. SCA members collect, sort and deliver the mail Tuesdays through Fridays. Join the fun, write a letter to your child, buy a stamp from the main office, and mail it by way of our Hayfield Elementary Post Office!