

Firm, Fair & Consistent®

Patrick Henry Academy
Patriots

Guiding Students for School Success

Give your child the courage to face consequences

It's tempting for kids to make excuses for their misbehavior. ("My brother did it!") After all, they want to please their parents. But no one is perfect, and everyone must accept responsibility. This takes practice. It helps to learn how to respond to excuses such as:

- **"I didn't do it."** If your child is being dishonest, probe for the truth without being judgmental. "That doesn't make sense to me. I'd like to know what really happened." Also mention how much you appreciate honesty. When he confesses, compliment him for telling the truth, but still enforce the consequence.
- **"It was his fault."** Blaming someone else is an easy way to avoid guilt. Instead of letting your child off the hook, focus on solutions. Say, "How can we keep this from happening again?" Later, when things are calm, talk about the situation. How did it make others feel? What if your child had made a different choice?
- **"I didn't mean to do it."** Accidents do happen, but rather than placing blame, discuss results. "Either way, you can help me clean it up. Unfortunately, we'll be late for the party." By stating the facts calmly, you encourage honesty and good behavior in the future.



Source: S. Marshall, "How to Teach Kids to Accept Responsibility for Their Actions," Parents.com, www.parents.com/kids/responsibility/values/its-not-my-fault/.

If your child runs, jumps, hops and zips through her day, she might have a tough time sitting still for long stretches to do homework. So don't insist on it. Instead, build regular "get up and move" breaks into her study sessions.

This will help her stay focused when she actually does sit down to work. And it just may keep those "ants in the pants" from getting out of control!



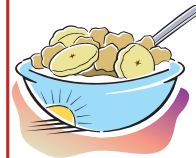
Work with the school for year-long success

Research is clear on the value of parent involvement. When parents and schools work together, kids do better in school. Find out if your child's teacher is looking for volunteers. If so, sign up now if you can.

Look for ways to help support your child's learning at home, too. Supervise a regular homework time. Read as a family. If you have concerns about learning or behavior, talk with the teacher soon.



Nutrition matters!



Good nutrition won't just make your child healthier. It may help her perform better in school.

Research shows that kids who are well nourished:

- **Are better able** to concentrate in class.
- **Have an easier time** completing complex tasks.
- **Earn higher scores** on tests.
- **Have fewer mood swings.**

So always start your child's day with a healthful breakfast—and send her off to school ready to learn!

Source: "Proper Nutrition Adds to Success in School," BabyBoomers.com, www.babyboomers.com/proper-nutrition-adds-to-success-in-school/188.

Just the facts, please

Avoid arguments with your child by stating facts, not your opinion. Here's an example:

- **OPINION:** "You never clean up your schoolwork!"
- **FACT:** "Your notebooks are scattered on the floor."

The first statement practically invites an angry reply from your child. But the second? It's a simple statement of fact—and one that's hard to argue with!

Source: Scott Brown, *How to Negotiate with Kids ... Even When You Think You Shouldn't*, ISBN: 0-14-200398-0, Penguin.



Chores teach more than responsibility

Children learn responsibility from chores, but that's not all! Helping around the house also teaches respect, independence and academic skills.

For example:

- **Folding laundry** encourages kids to sort and match. "Let's make separate piles for Mom, Dad and you." "Can you match socks by color or design?"
- **Cleaning up** is a perfect chance to organize. Pick a box for trading cards or a shelf for books. Alphabetize books by author or shelve them by size.
- **Watering plants** teaches about biology and the environment. What do plants need to stay alive? What happens if you forget to water them? What if you water them too much?



Source: J. Nelson, "Chores that Teach," *Scholastic Parent & Child*, April 2010, Scholastic.

Questions & Answers

Q: I'm pretty good about sticking to routines during the school week. But the "wheels come off the wagon" on weekends. How can I bring some order to my child's days off without taking all the fun out of his downtime?

A: Don't think of routines as taking the fun out of your child's weekends. Think of them as a way to bring structure to his fun! In other words, look at routines as a tool you use to help your child fit everything he wants and needs to do—from playing outside with friends to finishing chores—into his two-day breaks from school.



To get the most out of your weekend routines:

- **Model them after your weekday routines.** If you have a bedtime or morning routine on school days, don't abandon it on the weekend. Instead, tweak it. For example, continue to have your child follow a "wake up, eat breakfast and get dressed" routine in the morning. But let him start it at 9:00 instead of 7:30.
- **Take your "must-dos" into account.** Does your child play a team sport every Saturday? Do you attend religious services together on Sunday? Then factor in these obligations when creating your weekend routine.
- **Be flexible.** Overly rigid routines are not much fun, especially on weekends. So be sure yours allows for plenty of playtime and relaxation. Stick with predictable rituals for things like chores, dinnertime and bath time, but beyond that, it's okay to loosen up a bit. It's the weekend, after all!

Don't ignore those school-year jitters

Does your child seem quieter or moodier these days? He could be experiencing a case of the "new-school-year jitters." To help him deal with his nervousness:

- **Talk to him—and listen.** Let your child know you understand and are there to help.
- **Reassure him.** Remind your child that it's normal to be anxious about the new school year.
- **Seek help.** If your child's distress gets worse—not better—within a couple of weeks, talk to his teacher.

Source: M.J. Rapini, "Easing Those Jitters with the New School Year," Associated Content, www.associatedcontent.com/article/2100535/easing_those_jitters_with_the_new_school.html?cat=25.

Take time to meet your child's teacher

Who's one of your best allies when it comes to your child's education? Her teacher! Your child's teacher can offer insight into what happens in the classroom and how your child is doing there. She can also tell you what she expects from her students.

So take time to connect with your child's teacher, whether in person, by phone or via email. It could be one of the most important connections you make all year!



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