

Firm, Fair & Consistent®

George Read Middle School

Guiding Students for School Success

Channel your child's extra energy with regular, healthy exercise

The winter months have most likely contributed to some pent-up energy in your active child. March 9th is the start of Daylight Saving Time and March 20th is the first day of spring.

So it's a great month to start including some outdoor activities in your child's daily routine. And according to experts, increased physical activity in children results in better grades—and reduced disruptive behavior.

To keep your child active:

- **Give your child chores that get him moving.** He could rake, pick up tree limbs or sweep outside.
- **Do something physically active with your child every week.** Throw a ball back and forth. Go biking. Take a walk. Fly a kite. Play tag with your child.
- **Show your child that you enjoy exercise.** Let him see you walking, exercising or playing a sport.
- **Monitor your child's passive activities**—playing on the computer and watching television. Be sure to balance that time with physically active play.



Source: S. Blackthorn, *The Parent's Success Guide to Parenting*, ISBN: 0-7645- 5927-3 (Wiley Publishing, Inc., 1-800-762-2974, www.wiley.com).

Who's the boss? You are!

Are you struggling to keep your cool with your child? Remind yourself that you are in control. Set a few straightforward rules about responsibilities at home and at school. Be sure your child knows what will happen when rules are broken.



Remember: When it comes to discipline, being firm, fair and consistent is the key.

Source: Elizabeth Bruce, "Anger Management for Moms," *Mothering.com*, www.mothering.com/articles/growing_child/discipline/anger_management.html.

What's the best thing about the TV remote? It lets you change the channel. So the next time your child watches a show that suddenly gets too violent, flip to something else or turn it off altogether. Explain why the program is not okay. Also, remind her that violence in real life has real-life consequences.



Source: "Violence in the Media," *JAMA Patient Pages*, www.hmc.psu.edu/childrens/healthinfo/articles/violencemedia.pdf.

Teach responsibility one day at a time

It would be nice if teaching responsibility happened quickly. But it's a work in progress. Age-appropriate tasks can help, as long as they're assigned correctly.



Give your child a few tasks (not too many) that she can handle. Make them part of the family routine. Don't expect perfection and keep your sense of humor when challenges arise.

Source: Mary VanClay, "The responsible child: How to teach responsibility," *parentcenter*, http://parentcenter.babycenter.com/0_the-responsible-child-how-to-teach-responsibility_65726.pc.

Good social skills are just four P's away

Use these four P's to nurture and encourage your child's social skills.

Here's how:

- **Practice.** Show your child what good social skills look like.
- **Praise.** When he behaves properly, let your child know how proud you are.
- **Point out.** If you see an example of someone using good social skills, tell your child.
- **Prompt.** If he's just learning a new skill—such as saying "Excuse me"—give him a nudge when it's time to use it.



Source: "Practicing Social Skills with Children," *Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics Online*, www.dbpeds.org/articles/detail.cfm?id=114.

Routines are vital to children's success

Families often find that routines are the key to finishing important tasks on time, such as getting ready for school. For example, parents have found it helpful to have their child:

- **Plan at night.** Choose the next day's outfit before bed—head to toe. Pack school supplies and even have breakfast, lunch and snacks ready to go. Keep spare change handy for days when your child needs to buy something at school.
- **Set an alarm.** Have your child go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day. Give her an alarm clock to build independence and move things along. If she reads at night, set a time limit that encourages reading and rest.



Source: "Easing Into the School Routine," Disneyfamily.com, <http://family.go.com/education/article-GS-18390-Easing-into-the-School-Routine-t>.

Questions & Answers

Q: My fifth grader is a good kid, but he complains about never having a chance to relax. How can I help him manage his time better so he won't feel overwhelmed by schoolwork?

A: It sounds like you already know the solution to your child's problem: time management. The better he is able to master the clock, the less likely he'll be to feel overwhelmed. To help him strengthen his time-management skills:

- **Have him define what he wants.** It's hard to reach a goal if you don't know what it is. So ask your child to state his goal clearly. "I want more free time to play and relax."
- **Develop a plan.** If your child's goal is more free time, he'll need to do more than just wish for it. Instead, he'll have to look at how he spends his after-school hours and see where he can carve out more down time.
- **Give him the right tools.** Make managing his time easier by teaching your child to use a calendar or planner. If he gets home at 3:00 and dinner is at 6:00, for example, he could write "Do homework from 3:30-4:00" and "Read from 4:00-4:30." This will help him see that he actually has plenty of free time—90 whole minutes between reading and dinner.
- **Congratulate him.** Praise your child when you see him making progress. Let him know how proud you are when he uses his calendar carefully instead of throwing a fit because he "doesn't have any free time!"



Source: "Time Management for Kids," ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication, <http://reading.indiana.edu/www/famres/ptalk/pdf/026time.pdf>.

Lessons from home = safety at school

Things you do at home may help your child avoid violence at school.



You should:

- **Serve as a strong role model.** Show your child how to handle anger appropriately.
- **Be a good listener.** Let your child know she can always come to you with problems.
- **Talk about bullies** and how to avoid them.
- **Brainstorm ways** to resolve conflicts. Teach your child that fighting isn't the answer.

Source: "Are Children Safe at School?" RevolutionHealth, www.revolutionhealth.com/healthy-living/parenting/school-age-kids/school-learning/school-safety.

Doing chores should not be a chore

Don't let chore time become tantrum time! To keep your child from fussing the minute you hand him a broom:

- **Tell him exactly** what chores he's expected to do.
- **Rely on routines.** Don't surprise him with different tasks every week.
- **Evaluate his to-do list.** Be sure you're not asking too much.
- **Praise him** when he completes his work.

Source: "Chores and Allowance," American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org/publiced/BK5_Chores.htm.

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