

Madison messenger



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and Madison Home & School Association

Visit our website at www.ncusd203.org/madison

November/December 2003

Home & School President Report

Dear Parents, Students and Staff,

The holidays and the year 2004 are rapidly approaching and I am amazed at how fast this year has gone. Football, volleyball and cross-country seasons have ended and wrestling, cheerleading and boys basketball have just begun. The school is buzzing with activities everyday. The Home and School Association has been busy as well. Our Historians, Margaret Roemer and Jane Sterrett, have been busy ordering new Championship Banners for the gymnasium. Did you know that Madison has won over 100 conference titles in the last 25 years? They have added two additional this year thanks to our Lightweight and Heavyweight football teams. The new banners will begin arriving in the next few weeks. Stop by the gym to see the history of MJHS athletics.

If you are thinking of giving magazine subscriptions for holiday gifts, you can order them online at QSP.com and Madison will continue to receive credit throughout the year. Thanks to Brenda Steinberg, Debbie Wayne, Jill Johnson and Jenni Duerinck for all the time they invested in this year's magazine drive.

Our Greeter Program continues with over 60 volunteers signed up to help. Terese Krisch has done a wonderful job of making sure both shifts are covered everyday. If you are one of those that signed up to help, please be sure to check your schedules as the office staff and teachers have come to depend on you being "at the door."

Finally, I just wanted to mention a program that Patty Gallahue-Weiss and I attended the other night put on by the Naperville Police Department titled Internet Safety. Nationally known author, Detective Mike Sullivan, presented an incredibly informative evening on how some children and adults are using the Internet in dangerous ways. He showed us how unsafe Internet chat rooms can be and stressed the importance of parental supervision over your children's Internet activities. Patty is our Resource Officer here at Madison and she will be more than happy to answer any questions you have regarding this topic.

Please contact her at Gallahup@naperville.il.us
Wishing you a safe and peaceful holiday season.

*Gretchen Zelinski President ~
MJHS Home & School Association*

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Dad's Celebration Breakfast

Mark your calendars now. All Madison students and their fathers are invited to the 4th annual Dad's Celebration Breakfast on Saturday, February 7, 2004 from 8:30 to 10:30 am. It will be a wonderful opportunity to have breakfast, listen to music, and enjoy fun activities throughout the school.

*Watch for an invitation to
come home with your child in January*

Message From Our Principal

NOTEWORTHY THOUGHTS . . . From Madison Junior High

By Erin K. Anderson

The leaves have changed and we have comfortably nestled into another exciting fall and winter season at Madison. Our students have already been busy with field-trips and special events to support their learning. These experiences couldn't be made possible without the dedication and creativity of our staff and the support from our parents. Our November Fall Literacy night was a huge success and we are looking forward to our fall and winter concert season.

Whether it is in exploring the prairie, tracking down Harry Potter or collaborating on a team building course, our students continue to experience how learning is life and life is learning.

Communication continues to be a paramount project for Naperville School District 203 and Madison Junior High. Thank you to the families who hosted the fall parent coffees and for the parents that attended the one at Madison. Striving to keep our parents in the loop of conversation only enriches our partnership together and strengthens the growth and learning of every child. In this effort, we are attempting to secure email addresses of families. On November 20 we sent home a

"Communication continues to be a paramount project for Naperville District 203 and Madison Junior High."

letter inviting families to "register" their email accounts with our School, Family, Community, Partnership team. The goal is to acquire email addresses and set up distribution lists for the building, for the teams and other special groups. From there, we can share updates, special reminders or even daily announcements on a regular basis. You will have the luxury of receiving this communication at home or work and be able



to read it at your leisure. Mr. Mike Jaensch the leader of SFCP has volunteered to organize this information for Madison. Please contact him at his email Mike@Jaensch.us.

As many of you know, we have our daily announcements posted on our website. We are also posting them in the front office window for any student who may miss hearing the announcements or for viewing by families who may be at Madison visiting us. Please visit our website regularly to find out the latest news and special events that are coming up.

Finally, the season of reflection and giving thanks is upon us. Madison wishes our families a safe and happy holiday season.

This is the year!
Erin K. Anderson



Time sure flies! It seems like the school year just started, and yet the Christmas holidays are fast approaching. As we head into winter, I'm happy to report that the SFCP is off to a great start. Our principal coffees have been a great success and have given dozens of parents the opportunity to meet in an informal setting with Erin and the feedback has been universally positive. In our first coffee, we even had a special guest when our Superintendent, Dr. Lies, joined us. We plan on having some more coffees after the holidays, so stay tuned for news!

Also after the holidays, we will be having our Dad's Breakfast. Geralyn Petrauskas, who along with Kim Hamilton, is heading up the planning for this year's event,

has some of the details below. FELLOW DADS . . . make sure you keep your calendar's clear for this important and fun event. Not only will you enjoy it, your kids really get a kick out of showing you around the school.

Our next big event will be the first annual Madison Parent-Teacher Golf Tournament. We're still working on a firm date, but it will hopefully be a weekend in May.

And finally, I'm happy to say that our webpage is up and running under the Madison website. If you look under Parent Links, you can see what we're all about and also find up-to-date info on upcoming and ongoing activities. Check it out!

That's it for this month!

Mike Jaensch
Madison SFCP
Mike@Jaensch.us
428-3901

Next Meeting
January, 2004
7:00 pm, LRC
Check the website for date and time

"EXPLORING THE EXPLORATORIES" MUSIC DEPARTMENT

By Janet Kurinsky, MJHS Choir Director

The Madison Music Department is busy preparing for the Autumn Concerts. On Tuesday, November 18 the MJHS Bands performed. The sixth grade band performed a fun piece called *Recess Rock*. I hope you had an opportunity to see the first appearance of the Madison 6th grade band perform this fun, wild piece. The 7th grade band performed a highly entertaining mix of band literature, from the lyrical to the energetic: the beautiful phrases of *Quietly Come* and *Whisper* and the jovial, up-tempo percussion feature, *Mallet Maniacs*. The eighth grade band dazzled with their concert selections. One selection, *Bugler's Holiday*, featured the trumpet section.

On Wednesday, November 19 the MJHS Orchestras and the 7th and 8th grade chorus also presented a concert. This concert will featured vocal jazz selections from both choirs and concluded with the combined orchestras performing a new piece entitled *Dragon Dances*, by Asian American composer, Soon Hee Newbold.

On November 5, the violin players in the MJHS Orchestra participated in a fiddle improvisation workshop led by Jim Kanas. Jim Kanas is a Jazz Guitarist/Folk Fiddler who sings and plays an assortment of American folk instruments. He has appeared on "Arts Across Illinois" on WTTW11/ Chicago PBS and also live and on recordings with many well known jazz artists. The orchestra students worked on fiddle improvisation techniques with Mr. Kanas during a morning workshop held at Kennedy Junior High, and in the evening, four MJHS violinists participated in a concert given by Mr. Kanas in the NNHS auditorium. The entire event was made possible due to a generous grant to the District 203 Junior High Orchestra program funded by the Naperville Education Foundation.

The MJHS 6th Chorus will present a concert with the Bluegrass Strings and Jazz Band on Tuesday, December 9. This concert will be held in the Madison Cafetorium at 7:30 pm.



COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Bullying/Harassment:

Bullying is another name for harassment and can be physical, verbal, emotional, and/or sexual. It consists of ongoing, intentional infliction of abuse by one or more students and can include teasing, threats, assault, theft, sexual harassment, and social isolation. Bullying has long been dismissed as "kids being kids". However, the staff and administration at Madison know that bullying is serious. Bullying, which is unacceptable, undermines our efforts at Madison to create a positive school climate.

Madison has taken an active role in helping students to understand that bullying/harassment can be stopped. Students can do things to stop the bullying, beginning with telling an adult. We want students to know that if they are being bullied they are not helpless.

If you need more information or assistance with a bullying/harassment situation, contact your child's counselor.

6th grade:	Karen Irvine, Lyn Walsh	420-6542
7th grade:	Pat Olinger	420-6401
8th grade:	Debbie Olson	420-6403

8th Graders/High School Registration:

As hard as it is to imagine, 8th grade students will soon begin the high school registration process. On December, 8th graders will spend time in the computer lab with their counselor exploring the DISCOVER program. This program is designed to help students explore their interests, abilities, and values, and is a good tool to use when choosing high school courses. Then in January counselors from Naperville Central will visit with 8th grade students to talk generally about high school. Students will also receive a copy of the Naperville Central High School Course Description Book and the Freshman Guide. More information will be forthcoming as dates for high school registration are confirmed.

JOIN A CLUB!

Newspaper Club - Mrs. Aimonette
Intramural Bowling - Mrs. Vermaat
Fellowship of Christian Athletes - Mr. Bakke
Technology Club - Mr. Beckman
Yearbook Club - Mrs. Labeledz

Environmental Club - Miss Owen
Student Council - Mr. VanHarlingen
Drama Club - Mrs. O'Boyle
Amnesty International - Mr. Beckman
Science Fair - Mr. Winter

A WORD ABOUT COMPUTER VIRUSES FROM THE COMPUTER LAB

In today's computing world, it behooves all users to be aware of vulnerabilities from viruses. Please make sure that you are well versed in what computer viruses are and what damage they can do. Then, discuss and implement a virus protection plan for your family.

There are several virus tutorials online as well as pages of frequently asked questions (FAQ's). Use your favorite search engine to search for "computer virus tutorial" or "computer virus FAQ". Spend a few minutes researching what they are and how they spread. Discuss with your family and friends what the best virus protection plan might be for you.

There are two main software packages that are available for purchase: McAfee and Symantec's Dr. Norton. After purchasing and installing a virus protection program,

- Be sure to configure it to scan all emails as they come in as well as scheduling, regular (weekly) disk scans.
- Insure that you are diligent in scanning floppy disks that are used.
- Be sure to get (download) their frequent updates as new viruses are cropping up each week.

These programs will only provide the level of protection that you ask for.

At Madison, we have implemented the following virus protection plan. All workstations in the network have E-Trust Antivirus software from Computer Associates. Our virus definition files are updated weekly, as well as imme-

diately, if new viruses are found by Computer Associates. This software will detect and "clean" incoming viruses.

Students and staff are expected to do a manual "scan" of their disks or CD's from home before they use them. If a virus is found on a disk, the software will attempt to "cure" it. Once cured, the file can be used. If it is not a curable virus, it will be quarantined, and the file cannot be used. If students find viruses on their disks from home, they should let their parents know and discuss their virus protection plan at home.

Important Safeguards:

- Never open unexpected e-mail attachments, even if they're from friends
- Update your anti-virus software at least weekly! Then install the updated version
- Learn more about your computer. This will help you spot viruses
- Back up your important files and ensure that they can be restored
- Have multiple backups of important files. Make sure you date the backups. If a virus pops up, restore from a backup taken prior to problems
- Remove diskettes from floppy disk drives before turning computers on or off
- Understand your computer's anti-virus software, configure it properly, and use it often

See University of Nebraska's Virus Tutorial at www.unl.edu/security/viruses copyright permission

District 203 Preschool Program

This year the District's Early Childhood Program has expanded. In previous years the District has provided programs for preschool age children who are at-risk for learning or for those children with special needs. This year, as a pilot program, the district has expanded its programs for young children by providing preschool opportunities to community students within the district.

Community students may attend the program if they were three or four years of age as of September 1, 2003 and are residents of District 2003. The program is four half days per week, Monday through Thursday. Presently the district offers one morning session and one afternoon session at Beebe Elementary School. Parents provide transportation for their children and there is a tuition fee of \$175.00 per month.

As with all of the District's Early Childhood programs, The Illinois Early Learning Standards are followed, which further align with the Kindergarten through Grad 12, Illinois Learning Standards.

For further information, please contact the District Early Childhood Office at 420-6899. Limited openings remain for the 2003-2004 school year.

Lunch Passes

In the past students at Madison who forgot their lunch or lunch money could get a "Lunch Pass." This pass enabled students to get a voucher for cheese and crackers, milk and a vegetable—the cost was \$1.00. The student was expected to repay the \$1.00 in a timely fashion. Unfortunately the process often involved repeated reminders and frequent contacts to students in order for them to fulfill their obligations to Sodexo, our food service providers.

In order to encourage student responsibility and support our partnership with Sodexo, we are honoring their request to discontinue this practice. As a result, beginning December 1st, Lunch Passes will no longer be issued. We encourage families to discuss strategies to address the situation should it occur.

Please feel free to contact Mrs. Lewis-Bajusz with questions or concerns.

OUTDOOR RECESS – is held unless the temperature or the wind chill is 0° or below.

Reading Connection

Introduce your child to many kinds of information in daily newspapers. Select a topic or an important event to follow for two or three days. Try reading about the event in different newspapers, listening to the news, or watching the TV news. Compare and contrast the information given and discuss the topic.

Student Absences

Please remember that student absences **MUST BE** reported on the Attendance Line(420-6950) before 8 a.m. or 420-6400 after 8 a.m. each day that a student will not attend school. It is especially important that anticipated absences, such as those associated with holiday travel, be called in to the Office (420-6400) with the date(s) the student will be gone. Otherwise, the Office will be trying to contact you at home, work, or through emergency numbers to make sure your child is safe. Please be sure to keep all numbers current by sending a note to the Office or by phone.

Allergy Alert

A number of students at Madison has life threatening allergies. Most of the affected students have allergies to peanuts and/or tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, etc). Some students are allergic to foods containing dairy products, gluten/wheat, eggs, and insect stings. When a student with a life threatening allergy is exposed to the substance they are allergic to, their reaction can include hives, rash and itching, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramps, coughing, and throat clearing. Swelling of the face, hands, tongue and throat, dangerously low blood pressure, increased heart rate, and shock can occur and constitute a medical emergency.

Because the school wishes to minimize the exposure of students with life threatening allergies to their allergy triggers, we ask for the help of everyone in the school community.

Exposure can be decreased if anyone eating obvious nut containing foods, especially those that are sticky like peanut butter, wash their hands before coming to school or going back to the classroom. We ask that everyone observe the rule of no eating on school busses. Children should be taught not to share food with others.

Your cooperation in following these simple steps as well as minimizing, when possible, the amount of nut containing products in the school environment will help keep all of our school population safe.

Questions regarding life threatening allergies and other health related questions may be directed to the school nurse in your child's building.

Have You Met Our School Resource Officer, Mrs. Patty Weiss?

Mrs. Weiss attended Western Illinois University where she graduated with a degree in Law Enforcement and Psychology. She was later hired by the Naperville Police Department and graduated from the Chicago Police Academy.

Mrs. Weiss has been with the Naperville Police Department for 16 years. During this time, she served as a Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, Juvenile Investigator; Dare Officer and Bicycle Patrol Officer. Mrs. Weiss has 3 children of her own and lives in Naperville.

The School Resource Officer Unit consists of police officers that serve in the middle schools and the high schools to prevent crime, educate students, and serve as a vital resource to students, parents, and educators in solving problems, maintaining order, and mentoring youth.

The Naperville Police Department has worked in cooperation with Naperville School District 203 and Indian Prairie School District 204 to deploy officers who work directly out of the three high schools and eight middle schools in the City of Naperville.



School Idling Procedure Notification

Protecting Students' Health by Protecting Them from Vehicle Exhaust

Recently District 203 implemented procedures to protect the health and safety of children at school from harmful vehicle emissions. The goal is for schools to reduce the unnecessary idling of buses near the school building, in order to reduce students' exposure to emissions. We are also requesting parents to assist us in this mission.



Why is idling of vehicles a problem?

- **Vehicle exhaust is hazardous to human health, especially children's.** Studies have linked pollution from vehicles to increased rates of cancer, heart and lung disease, asthma and allergies. Children breathe more rapidly and inhale more pollutants per pound of body weight than adults, and their lungs are still developing. A study by Yale University found that students on school buses are exposed to 5 to 15 times the levels of particulate pollution. Levels are especially high when buses idle and line up back-to-front. Idling of cars also increases the levels of pollution near schools.
- **Idling wastes resources and damages the environment.** Burning fuel needlessly costs money and contributes to air pollution problems that harm plants and animals.

Naperville Community Unit School District 203, with support of the Air Quality Committee, remains proactive in our efforts to create a healthier environment for your children by:

- Implementing a no-idling procedure for all vehicles at every school building.
- Posting "no idling" signs, training bus drivers and administrators that engines should be turned off when a vehicle is waiting or parked in close proximity to the school.

Parents and guardians are essential to ensuring the protection of children's health from vehicle exhaust. We ask that parents do not idle their vehicles in close proximity to the school when students are present. Please keep in mind, air-intake vents bring emissions directly into the classrooms.

NESPA Negotiations

The Naperville Educational Support Professionals Association (NESPA) has been negotiating with District 203 for a new contract since May, but has not been able to reach an agreement in 14 sessions, including three with a federal mediator. Our last contract expired on June 30th.

Our 540 professional employees are an important part of what makes our school district so great. The secretaries and office personnel, the instructional and special education assistants, and all the rest of our staff have contact with virtually every child in the District, every day. Our personnel help to provide a safe environment for learning, enrich the educational experiences of the children, and maintain student records.

After many months of negotiation District 203 has agreed to bring insurance premium rates for NESPA employees into line with other employee groups. The School Board also has agreed to resolve the salary inequity problem caused by hiring practices in the 1990's when our salaries were well below market. In order to fill a very large number of open positions, the District hired people at salaries higher than those of employees who already had many years of District experience. These 188 employees have been waiting three years for this adjustment to be completed. This is a one-time only adjustment.

Our still unresolved major issue is a salary increase. The School Board believes that salaries for certain of our positions are higher than those of certain "benchmark" districts similar to ours. At the time of our last negotiations, our salaries were at the bottom 10% when compared to those same benchmark districts. During our 2000-2003 contract negotiations, the Board committed to improving that situation and their actions went a long way toward improving the morale and retaining loyal, experienced employees. The District also benefited from being able to attract qualified people to open positions.

Now we are looking for a modest salary increase for all NESPA employees. The District's offer of an increase of 3.5% per year in salary and benefits leaves only 1.0-1.4% for salary increases after insurance costs and the inequity adjustment are deducted in the first year. Salary increases would range from 1.2-1.6% in the second year and 1.4-1.8% in the third year of their proposal.

Every other District 203 employee group – including administrators, exempt employees, teachers, custodians/maintenance workers, and bus drivers – has received at least a 2% salary increase. We feel we do not deserve less consideration than all other District personnel have received.

A strike is a negative action that affects everyone, especially students. We are positive people. That is shown by the fact that we have been working without a contract since July 1st, and trying very hard to resolve our issues and put together an acceptable agreement by now. We love our work and want to be recognized, respected and fairly compensated for the essential role we play in the excellence of District 203. We are the "heart" of the schools. We make a difference!

Thank you for your goodwill and support!

Kenni Johnston, President

Middle Years

Working together for school success

Short Stops

► Tough talk

Kids sometimes ask their parents how they behaved as children. Questions like "Did you use drugs?" may signal your child's curiosity about risky behaviors. Consider a response such as "Why do you ask?" to encourage your middle grader to discuss what's on her mind.

► Did You Know?

The average middle grader spends about 17 hours a week online and 14 hours watching television. But most kids devote only six hours a week to reading for pleasure. Suggest that your child cut down on Web and TV time and read a magazine or listen to music instead.

Source:

http://biz.yahoo.com/030724/245198_1.html

► I'll get it!

Do your children race to the phone on the first ring? Talking to friends is important, but parents can still set limits. Try not answering the phone during dinner. Meals are a time to share their day, not the phone.

► Worth quoting

"the beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you." *B.B. King*

► Just for fun

Student:

"Would you e-mail my test results to my parents?"

Teacher: "But your parents don't have a computer"

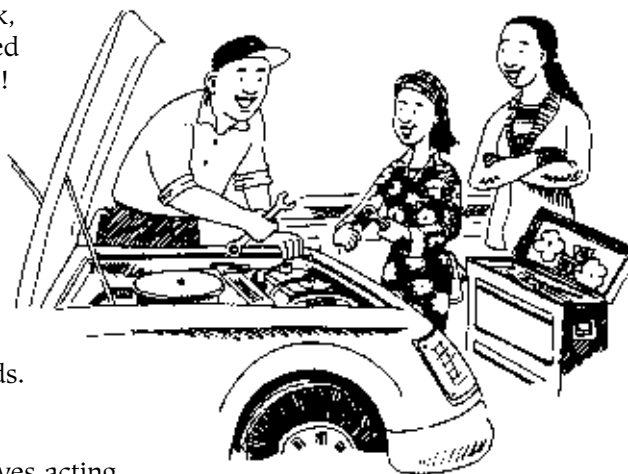
Student: "Exactly!"



Learning Never Ends

After studying all week, your middle grader is tired of learning, right? Wrong! He may be tired of sitting in class, but he's still eager to learn. Your child's interest in all sorts of things doesn't end at school.

Here's how several parents keep their kids learning on the week ends.



Friday night drama

"My daughter Rosa loves acting. One night I asked her to perform for our family, so she invited a friend to help her put on a play. It was such a success that they do one almost every Friday night. During the week, I take them to the library to find new material. Watching them sure beats Friday night reruns – and they're doing lots of reading."

Sunday comics

"My son Rob is always saying witty things. When I suggested he write down his one-liners, he turned his jokes into an essay called 'The Rob Report.' Talk about funny! I encouraged him to submit it to our community newspaper. The staff liked it so much, they've asked him to write another article for next Sunday's edition."

Saturdays at the shop

"Ask my daughter Jenny to write a poem, and she chews her lip. But fixing cars is something she enjoys. Every weekend her dad teaches her how to repair engines at his shop. As he puts it, 'Sonnets may frustrate her, but sockets make her happy!'"

Conference know-how

You can use parent-teacher conferences to build partnerships that improve your child's education. Use this checklist to make the most of these meetings:

☑ Begin With What's Important

Planning your questions ahead of time allows you to discuss critical issues before time runs out

☑ Share Information

Sharing your middle grader's strengths and accomplishments, as well as his weaknesses, will help the teacher understand him better.

☑ Stay Positive

Look for solutions instead of focusing on problems.

☑ Leave With a Plan

Discuss steps to improve your child's performance.

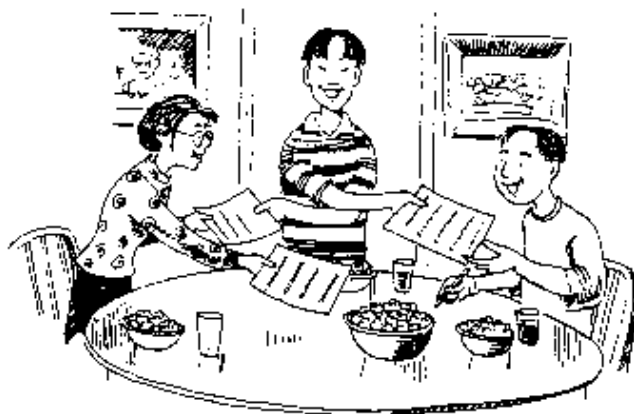
☑ Check back

After a couple weeks, contact the teacher to ask if the plan is working or if changes are needed.

Gearing up for tests

Middle graders know how to make their lunch and select their clothes – preparing for tests may be a little tougher. But tests don't have to be unbearable if your child knows how to handle them. Share these tips with your middle grader:

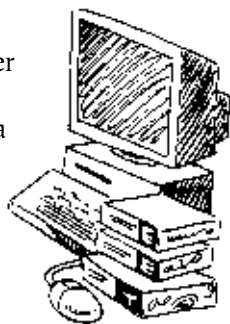
- Have your child rewrite class handouts in her own words. Rephrasing information will help her build understanding. Encourage her to write her class notes on one sheet so she can use the page as an easy-to-read study guide.
- During study sessions, suggest that your child and his friends make up their own practice tests. Then, have them swap papers and take each other's exam. Your middle grader may absorb more information by seeing how someone else interprets the material.
- Tell your middle grader to view the test as a challenge. She's being asked to demonstrate what she's learned, she has practiced hard, and now she's ready to show her stuff! Having a positive attitude about the test can help her score higher.



Q & A Playing electronic games

Q My middle graders enjoy playing computer games. We avoid games that promote violence, but are there benefits to playing other, nonviolent games?

A Experts have identified several benefits of friendlier electronic games. They can provide a valuable introduction to computers, and studies suggest they may improve hand-eye coordination and problem-solving skills. Keep the following gaming tips in mind.



As with most activities, moderation is key. Have your kids keep a log of their game time so they don't overdo it. Check the game's ratings to make sure they're appropriate. Finally, consider playing along with them. It's a great way to have fun together – and you'll find out what games they really like. Editor's Note: For more information about game ratings, visit the Entertainment Software Rating Board's Website at www.esrb.org/esrbratings-guide.asp, or call 800-771-3772.

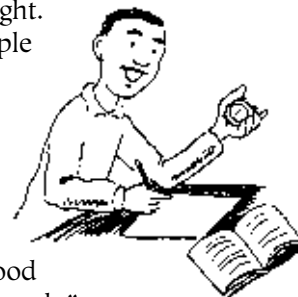
Parent to Parent – Homework Hotline

Homework had our son Charlie groaning every night. It wasn't too difficult, and he wasn't behind. He simply dreaded homework.

Charlie phoned his brother, Andrew, at college to ask him for advice. Andrew recommended starting with an energy booster, such as five minutes jogging, to kick-start Charlie's mind. He also suggested setting time limits for assignments like math or science worksheets. "Racing against the clock is a good challenge," he said, "as long as you hand in quality work."

Andrew's final advice to Charlie: "Do homework at school to free up your evenings. Do it during homeroom, lunch, or the bus ride home – but not during class." We agreed with Andrew but made a rule that Charlie must bring his work home to show us that it's done.

Charlie really appreciated his big brother's advice. He's also been using the same tips for long-term projects.



Activity Spaghetti Chemistry

Here's a fun activity that teaches your middle grader about chemical reactions.

Materials: tall, narrow glass jar; water; food coloring; baking soda; uncooked spaghetti; vinegar

Fill the jar about 1/2 full of warm water. Add a drop or two of food coloring (don't make it too dark). Pour two tablespoons of baking soda into the water, and toss in a handful of broken spaghetti. Then, pour 1/2 cup of vinegar into the mix. Stand back and watch what happens. Mixing the vinegar and baking soda creates a chemical reaction that produces carbon dioxide. Because the gas is lighter than water, the bubbles float to the surface, pushing the spaghetti up.

