

Parent Newsletter

For Title I Families

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Reflect on the school year and celebrate your child's success

As the school year winds down, it's a great time to help your child look back, look forward, give thanks and celebrate. Here's how:

- **Talk to your child's teacher.** Ask about your child's strengths and weaknesses. How has he improved? Where does he need more work? Ask what you can do to help your child over the summer.
- **Talk to your child about the school year.** Ask what he thinks went well. Talk about what challenged him most. Help him figure out what changes he should make for the upcoming school year.
- **Review your child's successes.** Look over schoolwork you've saved during the year. Point out how much your child has learned—how many new words, for example. Or how he can add and divide. Or how his writing has improved.
- **Help your child set learning goals for the summer.** How much time will he spend reading? What math concepts would he like to master? Guide him, based on the suggestions from his teacher.
- **Encourage your child to thank people who have made the year work**—the teacher, school nurse, librarian, food service worker, etc. This will help him appreciate how many people have helped him.
- **Celebrate the year's accomplishments with a special activity.** It doesn't have to be elaborate or cost anything. Just make plans to enjoy one-on-one time with your child.

Remember the 85-15 rule for discipline

Too often, discipline gets a bad rap. Many parents think it means punishing their children when they misbehave—which isn't enjoyable for kids or parents.

However, the word discipline actually comes from the Latin word disciplina, which means "teaching." So try thinking about discipline as a way to teach your child skills to be successful in life.

Most of your discipline—roughly 85 percent—should focus on encouraging the behavior you want to see from your child. You can do this by being a good role model. If you want your child to be kind, be kind to others. If you want your child to be responsible, fulfill your commitments.

You can also point out other people who display the behaviors you'd like to encourage. And when you see your child doing the right thing, offer praise.

That leaves just 15 percent of the time for correcting negative behavior. Set rules and enforce consequences consistently. Then express your confidence that your child will make better behavior choices next time.

Keep your child safe while navigating the online world

Technology has changed how students learn and how they socialize. Millions of kids in all age groups are online every day—at home, at school, at friends’ homes, at the library—and many are creating online content.

To promote online safety:

- **Discuss rules and expectations.** Use software that helps protect children, but supervise carefully, too. Allow your child to communicate online only with people you both know.
- **Set guidelines.** Establish times when technology is not allowed, and set a time when all devices must be turned off for the evening.
- **Remind your child** not to reveal personal information online, such as phone numbers, school name, passwords or your home’s location.
- **Keep internet use** out in the open. Have your child use computers and digital devices in common areas where you can supervise.
- **Learn about the websites and apps** your child wants to visit or download. Make sure you approve of the content.
- **Encourage your child to tell you** about any inappropriate content, messages or experiences online. Report concerns to the authorities.

For more safety tips, visit the Family Online Safety Institute at www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting.



Engage your child in outdoor science learning this summer

Research shows that girls start to lose interest in science as early as grade school. But a new study shows that learning science outdoors can boost girls’ knowledge and their interest in the subject.

In one program, female students explored science in the natural world and recorded their findings in a journal. These students earned higher grades in science and understood more about the science they learned.

To encourage this kind of hands-on science learning whatever your child’s gender, head outside and:

- **Have a scavenger hunt** for specific items that can be found nature.
- **Observe** insects and frogs.
- **Look for evidence** of animals, such as tracks.
- **Record how plants change** over the summer.

If you or your child see something puzzling, visit your library or go online to find the answer. By encouraging your child to ask questions now, you can encourage enthusiasm for science in the future.

Source: K.T. Stevenson and others, “How outdoor science education can help girls stay engaged with science,” *International Journal of Science Education*, Taylor and Francis Ltd.