

ECHO



MOUNTAIN RAMBLER

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The Buck Stops Here

By Mr. Freeman

Test Time Again!

It's that time of the year again. All of the students in grades 2 through 6 are taking the SAT-9 test the second week after we return from break. From spelling quizzes to college entrance exams, tests are part of school life. A single test might not accurately measure the child's true performance when a child gets very anxious or is not at their physical and emotional best. There are some things we can do to improve the chances of doing one's best.

The most important things for a parent to do are the ones you do every day:

- Put your children to bed early, growing children need at least TEN hours of sleep.
- Make sure your child gets balanced nutrition, some kids skip meals or just eat sugary snacks.
- Read at home and cut down on TV time, TV is associated with numerous problems.
- Make sure your child attends school on-time and regularly, the longer at the same school, the better.

Many students handle the pressure of these tests, but some get a case of the jitters. Parents can help put their children at ease by telling them some of these things:

- Some skills come naturally to some people, and others have to really work at it: like making free-throws.
- Even if test-taking skills don't come to you naturally, **you can learn** strategies such as *skimming the test, saving the hardest questions for last, and looking for clues in the questions.*
- Test scores aren't everything: **attitude, attendance, and doing your best** work every day are a big part of one's performance.
- By *stressing how important these things are all of the time*, you reduce the stress of any one test.
- **Most importantly**, make sure your child knows that you expect them to do their very best, but they should also know that **you will love and accept them no matter** what their score is.

Ramblin' On

By Mrs. Guerin & Mr. Halley

"I Didn't Make My Day"

The daily communication tools used between school and home regarding your child's behavior are the "I Made My Day" stamps and the "I Didn't Make My Day" notes. The purpose of this communication is to involve you as an important partner in your child's choices at school. Our goal is to keep distractions to learning and safety to a minimum in order to optimize learning time.

If your child does not make his/her day, it does not mean that your child has failed, is in trouble, or is being "punished." This allows you the opportunity to discuss productive decision-making and positive choices with your child. The next school day begins anew and gives your child the chance to try positive alternatives which allows him/her to focus on the job of learning.

Here are 10 rules of thumb to help you talk with your child about any issue (*from the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*):

- ☺ **Create an open environment**: Children are quick learners. If they see that parents are uncomfortable when they ask questions, they will stop asking.
- ☺ **Consider your child's temperament**. If a child is a worrier, saying, "Don't worry about that" won't be much comfort. Instead, parents need to give lots of specific information.
- ☺ **Respect your child's feelings**. Be in tune to their comfort level regarding topics that they may find uncomfortable. Validate their feelings and try to be brief in giving information and advice and then try again later.
- ☺ **Understand their questions**. When your child asks you a question, ask him/her to tell you what the answer might be. This gives you an idea of what the child understands.
- ☺ **Always be honest**. Children deserve the truth, which gives them information to use when making choices in the future.

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