

Counselor's Corner

February 2012

Working Together for School Success

Ms. Jeanette Myrick, School Counselor/Kings & Park Avenue

Ms. Grace Geysen, School Counselor/Sanfordville

Our Elementary School Counseling program is aimed at helping all students reach their academic, career, personal, and social/emotional potential beyond just the elementary school years. Our mission as student advocates is to provide a comprehensive guidance program that will assist students in acquiring the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to become effective students, responsible citizens, and lifelong learners.

The Ten Most Important Tips for Parents

1. Provide for the safety of your child(ren). Be sure that their basic needs are met on a daily basis, so that they can use their own energy/resources for their growth and development. Remember that the need to provide a safe environment grows with the child, and is equally important in the teen years.
2. Give your child unconditional love and acceptance. All children need at least one adult in their lives who is irrationally attached to them, and lets them know it on a daily basis. OR what children need the most from parents is lots of presence (note spelling; NOT presents).
3. Make sure to catch your kids doing something right every day. Thanking them, or praising them, in advance for something they will be doing is an excellent way to get their attention and cooperation.
4. Spend time getting to know each of your children for who they are as an individual. Encourage their interaction and inquisitiveness. Accept them for who they are rather than trying to make them who you would like them to be. When your ideas differ from theirs, let them know what yours are, and that theirs are no less valid.
5. Consider the type of attention you give your child(ren). It is said that, on average, children receive 30 negative comments for every one positive. Tip the balance and try telling children what they can do or what you like about their behavior instead of what they can't do or should be doing.
6. Routines and clear expectations are critical to helping children feel safe and secure. When a child understands the rules and routines of life, they are better able to act as expected. When children feel secure in their daily life, they are more likely to try new experiences that can help them explore life more completely.

7. Socialization with others is critical to the development of a whole human being. Adults can provide their children with a safe, developmentally appropriate environment in which to interact with peers and other adults. Play is the work of children. It should be treated seriously, with children as the "directors" and adults as the "producers".
8. Every person, regardless of age, class, position, etc. deserves respect. It is important to act respectful of your child(ren) and to let them know that you expect them to be respectful to you. However, respect must be earned. Remember, that part of respect means allowing your children to make some of their own decisions, which include decisions that are not so good. People learn more from mistakes than successes, so allow your child to make them AND live with the consequences of those decisions.
9. You are your child's first and most important teacher. Children learn in the home appropriate social conduct. Act in ways that model appropriate behavior and let your child know that you expect the same of them. If you find fault with their behavior, let them know what it is about their behavior that was unacceptable. Let them know your clear expectations for the future. Try not to equate your negative feelings about their behavior with your feelings about them.
10. Each child needs a private space to call their own, both physical and mental. Respect their individual need for privacy, their personal goals, dreams and fantasies. Remember that the hopes and dreams for themselves and their future will change over time and may well not mirror your own.