

Second Grade Parent Meeting
October 19, 2012

Rationale for Meeting: parenting is very difficult in the 21st century and we all need to work together to raise our children/students

Goal(s) of the Meeting:

- Establish a partnership between school and home
- Paint a portrait of a typical 7-8 year old child
- Share current information about what is/is not normal and appropriate for children this age
- Get to know parents of your child's friends to make communication and information sharing more comfortable for now and the future
- Discuss values as they impact our parenting

Handouts From Meeting

• **Vision of Reed School Graduate:** This is a district-wide document. Refer to it throughout your child's educational career. Periodically ask yourself: What can I do to foster my child's development with regard to the statements on the document? How can I assess whether my child is developing in these areas?

• **Restorative Practices:** This handout outlines a comprehensive approach to discipline. Second grade students are developmentally ready for this approach to discipline.

• **Madeline Levine:** In addition to the article "*Parents Need to Give Kids Space to Grow*", Dr. Gold recommended that parents read or reread Levine's books: *Teach Your Children Well* and *Price of Privilege*

Question Posed to Parents: *What changes have you noticed in your child since the beginning of first grade?*

Parent Responses:

- Doesn't want to get up in the morning
- More private. Keeps secrets with friends
- Attitude/ talks back
- Independent. Is willing to assert more independence
- Increased confidence in academic skills
- Increased defiance
- Thinks things through/ beginning to be more reflective
- More physical ability
- Greater awareness of his/her own strengths and weaknesses

Five Areas of Development: Physical, Social, Emotional, Cognitive and Moral

"The job of childhood is mastery of all of these areas."

Physical Development:

Seven and eight year olds:

- This is a time of gradual change and growth
- Kids need a minimum of 10 hours of sleep every night
- They are ready to participate in organized sports, but the primary focus should be on skill development
- They should have at home responsibilities, since they are physically capable of doing much more around the house. They should participate in contributing to the functioning of a household (make their own bed, unload the dishwasher, etc.)
- Parents need to confront the conflicting values of responsibility and perfection. If kids are expected to have home responsibilities, they will likely not do perfect jobs all the time. Parents need to decide what is more important: doing a job perfectly or simply taking responsibility
- They are ready to receive an allowance. Allowance should not be contingent on chores or schoolwork. The purpose of allowance is for the child to understand the role of money. Dr. Gold recommended that 1/3 is donated to charity, 1/3 is saved, and 1/3 is used at the child's discretion. A reasonable sum is one dollar per grade level times three (if 1/3 is going to charity and 1/3 for savings).

Social Development:

Seven and eight year olds:

- They develop an awareness of others
- They develop a differentiated view of themselves

Girls:

- They like to discuss feelings
- They often make exclusive friendships, establish best friends
- They tend to be dramatic

Boys:

- They tend to play in groups
- They like to be active/physical

Parents become consultants rather than managers of child's social realm. Guide your child in developing mastery of his/her social realm. Encourage your child to expand relationships. When friendship difficulties arise, help your child reflect. Ask your child: Why do you want to be with that person? How do you feel when you are with that person? Does that person treat you the same in different settings? Parents should allow boys to express their feelings.

Emotional Development

Seven and eight year olds:

- They can begin to manage their emotions
- They can begin to handle disappointment, frustration, and “no” from parent
- They can adjust their behavior based on environment (school vs. home)

Dr. Gold recommended helping your child establish an *Emotional Scale (1-10)*. Discuss events that trigger strong emotions/reactions. Rank an event that deserves a rating of 10. The next time your child overreacts emotionally, have them consider the present event with regard to the emotional scale. This process helps the child develop a clear perspective of the severity of the incident as well as the appropriateness of their emotional response.

Cognitive

Seven and eight year olds:

- They are transitioning out of the egocentric stage. They can begin to understand the concrete world.
- They are able to express themselves more clearly
- They are developing a broader vocabulary
- They can understand rules, sort and organize, order objects and even people (who’s best at....) This gives them the cognitive basis for being able to handle the academic challenges of reading, math, science
- because they can handle the fact that games have rules, they can better engage in organized sports. They are still black and white about rules, and haven’t figured out that rules are arbitrary and can be change

Moral

Seven and eight year olds:

- Monitor themselves based on “*not getting in trouble*”
- Do tell lies
- Can understand the difference between a lie and not stating the “*exact truth*” in order to preserve someone’s feelings (“white lies”), but they must be taught this distinction
- They can develop empathy with guidance
- They are ready to develop a “filter” about what can and should be said

Parents should help child develop an inner voice to monitor words and actions. Parents should explicitly teach empathy skills. Ask your child: What is the impact of your action on the other person? What can you do about it?

.....

Role of Technology

Technology is not going away! Parents need to manage the amount of time and interaction a child has with technology.

- Computer use should be in a public place (kitchen, dining room etc.)

- Limit time. Establish a family rule (e.g. no computer games on school days, 30 minutes once all homework and chores are complete)
- Seven and eight year olds do not need iPhones

Avoid the trap of isolating with technology and be sure to engage and model family unity.

Shared time together develops:

- effective communication skills
- confidence
- positive social interaction skills