



GUIDANCE NEWSLETTER

Communicating With Your Child

(The following information is from the Missouri School Counselor Association.)

- DO listen to your child with an open mind.
- DO listen quietly and attentively. Listen to what your child has to say before responding.
- DO maintain eye contact with your child while he/she is talking. Your nonverbal messages come across louder than your verbal messages. Make sure your non-verbals are saying, "What you have to say is most important to me right now."
- DO accept your child's feelings. They may be different from what you want them to be, but we all have a right to our own feelings. DO be clear and specific. Children need boundaries. Your children cannot read your mind.
- DO ask for their ideas and opinions. It lets them know that you value what they think and that it is safe for them to talk with you.
- DO help your child label his/her feelings. Children will experience a wide range of emotions, but they may not have the words to express them. Sometimes it's helpful to say, "I can see that you are angry" or "I can see that you are hurt."
- DO be honest and open with your own feelings to the extent that it fits within your emotional comfort zone, and it is not too much for your child to handle.
- DO accept differences in opinions. It is helpful to remember not to ask a question unless you are fully prepared to accept the answer.
- DO control your tone of voice. If you are screaming or if there is anger in your voice, your child will either react with anger or tune you out.
- DO be a positive role model when communicating. Remember that although children will not always do what you say, they will often do what you do.
- DO try to talk where there are no distractions. Serious conversations are best held in private.

Mission. To guide YOUR child through and beyond the loving halls of Notre Dame.

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In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.....Prov 3:6

Ten Commandments for Sports Parents

From *Our Sunday Visitor* brochure.

1. **Don't act like a jerk in front of your kids.** It's the classic "if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all." If you're not yelling (positive) cheers or words of encouragement, you're acting like a jerk.
2. **Sports algebra.** There is an inverse relationship between the importance you place on sports and the amount of fun your kids are having. The more serious your attitude toward their participation, the less fun it is for them.
3. **Your children will not play professional sports.** Ninety-nine percent of children involved in sports will not make it to the professional level. Enjoy what they can do and what they enjoy doing.
4. **Remember that they are the ones playing the sports, not you.** How your children perform in sports has nothing to do with your own self-esteem or childhood dreams. It is unfair to your children if you act like their performance is a reflection on you.
5. **Other people's kids are still kids.** Remember that all kids are trying to have fun. The other team is just a bunch of kids in different uniforms trying to have fun, too. Treat them as you would want your children to be treated.
6. **Put up or shut up.** Leave the coaches alone. Leave the umpires and referees alone. They are not perfect and will make mistakes. If there is a moral or ethical violation, file a complaint with the proper authorities.

7. **Check to see if your child is having fun.** If he/she is not, consider pulling him/her from that sport. Be careful not to pull too soon; you want to give it time. But if your child is truly miserable and it persists, consider discontinuing.
8. **Remember that you are not the coach.** Do not replay every mistake your child made in the game. If they want to talk about something bad that happened, talk about it, but in proper perspective.
9. **Remember to have fun for yourself.** At the end of the game—win or lose—both you and your child should have had a good time.
10. **Every kid is his or her own kid.** Some kids will like sports and some won't. Some kids are good at them and some aren't. Every child is a unique gift from God. We never want to define a child's worth by the level of skill on a playing field.

Top 10 Ways NOT To Motivate Your Teen:

(from *Leadership For Student Activities*, Oct. 2011)

1. Point out their failures.
2. Bail them out of difficult circumstances.
3. Nag them.
4. Threaten them.
5. Bribe them.
6. Give them all the answers.
7. Talk only about what you care about.
8. Withhold love when they don't meet expectations.
9. Create plans for them without their involvement.
10. Focus on short-term results and ignore the bigger picture.

Reduce Test Anxiety

(from *How to Get Good Grades in Ten Easy Steps*)

- 1) **Start studying early.** Cramming only makes your anxiety worse..
- 2) **Mentally practice going through the test.** Visualize your self sitting down in the desk and confidently answering the questions.
- 3) **Get a good night's sleep!** Being well-rested is key to allowing your brain to focus on the information on the test.
- 4) **Try relaxation techniques.** Deep breathing and thinking of your

ABCs for Success

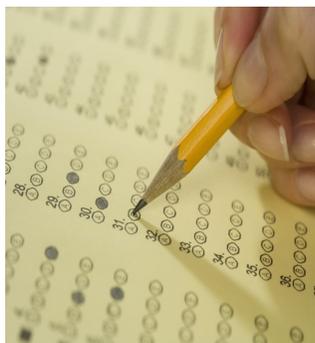
(From *Leadership for Student Activities*,
December 2007)

- A: Ask a lot of questions of teachers, counselors, and interested adults.
- B: Be on time. Be willing to learn. Breaks—take them when studying.
- C: Complete your assigned tasks. Creativity—use it daily. Celebrate your accomplishments.
- D: Discuss ideas with others. Don't procrastinate.
- E: Eat well.
- F: Focus on your goals and priorities. Remain focused all year.
- G: Get organized. Go to the library. Use good penmanship.
- H: Have confidence and ambition.
- I: Involve yourself in things you like. Initiative—take it.
- J: Join friends in fun and relaxing activities from time to time.
- K: Know your limitations.
- L: Learn communication skills. Listen. Lighten up.
- M: Make up missed work. Manage your time wisely.
- N: No cell phones/TV/music while studying.
- O: Operate with a positive attitude. Organize your life.
- P: Persevere. Plan your goals. Pay attention in class.
- Q: Question your priorities from time to time.
- R: Read before bed. Research well your options in life.
- S: Sleep—get enough. Stay informed. Stress—avoid it.
- T: Teamwork. Time management. Try again.
- U: Use every resource available.
- V: Volunteer and tutor.
- W: Write thank-you notes. Web sites—find the most useful ones.
- X: Examine your goals. Explore the possibilities. Be exemplary. Promote excellence in all you do.
- Y: You—take time for yourself.
- Z: Zeal—demonstrate enthusiasm and intensive interest in something. Don't be a zombie.

When Should I Take the ACT?

In general, junior year is a good time to start taking the ACT.

There really is no need to start taking it any earlier; students will need many of the courses during sophomore and junior year to understand some of the material on the ACT. But it's not going to hurt anything if you want to get a few "practice" tests



in before you get serious about taking it your junior year.

We strongly encourage you not to wait until your

senior year to take it. Many regular admission and merit scholarship deadlines are as early as December. You don't want to miss out on any opportunities because you haven't yet taken the ACT. In addition, senior year is very busy with the college search—campus visits, filling out applications, looking for scholarships—that one less worry will make your life just a little bit less stressful.

If you're looking for a little practice before you take the ACT, **the Guidance Office has ACT practice tests available.** The practice tests are set up just like the actual ACT and the answers are in the back of the book. If you're anxious about taking the ACT, this is a good resource for you. ACT also has apps for iPhones and iPads; see the Guidance page for a complete listing.

If you are a senior and have not yet taken the ACT—even if you think you are not going to college—you need to register to take the ACT. Notre Dame offers all ACT dates except June.

The Rules for Being Human

1. **You will receive a body.** You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours for the entire period this time around.
2. **You will learn lessons.** You are enrolled in a full-time, informal school called life. Each day in this school you will have the opportunity to learn lessons. You may like the lessons or think them irrelevant and stupid.
3. **There are no mistakes, only lessons.** Growth is a process of trial and error, experimentation. The "failed" experiments are as much a part of the process as the experiment that ultimately "works."
4. **A lesson is repeated until it is learned.** A lesson will be presented to you in various forms until you have learned it. Then you can go on to the next lesson.
5. **Learning lessons does not end.** There is not a part of life that does not contain it's lessons. If you are alive, there are lessons to be learned.
6. **"There" is not better than "here."** When your "there" has become a "here," you will simply obtain another "there" that again, looks better than "here."
7. **Others are merely mirrors of you.** You cannot love or hate something about another person unless it reflects to you something you love or hate about yourself.
8. **What you make of your life is up to you.** You have all the tools and resources you need; what you do with them is up to you. The choice is yours.
9. **The answers lie inside you.** The answers to life's questions lie in-

