"CHERISHED MOMENTS" COLUMN
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For: September 18, 2009

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The “Cherished Moments” column is written by Cathy L. Graham, County Extension Director with the Scotland County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension. The following column will provide information to improve relationships between adults and children. “Cherished Moments” is dedicated to the many adults (parents, teachers, caregivers, volunteers, educators) who strive to grow and to the children who will surely benefit.

“If you bungle raising your children, I don't think whatever else you do very well matters very much.”
-- Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

Tips for Helping Your Child Succeed In School

How often do you think about ways to help your children succeed? Often, I'm sure. All it takes is an apple a day... **Ask, Praise, Participate, Learn, Expect.** I thought these ideas were great and wanted to share them. I received a copy of the "APPLE" brochure with suggestions from the National Association of Elementary School Principals and World Book Educational Products.

**Ask**
1. Ask your children the best (and worst) thing that happened at school. Share your stories too. (Let them know their feelings are important.)
2. Ask about their homework and reading assignments every day. Help when you're needed.
3. Have your children help you make decisions or solve problems. Ask, "What do you think?" Then talk about the reasons for your decisions.
4. Ask your children to read to you several times a week, and read to them often too.

**Praise**
1. Congratulate your children when they deserve it--when they work hard, do well, or come up with good ideas.
2. If they tried hard but came up short, let them know you're proud of their efforts. Later, talk about "next time." Keep standards and expectations realistically high.
3. Praise your children for what they do--not for how they compare to others.
4. Help them understand that the pride they feel when they accomplish something is the most important praise of all.

**Participate**
2. Get to know their teachers. Keep up with your children's schoolwork and activities.
3. Be available if your children need or want help with assignments... but don't do their work for them.
4. Create a quiet place to study with school supplies and reference materials. Do your "homework" (pay bills, write letters, read) as your children study.

**Learn**
1. Show them that learning never ends--for you or for them. Read. Write. Take a class. Try something new. Don't hesitate to say, "I don't know," then look up the answer together.
2. Make the library visits a habit for information and pleasure.
3. Let your children know that you appreciate what they are learning--and help them see its value. How you use math when shopping. Science in the yard. Reading for everything!
4. Learn your children's academic strengths and weaknesses. Praise their strengths and offer support where it is needed.

**Expect**
1. Let your children know you expect them to do their best... to study for tests, to complete projects on time, to let you know if they need help, and to share in the work at home.
2. Expect schoolwork to be a priority--reading and learning over TV, video games, and recreation.
3. Let your children know you expect them to follow a routine. Together, set a schedule for schoolwork, reading, playing, meals, and bedtime.
4. Be realistic about your children's abilities, and set goals and standards that they can meet. Expect them to succeed. Let them know how sure you are that they will be a success in school and in life.

**FUN THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR CHILDREN**
- Divide into teams. Each team gets a small pumpkin (4-6 inches in diameter for smaller children) and a broom. Use the broom to roll the pumpkin across the goal line and back.
- Play with play dough.
- Have a race crawling across the floor.
- Make a fun snack.

For more information contact the Scotland County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service at 277-2422.

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