TOPIC: Family Literacy Night: Writing Together

Summary: Here is an idea around hosting a family literacy night, read more here:

https://twowritingteachers.org/2013/12/02/family-literacy-night-writing-together/

TOPIC: New Podcast with Highlights! How Reading Can Help Deal with Fear and Anxiety

Summary: Use reading at home during #COVID19!

Listen in to the latest episode of our new podcast, For the Love of Reading In this episode, Highlights Editor in Chief, Christine French Cully, talks with Jennifer Miller of Confident Parents, Confident Kids, and shares how books and storytelling can help kids deal with their anxiety, especially in these unprecedented times.


TOPIC: LEARNING TOGETHER ABOUT OUR PLANET

Summary: There’s strong evidence that points to a range of benefits for children who get outside and play. Click on the link below to read more:


TOPIC: SETTING THE TONE FOR THE AT-HOME LEARNING DAY — THE MORNING ROUTINE

Summary: Although every family will manage the major changes of staying at home and distance learning differently taking it account their own strengths, limitations, and daily accountabilities, for children and adults alike, a consistent morning routine offers many benefits. That structure can provide a sense of safety and stability for all as they begin their day. This can lower stress levels when family members have their needs taken care of each morning through a predictable routine. If children help create the routine, then power struggles are less likely to take place regularly.
TOPIC:  5 Key Reasons To Encourage Your Child to Journal

Summary: Those who journal are in good company. Some of history’s greatest visionaries, including Ben Franklin, Winston Churchill, and Marie Curie, kept journals. But aside from famous company, there are other important reasons for journaling. Studies show that keeping a journal reduces stress, improves focus and boosts mood.

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2020/05/12/5-key-reasons-to-encourage-your-child-to-journal/

TOPIC:  FAMILY RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

Summary: In Uncertain, Stressful and Dangerous Times, How Can We Make the Best Choices for our Family?

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2020/05/28/family-responsible-decision-making

TOPIC:  “SAY THEIR NAMES” – A TOOLKIT FOR DISCUSSING RACISM FROM CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Summary: A toolkit to help foster productive conversations about race and civil disobedience

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2020/06/02/say-thier-names-a-toolkit-for-discussing-racism-from-chicago-public-schools/

TOPIC:  EXPANDING SOCIAL AWARENESS AND TEACHING ACTIVISM THROUGH YOUR SUMMER READING

Summary: When we consider our child’s daily interactions with others, they may not get the kind of exposure to various skin tones, cultures, differing belief systems, or other income levels to expand their circle of concern. We want to raise socially aware and inclusive kids who are able to make connections with or act kindly to a person of any age, gender, ability, color, culture, or creed, but our neighborhood may not be conducive to forging those important connections. Ah, but the world of children’s literature can…and in the comfort of our very own homes
TOPIC: HARNESSING THE STRENGTHS OF YOUR SURVIVAL IMPULSES

Summary: “It was all your fault,” I hear either as a real statement or the sub-text of an accusation from family members and with my whole body, I want to run. “I’ve gotta get outta here!” I think with a sense of pressing urgency. My survival personality is the runner. I don’t want to fight. I have great difficulty in the heat of a moment responding with words (yes, freeze is another of my survival responses) so my instinct with danger is to exit stage left. Yet, in family life, leaving may not be practical or possible. Running away may even escalate the problem along with the upset feelings if family members feel ignored or stonewalled by my quick escape. So, I’ve asked myself, how can I ensure my reaction – my words and actions – are constructive and healthy when I find my survival persona taking over?

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2020/06/25/harnessing-the-strengths-of-your-survival-impulses/

TOPIC: ESSENTIAL CONVERSATIONS TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR LIFE

Summary: “What are the most life-defining pieces of wisdom and memories that I could leave with my children and be in peace knowing that I have prepared them for life?”


TOPIC: The Hidden Halloween Treat

Summary: The skill of perspective taking is one that has been found to assist in problem solving, communication, multi-cultural understanding, empathy and academic performance.

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2013/10/24/the-hidden-halloween-treat/

TOPIC: POWER, CONTROL AND GETTING “STUFF” ACCOMPLISHED

Summary: How do you meet your own goals of being on time and moving through the day with your children without power struggles?
TOPIC: SIMPLE STORIES OF KINDNESS

Summary: Simple acts can significantly improve the quality of a person’s life. Read more here and source some books and further reading:

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2013/11/08/simple-stories-of-kindness/

TOPIC: HELPING YOUR CHILD’S SCHOOL CREATE A CARING COMMUNITY: LESSONS FROM A PARENT VOLUNTEER

Summary: The garden is a great metaphor for my work on creating caring learning communities with my kid’s schools. You need to enrich the soil, pull the weeds, be patient and allow it time to grow. It takes years and lots of patience.


TOPIC: A STORY OF THANKSGIVING

Summary: There are small ways you can model and make a habit out of gratefulness each day of your busy family lives.

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2013/11/21/a-story-of-thanksgiving/

TOPIC: BRING THE HOLIDAYS INTO FOCUS

Summary: My gift to you this season, whether you celebrate a holiday or simply get some much needed time off of work, is to provide you with some basic ideas for setting your own intention to be fully present to your children and the other people – family and friends around you.

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2013/12/19/bring-the-holidays-into-focus/
TOPIC: CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS

Summary: Whether we are communicating with a preschooler, a fifth grader or a teenager, it helps to think through how to have an open dialogue when those important moments strike.

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2014/01/16/critical-conversations/

TOPIC: Video: “7 Tips for Parents Supporting Remote Learning”

Summary: Only 5:35 minutes – watch the link below

https://engagingparentsinschool.edublogs.org/2020/04/09/video-7-tips-for-parents-supporting-remote-learning/

TOPIC: 5 ways parents can motivate children at home during the pandemic without nagging or tantrums

Summary: Wendy Grolnick, a psychologist and parenting expert who has worked with U, has studied how parents can help children become more self-motivated and decrease conflict in the family. In this piece she shares some strategies to make the house run more smoothly during the coronavirus crisis.

https://theconversation.com/5-ways-parents-can-motivate-children-at-home-during-the-pandemic-without-nagging-or-tantrums-134617

TOPIC: SIMPLE DRAWING IDEAS FOR TWEENS

Summary: Most tweens (ages 8-12, or thereabouts) can still find pleasure in what I call “flexible drawing ideas.” In other words, these drawing ideas are perfect for kids who don’t like doing still life pictures, manga, landscapes, or portraits! But kids will enjoy this type of drawing activity because they won’t feel pressure to “make it look good.”

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/drawing-ideas-for-tweens/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808

TOPIC: CHAPTER BOOKS TO READ ALOUD TO 4-6 YEAR OLDS

Summary: It goes without saying that you should continue to read picture books to your preschoolers and kindergarteners, but if your children are ready, adding in just the right
chapter book can add a new dimension to your read aloud time. The qualities of the best chapter books to read aloud to 4-6 year olds are simple. Read more below:

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/read-aloud-chapter-books-for-4-and-5-year-olds/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808

**TOPIC:** 35+ Make Your Own Puzzles for Kids: Ideas for all Ages

**Summary:** Most DIY puzzles are very inexpensive to make, and many of the ones I’ve included below can be repurposed for other playtime activities.

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/make-your-own-puzzles-for-kids/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808

**TOPIC:** Heartwarming Books to Read Aloud as a Family

**Summary:** Family read aloud time is the best time in the world. When you find just the right heartwarming children’s book to share with everyone, you want to jump for joy because family time is that much better.

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/heartwarming-books-to-read-aloud-as-a-family/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808

**TOPIC:** 5 myths about race and kids that white parents must let go of

**Summary:** When it comes to race and kids, a lot of the conventional wisdom sounds logical. That’s how conventional wisdom works, right? Most white parents believe that kids are racially innocent and only learn prejudice if their parents say overtly racist things to them. We assume our kids don’t notice race unless its pointed out to them. But neither of those things is true

https://www.rebekahgienapp.com/race-and-kids/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808

**TOPIC:** The Best Gift a Child Can Give – and It’s 100% Free

**Summary:** Many children will still have an idea about what they want to give to mom and dad, or grandma and grandpa, or the other special people in their lives. But some children don’t. So what can you say when your child asks....

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/gift-child-can-give/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808
TOPIC: Fun and Amazing Brain Teasers for Family Gatherings

Summary: What’s the secret for peaceful family gatherings? Hint: it’s not a discussion of politics and religion. If you are bracing yourself for the family to descend, the best weapon you can have at your disposal is a brain teaser or a magic trick. Read more here:

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/brain-teasers-for-family-gatherings/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808

TOPIC: 5 TIPS TO GUIDE PLAY IN EVERY SITUATION

Summary: Here are 5 tips to guide play in everyday situations when you are busy or on the go.

https://www.growingplay.com/2017/05/guide-play-everyday-situations/

TOPIC: How to Give Children the Gift of Play

Summary: Rather than just succumb to turning on electronic devices of all kinds here are 5 tips to help give children the gift of play


TOPIC: Do Video Games Influence a Child’s Ability to Learn a New Skill?

Summary: I had an interesting observation today while playing with two of my children. Using blue plastic piping, PVC caps and some string we made the bow and arrows (which we had a lot of fun creating). We headed outdoors to test out the new devices. After two failed trials both of my children seemed super frustrated. This made me a tad frustrated. How did they expect to be good at something right away and especially archery? I gave a little “it takes practice” pep talk. Then my daughter states “but I am good at it on the Wii”! I continued to remind them that it required practice and they plodded on. After many trials, they were able to do it and they were extremely proud and quickly showed off their new talents to their older sisters. But, I am sure that had I not encouraged them to continue they would have given up….read more below

TOPIC: 8 Things Tweens and Teens Can Do INSTEAD of Social Media

Summary: Does your tween or teenager spend too much time on social media? Do they struggle when they watch as other teens go out with friends and they are home? Social media for developing brains and changing hormones is a bad combination. Here are 8 things tweens and teens can do INSTEAD of social media.


TOPIC: Teach Children to Think Outside of the Box

Summary: With all of the future changes and automation in our society, it is our job as parents to teach children to think outside of the box. We need to raise children that are independent and creative thinkers. Unfortunately, many times these skills can go by the wayside at school. Teachers have to cram in so much content knowledge in order to get satisfactory state test scores, that creativity and ingenuity are not always a priority. Parents and teachers can take the time to add in supplemental lessons or use project-based and discovery learning to encourage children to think outside of the box.


TOPIC: Learning without Worksheets – A 5 day learning challenge for pre-schoolers

Summary: Checklist and easy instructions, see link below:


TOPIC: 50+ Perfectly Simple Toddler Activities to Try at Home

Summary: I’ve started keeping track of some of my favorite toddler activities – both my own and ideas from other websites. And this is my giant master go-to list that every hands-on parent needs to keep handy.

https://www.bing.com/search?q=50%2B+Perfectly+Simple+Toddler+Activities+to+Try+at+Home&src=IE-TopResult&FORM=IETR02&conversationid=
TOPIC: Engaging and Supporting Families During Distance Learning

Summary: The expectation is not for families to replicate the classroom environment at home or exactly what would be happening during a normal school day. That is not possible. Instead, we wanted families to understand that their homes are already primed for wonderful learning to happen and that there are simple but meaningful changes they can make in their environment and routines to support their children’s learning. To this effect, we sent home resources for families to explore and a video we made describing these changes. Here is what we wanted families to know:

https://globalfrp.org/Articles/Engaging-and-Supporting-Families-During-Distance-Learning

TOPIC: 5 WAYS TO MAKE THE EARLY YEARS COUNT

Summary: Playtime is an opportunity to learn and try out new skills while having fun. Play helps children learn about themselves and the world around them. Children need different kinds of play opportunities from birth to use their imagination, learn and practice skills. Check out some of these tips and ideas to help your child develop important physical, social and emotional wellbeing and skills needed to thrive in later years.


TOPIC: How TalkingPoints Is Helping Teachers and Parents Stay Connected to Enhance Student Success and Well-Being

Summary: With more students learning from home, it is even more crucial for teachers and parents to stay connected to each other. TalkingPoints has received cash grant support from the Cisco Foundation to develop its mobile platform that automatically translates messages between teachers and students’ families. Through the platform, teachers can interact with any family member in over 100 different languages.


TOPIC: Apps for Parents – Early Literacy Education

Summary: These are apps created by libraries to educate parents about early literacy.

https://edshelf.com/shelf/ogfuubg-apps-for-parents-early-literacy-education/
TOPIC: PTA (parent teachers associations) program creates parent advocates

Summary: With 117 years of promoting parent involvement under its collective belt, the PTA thinks it has the right formula for training parents in their new watchdog role under California’s reformed school finance and accountability system.


TOPIC: Welcome to Global Family Research Project!

Summary: We are pleased to announce that all of the materials produced by Harvard Family Research Project (1983-2016) are now available in the archive section of our Global Family Research Project site. Search the archive and you will find many useful resources and related research for building and evaluating family, school, and community engagement practices, programs, and policies; for strengthening professional and organizational development; and for creating a more equitable anywhere anytime learning ecology for all children and families.

https://globalfrp.org/Archive?utm_source=Constant%2BContact&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=Landing%2BPage&utm_campaign=FINEFeb2013

TOPIC: Secret Parent: 10 things we’d like to say to teachers

Summary: Parents evenings aren’t our idea of a fun night out, your complicated grading systems are impenetrable and it would be nice if you talked to us before a crisis


TOPIC: Family Time Machine

Summary: The Family Time Machine is fueled by your family’s imagination! It recharges its batteries when your family turns moments of togetherness into family time by learning, imagining and playing.

http://www.familytimemachine.com/
**TOPIC: What If You Could Change Your Child's Future In One Hour Every Week?**

**Summary:** Springboard elementary school runs after-school and summer programs with struggling readers in low-income elementary schools in 12 cities across the U.S., including Girls Prep Lower East Side Elementary School, which Sapphira attends. Once each week, a family member — mom, dad, grandma, an older sibling — attends an hour long workshop to help learn and practice the strategies students are learning in class.


**TOPIC: How parents can partner with schools to help kids succeed**

**Summary:** Teamwork makes the dream work,” as the saying goes. That turns out that it’s true, especially when it comes to your child’s education. We got some expert advice on how parents can best partner with schools to help their little learners succeed. (And fear not, running the school fundraiser was not mentioned!)

Outside the British International School of Chicago Lincoln Park every day, regardless of the weather, Principal Ed Pearce greets students and parents. Even a 30-second conversation can be a great way to establish a positive relationship between home and school, fostering a strong community feel in the process, he says.


**TOPIC: Diving Into Summer? Check Out: Summer Sanity Strategies**

**Summary:** Founder of Confident Parents, Confident Kids talks about taking some time over the coming weeks to do some collective summer dreaming while establishing some “lite” routines, in this way your summer will be filled with cooperation, shared responsibility, and opportunities for those precious moments of spontaneity — the ones that truly define the summer. So with that in mind, here are the ways in which we’ll establish a foundation for fun. Perhaps some of these tips will help your household enjoy the summer as well.

https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2018/05/31/diving-into-summer-check-out-summer-sanity-strategies/
TOPIC: 10 GREAT BOOKS FOR 3-YEAR-OLDS THAT YOU DON’T ALREADY HAVE

Summary: This list of 10 great books for 3-year-olds is just what you need. Print it out (find the form to get the pdf at the bottom of the post), take it to the library and you are on your way to freedom from the same old-same old picture books.

https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/books-for-3-year-olds/?ck_subscriber_id=286904808

Topic: 32 Fun Activities for 1-Year Olds (You’ll Never Run Out of Things to Do)

Summary: While it doesn’t always take much, continuing to find fun activities for 1-year olds can sometimes be a chore. If you don’t provide them with enough stimulation, they can get cranky. And if your little one is mobile already, he or she can get into trouble as well. Keeping them occupied with fun activities is key. And it’s not only so they don’t get bored and don’t bother you. It’s to help them with their brain and motor development too.

http://www.cynicalparent.com/fun-activities-for-1-year-olds/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=pinterest&utm_campaign=tailwind_tribes&utm_content=tribes

Topic: Everyday Learners: Dads help children succeed through reading

Summary: Reading with your children can create fun memories and a stronger bond with parent and child. Amy Upchurch, parent engagement and transitions coordinator at Mountainland Head Start, has seen many benefits for children that come when their fathers read with them.

**Topic : How important is it for you to be involved in your child’s early childhood education?**

**Summary:** Being a parent is a full time job. It can be hard to balance everything and sometimes that means making tough choices between being involved with your child’s activities and other things that require your attention. So how important is it to be involved in your child’s early childhood education?

Research shows there are benefits to the parent and child when parents are involved. Children whose parents are involved in their early childhood education benefit by:

- Enhancing their self-esteem.
- Improving their attitude about school.
- Increasing consistent attendance at school.
- Creating a school to home connection.


**Topic : My kids have gained these 6 things through toy minimalism**

**Summary:** This author started using toy minimalism in her house and has never looked back. Children can gain six things by slimming down on the toys.


**Topic : Starting a Preschool Journal**

Summary: This author has been thinking about motor skills and writing activities for her preschooler. “All my life I have been a diarist but since having kids, I have not kept up as I should. I wondered if introducing the concept of preschool journaling would get me back in the game. Maybe we could share some journaling time”.

[https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/pre-school-journaling/?utm_source=MadMimi&utm_medium=email&utm_content=The+classic+children%27s+books+you+may+have+missed%21&utm_campaign=20180116_m143631087_Why+you+should+celebrate+2018+like+it%27s+1918&utm_term=Develop+pre-writing+skills+and+help+your+child+start+a+journal](https://www.whatdowedoallday.com/pre-school-journaling/?utm_source=MadMimi&utm_medium=email&utm_content=The+classic+children%27s+books+you+may+have+missed%21&utm_campaign=20180116_m143631087_Why+you+should+celebrate+2018+like+it%27s+1918&utm_term=Develop+pre-writing+skills+and+help+your+child+start+a+journal)
**Topic: Teaching parents how to teach their toddlers: Seattle-area program yields lasting benefits**

Summary: Parents were approached: Did they want help prepare their child for school? If so the Parent-Child Home Program would send trained visitors to spend 30 minutes with them twice a week, demonstrating how to get the most educational value out of playing and reading with their 2 and 3 year olds.


**Topic: 7 Things that make parenting a school kid harder than a daycare kid**

Summary: according to Jamie Agins Lincow, who wrote in a recent article for Working Mother Magazine that the daycare to school transition is “exhausting”.


**Topic: Families Matter for STEM Learning**

Summary: Student success in the world today requires strong science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills and the capacity to apply these skills in everyday life. As a child’s first teacher, families play a critical role in the development of STEM capacities.

Research shows there are three main ways that families strengthen STEM learning from early childhood through adolescence:

Watch this short video:

Topic: How important is it for you to be involved in your child’s early childhood education?

**Summary:** Research shows there are benefits to the parent and child when parents are involved in their child’s early childhood education.

Read more here:
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/how_important_is_it_for_you_to_be_involved_in_your_chil ds_early_childhood

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Topic: Parents: How to Build Empathy and Prevent Bullying

**Summary:** The survey, commissioned by the Cartoon Network and designed by VJR Consulting in consultation with the Making Caring Common project (MCC) at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education, found that the vast majority of young children in this country have experienced bullying and that they look to adults to set an example about how to treat others. Find out more here:

http://www.thejournal-news.net/online_features/community_cares/parents-how-to-build-empathy-and-prevent-bullying/article_6bec9630-588e-57dc-8307-5ae62451adea.html

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**Summary:** 13 tips for you

**Topic: Supporting parents' efforts to help their children develop during the preschool years improves a child's school readiness, reduces behavior problems, enhances social skills, and promotes academic success.**

**Summary:** Children begin learning at home before they ever reach the classroom, but many families face barriers to providing high-quality early educational opportunities. There are a number of research-based strategies to bolster parent engagement in ways that improve child outcomes.


**Topic: Teaching in King County’s living rooms: Parent coaches share what they’ve learned**

**Summary:** The key to the success of King County’s Parent-Child Home Program, featured Wednesday in The Seattle Times, is the people hired to visit families and help parents understand how to get the most educational value out of playing and reading with their 2- and 3-year-olds.


**Topic: The Power of Introductions: Paving the Way for your Child’s New Friendships**

**Summary:** It’s been said that the sound of our own name can be magical. It’s often true and particularly so for a child. I remember the principal saying “Hello Jenny.” to me in the school hallway. And I was in awe. “The principal knows my name?!” I thought.

When your children are entering a new classroom and grade level, there will likely be at least a few new faces they will encounter as the school year begins. We, as adults, sometimes skip or simply forget introductions between children. Teachers may introduce themselves and miss out on the chance to introduce students to one another. For teachers in classrooms, after-school program staff, coaches for sports teams, or Moms and Dads picking up their children on the playground, ensuring that there are full rounds of
introductions on multiple occasions is an essential step toward building a sense of connectedness and community. Our name is an important part of our self-identity.

Learning names can be a doorway to building relationships. As educator and author Roxann Kriete wrote: “Naming is often the beginning of knowing.”