

# Helping Children Learn<sup>®</sup>

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

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## Help your student navigate the complex world of online research

Elementary school students may have grown up with computers, but they are just beginning to learn to do research online. The internet offers an ocean of resources—many that are reliable and some that are misleading or downright inappropriate. To help your child surf the internet safely and evaluate what she finds:



- **Supervise.** Guide your child as she browses the internet. Ask her teacher for a list of reliable websites and relevant keywords for specific assignments.
- **Use search engines** that have “safe search” settings, such as *KidzSearch.com* or *duckduckgo.com*.
- **Talk about advertising.** Some sites pay search engines to list their sites first. Tell your child that being on top of a search list doesn't mean a site is better. Teach her to look for small labels saying advertisement, or for links to sites that are selling something.
- **Discuss credibility.** Help your child determine if a site is reputable. Is it presenting facts, or opinions? Does it give a balanced view? Who is the author? Does the site list sources for the information it presents? Who is the publisher? Has the site been updated recently?



## Self-talk can stand up to peer pressure

You might think that you won't have to deal with peer pressure until your child is in middle school. But elementary schoolers can feel the same pressure to fit in and do what “everyone” is doing—even when they know it's wrong.

That can mean going along with teasing someone on the playground. Or, it might mean watching a movie at a friend's house that would never be allowed at home.

Don't wait to teach your child how to deal with peer pressure. Let him know that he has the power to do what he knows is right, even if everyone else seems to be doing something different.

To make that easier, teach him phrases he can repeat to himself:

- **I can make choices** for myself.
- **It's OK if I make choices** that are not the same as the ones my friends make.
- **I can say,** “You are my friend, but I won't do that.”

Source: D. Bloch, *The Power of Positive Talk*, Pallas Communications.

## Respect supports learning

Respectful behavior in the classroom creates an atmosphere that fosters learning. To teach your child to respect others:

- **Show** him what respectful behavior looks like. Model it, and point out other people's respectful behavior.
- **Praise** him when he is respectful. “I'm proud that you waited for me to finish talking before you told your story.”
- **Correct** him gently, and in private. “Remember what we said you can do when you want something?”
- **Pass** compliments along. If a neighbor reports that your child held the door for her, let him know his behavior was appreciated.

Source: E. Fulleylove-Krause and others, “Encouraging Respectful Behavior,” University of Minnesota Extension, [nswc.com/teach-respect](http://nswc.com/teach-respect).

## Celebrate imagination!

April 27th is National Tell a Story Day. Celebrate with your family by taking turns telling made-up stories. For inspiration, gather a variety of objects—for example, a toy animal, a paper clip, an old shoe and a fork.

Challenge family members to tell tales that include as many of the objects as they can.



## Go on a fraction hunt

Here's a fun way to help your child relate fractions to her own life:

Together, look for fraction facts around your home. For example: One-third of the rooms in the house have beds in them. Three-fourths of the windows are open. Four-fifths of the people in the family like strawberries. One-quarter of the cars on the street are blue.

