



Educational Resources

A Newsletter of
KAHN EDUCATIONAL GROUP, LLC; Certified Educational Planners
• 6717 Vanderbilt, Houston, TX 77005 •

Spring 2009
Volume 5, Issue 1
Editor: September Frederick

College Admissions • Day/Boarding Schools • Special Needs • Summer Programs • Crisis Intervention

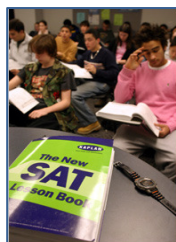
SAT / Score Choice is Back

This March, high school juniors taking the SAT will have the option of choosing which scores to send to colleges while hiding those they do not want admissions officials to see. The new policy is called Score Choice, and the College Board hopes it will reduce student stress around the SAT and college admissions.

But when it comes to college admissions, few things are ever simple. Some highly selective colleges have already said that they will not go along with Score Choice, and the policy is stirring heated debate among high school counselors and college admissions officials. Some argue that it is really a marketing tool, intended to encourage students to take the test more often. Others say that, contrary to the College Board's goal, the policy will aggravate the testing frenzy and add yet another layer of stress and complexity to applying to college.

"In practice, it will add more anxiety, more confusion, more testing for those who can afford it and more coaching," said Brad MacGowan, a college counselor at Newton North High School in suburban Boston and a longtime critic of the College Board and standardized testing.

Many students take the SAT more than once, and the College Board automatically sends colleges the scores of every SAT test a student takes. Under Score Choice, students can choose their best overall SAT sitting to send to colleges, but they will not be able to mix and match scores from different sittings. There is no additional charge if a student selects Score Choice, which also applies to SAT subject tests.



Score Choice is not a new concept. From 1993 to 2002, students were allowed to take as many SAT subject tests as they wanted and to report only their best scores to the colleges they applied to. In ending that policy in 2002, the College Board said that some students who had stored their scores had forgotten to release them and missed admissions deadlines.

It also said that ending Score Choice would be fairer to low-income and minority students, who did not have the resources to keep retaking the tests. Now, the College Board sees things differently. "It simply allows students to put their best foot forward," said Laurence Bunin, a senior vice president with the College Board. With Score Choice, Mr. Bunin said, students can "feel very comfortable going into the test center because, goodness forbid, if for whatever reason they don't feel comfortable, it won't be on their permanent record forever."

A major concern has to do with how colleges will handle Score Choice. Admissions officials at some highly selective colleges — the University of Southern California, Stanford, Claremont McKenna and the University of Pennsylvania, among others — have said that, Score Choice or not, they want all the scores — from the SAT and the ACT. It is in the students' best interest to send all scores, these officials say, because their practice is to combine the highest sub-scores from all of the score reports.

Some critics of the new policy note that the SAT's main rival, the ACT, which has been drawing increasing numbers of test takers, has long had a de facto Score Choice policy.

Score Choice was developed in response to student demand, and the College Board surveyed more than 3,000 high school students from a range of income groups and ethnicities. It also surveyed 700 counselors from a diverse group of high schools across the country, and 70 percent favored Score Choice. But counselors, as well as admissions officials, have expressed concern that the policy will give affluent students who can afford to take the SAT many times an even greater advantage.

New York Times,
December 31, 2008

RIISING SENIORS – MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SUMMER!

- ✓ **Get a jumpstart on your essays** – check out the essay topics on the Common Application, which is used by over 300 schools (www.commonapp.org). Pick one and get started so you can send it out in the fall.
- ✓ **Take an SAT or ACT prep course** – you'll be taking tests in the fall and you want to make sure you're prepared.
- ✓ **Visit colleges** – the summer is a great time to schedule college visits and interviews and make sure you like the town, geography, climate, and campus size. For more planning tips, visit <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/college-visits/73.html>
- ✓ **Participate in a summer program in an area that interests you** – there are language immersion programs, athletic camps, political camps, and adventure programs that can help you make the most of your summer and explore your interests.
- ✓ **Perform Community Service** – Volunteer your time with worthwhile causes and make sure you stay involved with your community. You may even make lasting contacts.
- ✓ **Have Fun!** – Be sure you take time to relax and have fun with your friends; this next year is going to go by quickly!

FAST FACTS: COLLEGES ON THE WEB

- 41% of college admissions departments now have blogs
- 23% of admissions officers use search engines and 17% use social networks to research prospective students
- YouTube and videos are now being used to deliver virtual tours of campuses, virtual visits to the dorms, and sample lectures from the faculty

Check out Examples Below:

Multiple Schools:
www.thecollegeblognetwork.com

Oberlin: <http://blog.oberlin.edu>

Baylor:
https://bearspace.baylor.edu/Group_BaylorProud/www/about.html

Ohio State:
<http://youtube.com/ohiostateuniversity>

Auburn:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/AuburnUniversity>

Texas Tech:
<http://www.youtube.com/user/texastech>

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Net News, Travel, New Staff	2
Boarding School, Volunteer	3
Prescription Drug Abuse	4
SAT/ACT information	5
Lindy's Bookshelf	6
Discipline and the ADD Child	7
Advice for IEP Meetings	8

Resources on the Web

ON-LINE APPLICATIONS:

www.ezcollegeapps.com

Common Application:

www.commonapp.org

Texas Common App:

www.applytexas.org

SPECIAL INTEREST SITES:

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life- www.hillel.org

Council for Christian Colleges and

Universities: www.cccu.org

College Athletic Association (NCAA):

www.ncaa.org

Occupational Outlook Handbook:

www.bls.gov/oco

Athletic Coach Database:

www.collegecoachesonline.com

COLLEGE FAIRS:

www.nacac.com/fairs.html

DIRECTORIES OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY WEBSITES

www.allaboutcollege.com

www.careersandcolleges.org

www.college-access.net

www.petersons.com

www.collegeview.com/collegesearch/

www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/

www.mycollegeguide.org

DIRECTORIES OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

www.clas.ufl.edu/CLAS/

american-universities.html

BY STATE:

<http://collegiateway.org/colleges.html>

www.collegeview.com

TESTS AND TUTORING:

SAT Info: www.collegeboard.org

ACT Info: www.actstudent.org

Princeton Review: www.review.com

Kaplan Tutors: www.kaptest.com/tutoring

FINANCIAL AID / LOAN CALCULATORS:

www.fastweb.com

www.finaid.org/calculators

www.nasfaa.org

www.freescholarship.com

www.college-scholarships.org

GENERAL LD AND AD/HD:

Assoc Higher Education & Disability:

www.ahead.org

ADD Assoc.: www.add.org

Learning Disabilities Online:

www.ldonline.org

Learning Disabilities Assoc.:

www.ldantl.org

National Center for LD:

www.ncld.org

Council for Exceptional Children:

www.cec.org

International Dyslexia Assoc.:

www.interdys.org

ADVOCACY AND LEGAL:

Wrightslaw: www.wrightslaw.com

Disability access information:

www.janejarrow.com

Lindy's Recent Travels...



As you know, my travel schedule takes me all over the U.S. to visit colleges, boarding schools, therapeutic schools and programs, and special needs facilities. I recently visited Virginia, Maryland, Montana, and Utah. My upcoming trips this spring and summer will take me to Colorado, California, Arizona, and Ohio. I do check my voice mail daily and will try to return all phone messages within 24 hours. Thank you all for your patience.

Lindy

NEW ADDITION TO OUR STAFF

Meet
Erin Webb, LMFT
Associate



We are very excited to welcome Erin to our practice. She will be assisting with local school and therapeutic boarding school program placement. As a graduate of The University of San Diego, Erin earned her Master's of Arts degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. She has over 12 years of professional experience in the field of behavioral analysis, residential treatment facilities, and community and school based outpatient therapy programs. She has worked with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Non-verbal Learning Disorders, Disruptive Behaviors and ADHD, as well as provided social skills training to parents.

Benefits of All-Girls Boarding Schools

Single-sex education has long been lauded for providing girls, especially, academic opportunities to explore, experiment, and realize their true intellectual abilities without the social and emotional pressures of a co-ed classroom. In fact, organizations like the National Association of Single Sex Public Education suggest that single sex schools encourage the breakdown of traditional gender stereotypes, and a June 2005 study by Cambridge University reinforces the theory that girls' performance in math and science-based courses improves significantly in single-sex educational settings. Regardless of academic opportunities, however, many parents worry about the social and emotional implications of sending their daughter to single-sex boarding schools – especially if part of their objective is to help her build healthy social, emotional and behavioral skills. And if you are worried about the implications of sending your daughter to boarding school, you probably share the same concerns as many parents faced with trying to find the right educational environment for their daughter – so it may be helpful to keep the following in mind as you make your decision: Girls in single-sex schools are...

1. **More confident.** Single-sex settings in both day and boarding schools provide girls with a safe environment within which they can explore new interests and activities – without the social pressure of a co-ed setting. This kind of environment gives girls the opportunity to learn firsthand the value and rewards of stepping outside your "comfort zone."
2. **More competitive.** Girls in single-sex educational environments have the freedom to engage in athletic pursuits without the risk of social judgment (being labeled a "jock," for example). As a result, they're able to develop a healthy competitive spirit – and the personal skills that go along with working as part of a team or an individual contestant.
3. **More likely to thrive as independent, successful adults.** Girls' schools – especially girls' boarding schools – are built entirely around their educational and pastoral needs. That means it's easy for girls to find strong female role models as well as the personal and intellectual resources they need to make healthy transitions into the college environment and beyond.



"When no boys are in the classroom, you feel more comfortable and safe. I was really surprised by how much more I raised my hand, said things when I wasn't sure I was right, and just felt more excited and into the class."

Making the Decision to Send your Child to Traditional Boarding School

Sending your child away from home for more than a week or two can be daunting, so why would anyone choose to send their child away to boarding school? The vast majority of boarding schools are warm, welcoming communities with one goal: providing the best educational, emotional and experiential opportunities for your child - 24/7.

Consider the Academic Advantage:

- Boarding school communities use traditional academic settings and hands-on experiences to provide kids constant intellectual stimulation.
- Boarding schools have the resources (like daily study halls and extra help, one-on-one tutoring, writing centers and learning resource centers) to help academically struggling or under-motivated students realize their abilities and excel.
- Highly gifted students find that boarding school offers them the academic challenge and the intellectual variety they crave, including an extensive selection of advanced courses and extracurricular involvements

Understand the Emotional/Social Support Boarding Schools Provide:

- Children who are maturing "too quickly" or "too slowly" often thrive from the bonds they develop in a boarding community.
- Boarding schools help students nurture art, academic, and athletic skills by providing them with the opportunity for more extensive - or intensive - involvement.
- The boarding environment helps students build valuable personal skills by teaching them responsibility, independence and inter-dependence within a caring community framework
- Boarding schools offer round-the-clock stability that can sometimes be lacking in today's hectic home life

Remember It's Your Child's Choice, Too

Involving your child in the boarding school decision is vital. After all, he/she is the one most affected by your choice and making the decision for him is the first step towards disaster. By responding positively to each of your child's concerns and asking your child to take an active role in the entire process you will reinforce the fact that you only have his best interests in mind

VOLUNTEER: SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Volunteers are the lifeline of the Special Olympics program.

More than 1.5 million individuals worldwide, dedicate their time, to Special Olympics.

These volunteers serve as coaches, officials, committee members, competition assistants and more. For information on events, volunteering or participating in events visit

www.specialolympicstexas.org
or contact Renee Klovenski at
713-290-0049 or
rklovenski@sothx.org.

2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 7-8, 2009
(8:00am-4:00pm)
**Greater Houston
Basketball Tournament**
Location: Various CY-
Fair ISD schools
Address: contact
organizer for location

Saturday, April 25,
2009 (8:30am-5:00pm)
**Regional Tennis
Tournament**
Location: Homer Ford
Tennis Center
Address: 5225 Calhoun,
Houston, TX

Saturday, May 16, 2009
(8:00am-TBD)
Regional Cycling Meet
Location: Memorial Park



SPECIAL FEATURE

Rx for Disaster**Prescription Drug Abuse by teens**

Although high school drug use is down across the country, in the past 10 years the rate of *prescription* drug abuse among teens has risen steadily. Nearly one in five — 4.5 million — admits to abusing medications not prescribed to him or her, reported the 2005 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study conducted by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. Pharmaceutical abuse has become so commonplace that it has filtered down to younger kids: Prescription drugs are now the number one illicit drug among 12- to 13-year-olds, according to the 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

Adults think of prescription drugs purely as medicine, but kids have come up with ways to create effects similar to what they'd experience from street dope — from crushing pills to circumvent timed-release controls to doubling or tripling dosages or simply downing handfuls. What's more, if parents are in the dark regarding these drugs' potential for abuse, they're also often blind to how deadly they can be. Accidental-poisoning deaths among youths ages 15 to 24 increased 113 percent between 1999 and 2004, mostly due to prescription- and illegal-drug abuse, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Upping overdose risks, four out of 10 teens believe that prescription meds are much safer to use than illegal drugs — even when they are not prescribed by a doctor. What's more, nearly three out of 10 teens think these drugs are not addictive, according to the Partnership study. Kids trust prescription drugs because they're mass-produced, FDA-approved, familiar medicines. "I've heard many kids say, 'I'm not doing hard drugs. I wouldn't use heroin,'" says Troy Faddis, a licensed marriage and family therapist and the clinical director of the Aspen Achievement Academy, a wilderness recovery program in Loa, UT. "But opiates like OxyContin are the pharmaceutical equivalent of heroin."

**What Kids Are Taking**

Teens often don't even have to leave home to get their first taste of prescription drug highs. More than three in five teens say prescription pain relievers are easy to get from their parents' medicine chests; half say they're a snap to obtain through other people's prescriptions; and more than half say pain relievers are available everywhere, according to the Partnership study. In addition to "borrowing" from relatives and bartering with friends, hooked kids often get their fix by buying from dealers — both other teens and career criminals with a history of distribution. Those dealers, as well as more enterprising kids, may fill their supplies by using falsified prescriptions on- or off-line, by visiting multiple doctors and going to pharmacies with legal prescriptions, or by out-and-out theft from drugstores or homes.

Easy availability, combined with kids' misperceptions of prescription drug safety, may explain why pill popping has become so accepted as part of the weed-and-alcohol culture of high school parties. The Partnership study found nearly one-third of teens (7.3 million) agree that there's "nothing wrong" with using prescription drugs without a prescription once in a while. The ways kids are taking the drugs now underscores this relaxed attitude. "We're finding that teens are no longer holding exclusive 'pharm parties,' where they'd get together and bring all the pills they could find, the way they did in years past," says the Aspen Achievement Academy's Faddis. Instead, they take them throughout the day, as a routine part of life.

Primary responsibility for keeping kids drug-free remains with parents — and there are steps you can take to reduce your child's risks. "Parents need to talk about drugs *with* their kids, not just *to* them," says Haight. "You learn so much when you let them talk, and once they know you're receptive, they're not afraid to come to you." You want your child to be safe — that's what you need to communicate to her. He recommends starting with something like, "I'm worried, because drugs are a big problem and anyone can be sucked in, especially if they have bad information. I don't want you to get hurt." Be brief (experts say that the effectiveness of the discussion falls off after the first few minutes); have this conversation more than once; and be honest — it's your conviction, as much as the facts, that will carry weight with your child. If you want a supplement to fill her in on the details, the DEA has an educational Website for teens on the topic of drug abuse: justthinktwice.com. In accessible language, the site covers all kinds of drugs, including controlled-substance prescription meds, and offers advice from peers, as well as links to where kids can find help. Another critical step, says *Pill Head* author Lyon, is to remove temptation from your house. Though it may sound obvious, few parents take the precaution of locking up their prescriptions, noting on the bottles how many pills should be left in each — and checking them every two weeks. If your child takes a daily prescription, like Ritalin, keep the bottle yourself and give him only a day's worth of pills at a time. Finally, parents should watch for behavior change — parents tend to know their kids well — and when they are really changing.

Good Housekeeping, October 2008

Find this article at: <http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/prescription-drug-abuse>

IMPORTANT TEST DATES TO REMEMBER!!

www.collegeboard.com

www.actstudent.org

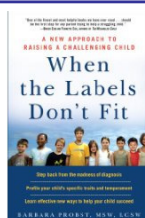
SAT TESTING			ACT TESTING		
SAT & Subject	Registration Deadlines		ACT	Registration Deadlines	
Tests Dates	Regular	Late (fee required)	Tests Dates	Regular	Late (fee required)
March 14, 2009	February 10, 2009	February 24, 2009	April 4, 2009	February 27, 2009	Feb. 28- Mar. 13
May 2, 2009	March 31, 2009	April 9, 2009	June 13, 2009	May 8, 2009	May 9-22, 2009
June 6, 2009	May 5, 2009	May 15, 2009			



Should
You
Take
the
SAT,
ACT,
or
Both?

	SAT	ACT
Available Dates	7 times per year	6 times per year
Length	3 hours, 45 minutes	3 hours, 25 minutes (including the 30-minute optional Writing Test)
Test Structure	10 Sections: 3 Critical Reading, 3 Math, 3 Writing (including the Essay), 1 Experimental (unscored but included as a regular section)	4 Test Sections (5 with the optional Writing Test): English, Math, Reading, Science, Writing (Optional), Experimental Test (sometimes added and clearly labeled)
Test Content	Math: Arithmetic, algebra I/II, geometry Reading: short and long passages with questions; Sentence Completion Science: not included	Math: Arithmetic, algebra I/II, geometry, and trigonometry Reading: 4 passages with 10 questions each Science: Analysis, interpretation, evaluation, basic content, and problem solving
Essay	First thing you do: 25 minutes; Factored into overall score; More abstract topic (vs. ACT)	Last thing you do (optional): 30 minutes; Not included in composite score; Topic of importance to high school students
Penalty for Wrong Answers?	Yes, 1/4 point subtracted for each wrong answer	No
Scoring	Total score out of 600–2400, based on adding scores from 3 subjects • 3 scores of 200–800 for each subject • Score of 0–12 for the Essay	Composite score of 1–36, based on average of scores from 4 tests • 4 scores of 1–36 for each test • Plus optional Writing Test Score of 0–12
Sending Scores	Entire score history is sent automatically. *NEW—Beginning with Class of 2010, you decide which test score is sent.	You decide which score is sent

LINDY'S BOOKSHELF



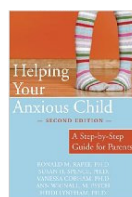
WHEN THE LABELS DON'T FIT:
A New Approach to Raising a Troubled Child
By: Barbara Probst

Probst argues that our society has become too quick to diagnose and label children who think or act outside the box. Although there are times when a diagnosis and medication are called for, she believes that the diagnosis explosion is over the top. Probst presents fresh tactics for dealing with difficult children, using temperament as a basis for understanding and intervention. She maps 11 core traits, including energy source, attention and sensory sensitivity. She then offers practical strategies and tools parents can use when a child's social or physical environment clashes with his temperament.



BOUNDARIES WITH TEENS:
When to Say Yes,
How to Say No
By: Dr. John Townsend

From bestselling author and counselor Dr. John Townsend, here is the expert insight and guidance you need to help your teens take responsibility for their actions, attitudes, and emotions and gain a deeper appreciation and respect both for you and for themselves. He offers practical advice on how parents can: deal with disrespectful attitudes and impossible behavior in your teen; set healthy limits and realistic consequences; be loving and caring while establishing rules; and determine specific strategies to deal with problems both big and small. Boundaries with Teens can help you establish wise and loving limits that make a positive difference in your adolescent, in the rest of your family, and in you.



HELPING YOUR ANXIOUS CHILD:
A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents
By: Ronald M. Rapee, et al.

Now in its second edition, Helping Your Anxious Child has been expanded and updated to include the latest research and techniques for managing child anxiety. You'll learn how to help your child overcome intense fears and worries and find out how to relieve anxious feelings while parenting with compassion. Strategies are included that describe: how to help your child practice "detective thinking" to recognize irrational worries; what to do when your child becomes frightened; how to gently and gradually expose your child to challenging situations; and how to help your child learn important social skills.

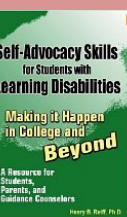
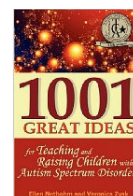
WHAT HIGH SCHOOLS DON'T TELL YOU:
300+ secrets to Make Your Kid Irresistible to Colleges by Senior Year
By: Elizabeth Wissner-Gross

Aimed at adolescents and their parents, this book draws on interviews with teachers, college admissions officers, and other parents to offer practical advice on how parents can begin in the eighth grade to prepare their children for a high-school career that will lead to admission into the best colleges. Part 1 focuses on the college admissions process and developing a game plan, while part 2 focuses on the best opportunities for children in a variety of areas, including math, science, the arts, the humanities, journalism, business, and government..



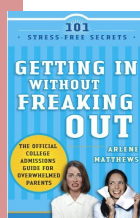
1001 GREAT IDEAS:
For Teaching and Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
By: Veronica Zysk & Ellen Notbohm

Parents and professionals can now bypass countless hours spent seeking answers to the mystifying day-to-day challenges of autism. In a snappy, can-do format, this insightful book offers page after page of try-it-now solutions that have worked for thousands of children grappling with social, sensory, behavioral, and self-care issues, plus many more. This book filters through all the technical terms and gives you quick, much needed information for those daily challenges that you definitely will encounter.



SELF-ADVOCACY FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES:
Making it Happen in College and Beyond
By: Henry Reiff

Written by a Professor of Special Education and Dean of Student Academic Life at McDaniel College, this book uses the author's research about successful adults with learning disabilities to promote self-advocacy among students. This work is brimming with useful and practical information. It is easily understood and embraced by students with learning disabilities, their parents, guidance counselors, and stakeholders in the fields of both higher education and special education. Readers will find tips about the college application process as well as legal and social aspects that students will encounter while in college.



GETTING IN WITHOUT FREAKING OUT:
995 Tips for Making the Most of College
By: Arlene Matthews

Matthews offers a helpful and humorous look at the process of college admission from the parents' perspective. Her 101 truths cover the gamut from researching colleges, to SAT test preparation, to touring colleges, to sending the freshman off to college. She offers sound advice on writing the personal essay, completing applications, and finding financial aid. She strongly recommends that parents--and their children--maintain realistic expectations throughout the process and develop a long view. Parents will appreciate the humor and candor of this helpful resource.

THE TRIPLE BIND:
Saving Our Teenage Girls from Today's Pressures
By: Stephen Hinshaw & Rachel Kranz

In many ways, today is the best time in history to be a girl: Opportunities for a girl's success are as unlimited as her dreams. Yet an alarm is sounding, revealing a disturbing portrait of the stresses affecting girls of all ages. Societal expectations, cultural trends, and conflicting messages are creating what Stephen Hinshaw calls "the Triple Bind." Girls are now expected to excel at "girl skills," achieve "boy goals," and be models of female perfection, 100% of the time. This is putting more and more girls at risk for aggression, eating disorders, depression, and even suicide. This book shows parents how to listen, learn, and help girls unlock the shackles of the Triple Bind. The author combines moving personal stories with extensive research to provide strategies and tools for parents who want to empower their daughters to deal in healthy ways with today's pressures.



****ALUMNI- Please share your news with us about the events in your life. Tell me about moves, weddings, promotions, etc. Email me at lkahn@educationalconsulting.com.**

Discipline and the ADD Child

John Taylor, Ph.D., *Additude Magazine*

Like all kids, children with attention deficit disorder (ADD/ADHD) sometimes make bad choices regarding their own behavior. No surprise there. But to make matters worse, parents could often use a few parenting tips themselves, and err in the way they discipline misbehavior.

Instead of using firm, compassionate discipline, they move into the ignore-nag-yell-punish cycle. First, the parent pretends not to notice the child's misbehavior, hoping that it will go away on its own. Of course, this seldom works, so the parent next tries to urge the child not to do such and such. Next, the parent starts yelling and scolding. When this doesn't produce the desired result, the parent becomes extremely angry and imposes harsh punishments. This four-part strategy (if you could call it that) isn't just ineffective; it makes life needlessly unpleasant for every member of the family.

How can you avoid it? As with any other pitfall, simply being aware of it will help you steer clear of it. At the first sign of starting on the wrong path, you can stop what you're doing and make a conscious decision to try something else. Take an honest look at how you respond when your children misbehave. What specific situations are likely to cause you to go down this path? How far down the path do you typically proceed? How often? Let's examine the ignore-nag-yell-punish strategy more closely to see why it doesn't work — and come up with some strategies that do.

Why ignoring doesn't work

By ignoring your child's misbehavior, you send the message that you neither condone nor support his misbehavior. At least that's the message you hope to send. In fact, your child may read your silence as "I won't give you my attention or concern" or even "I reject you." That can wound a child. On the other hand, your child may assume that your silence means that you approve of his behavior or will at least tolerate it. "Mom hasn't said I can't do this," he thinks, "so it must be OK."

Even if your child correctly interprets the message that you're trying to send by ignoring him, he has no idea what you want him to do instead. In other words, ignoring your child doesn't define better behavior or provide guidance about how your child should behave next time. Instead of ignoring him when he does something you disapprove of, use another "I-word": interrupting. That is, quickly move people or objects so that your child is unable to misbehave. For example, if your children start quarreling over a toy, you might say, "Alex, sit over there. Maria, stand here. I'll take this and put it up here." Similarly, if your teen comes for supper with dirty hands, immediately take his plate off the table and silently point to his hands. If you feel the need to tell your child what you expect of him, tell him once, very clearly. Then stop talking.

A Better Way, Don't be a nag

Why is it important to keep words to a minimum when disciplining your child? Because, as I often remind parents, words are like tires. Each time they rotate against the pavement, they lose tread and become less efficient at starting, stopping, and steering. If you spin words out endlessly, they'll become less efficient at starting, stopping, and steering your child. Eventually, your words will have no "traction" at all — as tires will eventually become bald. If the chatterbox parent is ineffective, so is the parent who barks orders like a drill sergeant. To break the yelling habit, tell yourself that you won't open your mouth until you're calm enough to speak at a normal volume and in a cordial tone. Often, all it takes to calm down is to spend a few minutes alone — something as simple as excusing yourself to get a glass of water may do the trick. Taking time to cool off will also help you avoid the last and most counterproductive element of ignore-nag-yell-punish.

Punishment vs. undoing and redoing

Parents often assume that by punishing a misbehaving child, they're helping to build the child's conscience. Not so. In most cases, harsh punishments, like spanking, simply encourage a child to become sneaky so as to not get caught next time. (They may even cause your child to doubt your love for her.) A better approach is to impose consequences that are appropriate to the offense and respectful of your child. Ideally, the consequence you impose for a particular misbehavior will involve undoing or redoing the situation. The consequence for carelessly spilling milk, for example, might be that your child cleans up the mess (undoing), and then pours another glass and sets it in a safer place (redoing). No need to blame or yell. No need to impose harsh punishment (for example, withholding food).

If you're careful to recognize your first steps down the ignore-nag-yell-punish path — and to substitute the strategies I've described — you'll find yourself on a different path, one that leads to a more harmonious relationship with your child. It's a trip I highly recommend.



Wondering about summer options for kids with ADD?

We can connect your family with non-competitive day and boarding camps in beautiful locations geared specifically toward kids with ADD/ADHD. Compared with traditional camps, these specialized programs have more individualized attention, social skills training, enhanced medical services, and educational components. **Call our office for more information.**

(713) 668-2609

Eight Steps to a Better IEP Meeting

1) Make every attempt to sustain relationships

IEP negotiations often play out over time and are more effective with a group of people that like and respect each other. Try to get to know and personally connect to the other team members.

2) Keep the focus on the child's needs, not the district's resources or the parents' expectations.

- *Get Independent Evaluations*
- *Design Specific, Measurable, Realistic IEP Goals*
- *Parental Expectations v. District Resources*

3) Always provide "face saving" ways out of a dilemma. Have a back-up plan.

Encourage brainstorming among all informed people at team meetings, especially before an IEP. When the collective resources of a group focus on a problem, the solutions that present themselves are amazing.

4) Listen actively, especially to the things you do not want to hear.

If you find your temperature rising, disengage your ego from what is happening. Breathe deep. Calmly restate what you heard like this: "I want to understand your position, Ms. Jones. Are you saying _____?" Then restate what you thought she said, not what you thought she meant.

5) Walk a mile in the other side's moccasins.

Spend sustained time at the school. Volunteer in your child's classroom and other classrooms. Watch the kids on the playground and in the lunchroom. What really goes on inside school? How tired are you at the end of a school day? How tired must the teachers, the aid, the principal, and your child be?

6) Build your record.

Parents must be willing to face the reality of their child's abilities!

7) Encourage everyone to love your child, then let them!

If a knowledgeable educator has a different approach or opinion from ours, this does not make her the enemy. Do not gate-keep around those people - they are invaluable, untapped resources.

8) Have a little faith.

Generally, give your child's team some credit for acting in good faith. If they need education, supply it. If you disagree, try to work it out without getting personal. Do not demonize well-intentioned people. Utilize them. Even if they have priorities that you cannot share, they can turn out to be of great help to your child.

*September 2008
www.wrightslaw.com*



KAHN EDUCATIONAL GROUP, LLC
Certified Educational Planners
 6717 Vanderbilt St.
 Houston, TX 77005