



# January Newsletter 2010

SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST SCHOOL – HYDES



Dear Parents,

The reason for the season is to show our love and become closer to God. The psalmists say: "Let us be happy, let us celebrate!" As we continue to celebrate Christmastime and look forward to a new calendar year, let us reflect on the fact that each day is a gift from God. It must be used wisely, approached with joy, and celebrated in the heart.

**Happy New Year!**

**Please note that we return to school on Monday, January 4, 2010.**

## **Reregistration 2010-2011 School Year:**

After Christmas you will be receiving the reregistration forms for the 2010-2011 school year. We ask that you fill them out completely and return them to school on or before January 13. **Please note the fee is \$100 per student.**

There is a separate application for siblings who will be attending our school for the first time. **Please call the office for a new student registration application if you have not already done so.** These are also due by January 13.

## **CSW:**

Catholic Schools' Week is fast approaching. We will celebrate January 31-February 5. For the benefit of new families to the school, this week is one of national celebration for Catholic schools. Look for a detailed bulletin to be sent home mid-January. Wednesday, February 3, is the day set aside for parents and friends to visit the school during our "Open House." Parents come and spend the day, including bringing a special lunch or snack to share with their children. Make sure you mark that day on your calendar. We hope you will be part of the excitement of the week. This year we will host an "Open House" for prospective parents and students on Tuesday, February 2, from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please pass on the info. Thanks!

## **Middle School:**

The mid-year exams for the Middle School students are scheduled for the week of January 11 through January 15.

## **"I Read to the Principal:"**

Congratulations to the newest members of the club: Colin Ehrhardt, Ella Thomas, and Eugene Bressler. Thanks to these students, I enjoyed many good books as I relaxed and listened.

## **Email Requests:**

Once again, I ask if you have changed emails and have not forwarded your new email address to the office, please do so as soon as possible. Many times we send special messages to our parents, and we do not want you to be uninformed.

## **Applause Applause:**

### Christmas Performances:

A big thank you to all who made the Christmas Concert a wonderful evening for everyone. Thanks to Annie Lewis, our instrumental music teacher, and to David Pomplon, our liturgical and classroom music teacher, for all their hard work in preparing our students for the big night.

### Knights of Columbus Poster Contest:

We would like to congratulate the winners of the Knights of Columbus "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contest.

#### **Grades 1-3**

1 Keagan Plume  
2  
3 Sarah Lynch

#### **Grades 4-5**

1 Brian North  
2  
3 Addison Plume

#### **Grades 7-8**

1 Abigail Catterton  
2 Kelly Fischer  
3 Rachel Weskalnies

## **Yearbook:**

If you have never seen one of our yearbooks, stop by the office to catch a glimpse. There are pictures from every grade, PK 3 through Grade 8. Look for order forms for the 2010 edition to be sent home in early January.

## **Inclement Weather:**

Just a reminder, so far we have not needed to listen for school delays or closings, but the time is coming. In the Handbook it states that we follow Baltimore and/or Harford County for late arrivals or early dismissals. The confusion for some came when Baltimore County announced Hereford Zone one hour delay. Saint John School is not in the Hereford Zone, so unless all of Baltimore County or Harford County is delayed, we will be on time. We ask that you reread once again our policy for Inclement Weather on pages 30 and 31 of the Parent/Student Handbook. Also, note the paragraphs for one and two-hour openings that follow.

## **Social Action Club:**

Happy New Year! A big thank you to the students and parents who brought in toiletries for the homeless. The students bagged the items at their last meeting and they were sent to Mrs. Loeffler for distribution.

## **Drama Club:**

Rehearsals will begin in the Church Hall this month. As of January 4, we will begin rehearsals on Mondays and Thursdays. You will be notified when we begin to extend practices. Please remember to pick up children at the Church Hall by 4:30 PM. We will do our best to finish on time. Thank you for your support. We are certain that everyone will love the performance of "Much Ado about Coconuts" in March.

## **HASA:**

### Breakfast with Santa

A big Thank You to Mary Beth Bressler and her crew of elves for all of their work on Breakfast with Santa. As usual, it was a fabulous time and everyone enjoyed it!

## **Knights of Columbus Thanksgiving Food Project:**

*The Knights of Columbus Long Green Valley Council #8736 would like to thank Saint John the Evangelist School for their participation in our annual Thanksgiving Food*

*Project. A special thank you to Social Action Teacher Coordinators, Sara Macek, Marilyn Donohue, and Nicole Creamer for organizing the food collection drive which resulted in a generous collection of 321 food items. In addition to these food items, 120 (20 oz.) bags of candy originally donated to the school, were also donated to the project. Special thanks also to Diana Elliott for her efforts in obtaining 200 Market Day pie donations for the Thanksgiving Food Project. This record quantity of pies almost doubled last year's donation of 102 Pies. We also received 50 (12 oz.) bags of coffee as part of a Market Day sales promotion. The generosity of all the families and staff in Saint John School is greatly appreciated.*

*The food received was distributed to the families in the outreach program at Beans & Bread Outreach Center, Our Daily Bread Employment Center residents, Missionaries of Charity Gift-of-Hope Convent Nuns, AIDS patients and families in their outreach program, and a local needy family. A total of 260 families and 80 individuals benefited from our Thanksgiving Project. All recipients were very grateful and wish to thank you for your generosity and thoughtfulness. Thanks again for making this year's Knights of Columbus Thanksgiving Project a huge success.*

**John Mayni**

*Thanksgiving Food Project Chairman*

Again, on behalf of the faculty and staff, I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

*Jean Delcher*

# Parents *make the difference!*

Early Childhood – January 2010

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## Help your preschooler set a few goals for the new year

Your preschooler may not understand the meaning of the word "resolution," but that doesn't mean she is too young to make some! Help your child set a few reachable goals, and offer plenty of support.



Here are some ideas for goals your child can work on in 2010:

- Personal care. Your child should resolve to brush her teeth morning and evening. She should brush her hair and wash her face. You can help (especially with teeth.) But keep encouraging her to do as much as she can on her own.
- Staying healthy. Your child should wash her hands after school, after using the bathroom and before eating. Other healthy habits include getting enough sleep, eating fruits and vegetables, and dressing properly for the weather.
- Dressing self. Between ages three and four, most children can dress themselves if their clothes are "preschooler-friendly." Help your child choose underwear, socks, and shirts and pants that are easy to pull on. Weekend afternoons, rather than busy school mornings, is the time to work on skills such as buttoning and snapping.
- Minding trusted adults. Your child knows who the special adults are in her world. They include you, her teachers, care givers and relatives such as grandparents. Emphasize daily to your child that these people love her and want to help her. In return, she must listen and follow their directions.

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### Talking & Listening

## You can soothe your frustrated preschooler with active listening

When your preschooler is extremely angry, it's hard to get him to talk about what's wrong.

Try active listening. Watch and listen to your child's feelings. Then repeat what he's said. This supports his feelings and lets him know you understand him.

He may then be able to express his feelings with calm words, rather than screams, tears and hitting. Plus he'll be better equipped to cope with negative feelings in the future.

For example, when your child screams or cries because someone grabbed his truck, say, "You seem very angry about Sam taking your truck." He may complain how an older child or friend ran away with his truck. Say, "I bet it's frustrating when someone taller and faster than you takes your truck."

Encourage your child to explain how he feels--sad, angry, worried, etc. Let him know you understand and appreciate how he feels--and that he's loved. He'll then be able to move on to other activities.

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## Building Character

# Build character, instill a sense of fairness in your preschooler

"No fair!" Parents and teachers know this is a favorite phrase for many preschoolers. But most very young children don't truly understand the meaning of fairness--or that it involves thinking of people other than themselves.

To reinforce this concept, teach your child to:

- Take turns. This staple of social skills is also a foundation of fairness. No one gets the best toy, time on the TV, or attention from a parent or teacher all to himself, all the time. Use daily phrases such as: "You had a turn. Now it's Edward's turn." Praise your child when he takes turns.
- Share. Just as fairness requires being able to give something up so someone else can have a turn, it also requires that sometimes two or more children work and play with toys or materials all at the same time. Crayons are a great way to teach this. Help your child divide them up with these words, "You get some. Jacob gets some. You are sharing the crayons. That is fair."
- Invite. Help your child look for other children who seem to be alone or are not included in play. Say, "Everyone should have a chance to play. That's fair." Then encourage your child to approach another child saying, "Do you want to come and play with us?"

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# Encourage your child's language growth at home

Going to kindergarten is a huge milestone in a child's life. During kindergarten, students learn how to tell a whole story, give instructions, rhyme, divide words into parts and follow classroom rules. To encourage these accomplishments:

- Have creative discussions. Ask your child to describe something he did--beginning to end. Or talk about something that will happen, such as a field trip. Ask "what if" questions. "What if you could go anywhere in the world? Where would you go?"
- Let your child be the "boss." Kids don't get many opportunities to be in charge. So allow your child to teach you something. Perhaps he knows how to play a game or make something, such as a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Have him tell you what to do first, second, etc.
- Play language games. Pick a word, such as say. How many words can you think of that rhyme with it? Take the letters of your child's name. Think of things that start with each letter.
- Review rules. Talk about ways to be polite, such as sharing, saying please and thank you, taking turns and following directions. Practice these skills through play. "Could you please pass that to me?" "You can have the next turn," and "Let's check the rules."

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**Click here to view the  
January EC Activity Calendar**

# Parents *make the difference!*

Elementary School - January 2010

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## Kids can't grow up responsibly if parents don't show them how

You probably know some people who've never quite grown up. They may have jobs, but never seem to be able to live on their own.



One reason may be that they didn't learn how to take on the responsibilities of adult life. Their parents may not have taught them the skills they need--to balance a budget or to take care of basic life skills like cooking or doing laundry.

If you want your child to grow up and live as an independent adult, you need to start teaching him those skills today. Here are some ways you can help your child develop the habits that will get him ready for adult life:

- Expect him to get himself up in the morning. Even a first grader can learn to wake up to an alarm.
- Teach him to care for his own clothes. Young children can put clothes in the laundry basket. They can fold their own clothes and put them away. Older kids can learn how to do laundry.
- Help him manage money. Whether it's an allowance or payment for extra chores, teach your child the value of saving.
- Enlist his help. Every family member should do something that helps out the family. Young children can set the table. Older kids can learn how to prepare a simple meal. When they do these things, thank them for making your home run more smoothly.
- Volunteer. Make time for your family to volunteer together. Doing something for others builds responsibility.

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### Talking & Listening

## What can you do to make sure your child is listening to you?

You've talked and talked. But you feel like a television set with the volume turned down--your child just isn't listening.

Nothing is so frustrating to parents. But there are things you can do to make sure your child listens when you have something important to say.

To get your child to listen, try these two strategies:

1. Make eye contact. If your child's eyes are on the TV set, her brain is there, too. So calmly say, "Peyton, I need to say something to you. Could you look at me, please?" Remember: If you shout, "Look at me when I'm talking to you," your child is likely to just tune you out!
2. Remember that less is sometimes more. Keep your instructions short and simple. It's best to give no more than two steps at a time. "Please pick up the books and put them on the shelf." Any more than that and your child is likely to forget what you've asked.

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## Reinforcing Learning

# Help your elementary schooler build strong observation skills

One thing that sets scientists apart is their skill as observers. Scientists notice and remember details. Here's a fun way to help your child develop this trait.

Ask your child to describe the front of a building she knows well. It could be your house, your apartment building or the school. Just choose a building that she sees regularly.

Have her be as accurate as she can. How many stories high is the building? What color is the front door? How many windows are there? Are the window frames painted a different color?

Write down what she thinks she remembers. Then take a trip. Walk outside to look at the front of your house. Walk down the street to see the school.

Check the reality against the details your child remembered. What observations were correct? Which details did she miss?

You can turn this into a game when you're out for a walk. Say, "How many windows were in the front of Mr. Johnson's house?" See if your child can remember without looking.

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## Attendance Matters

# Does my child's attendance really matter?

"Does it really matter if my child misses school?" parents wonder. "Yes!" say experts. Research shows that regular attendance is linked to current and future school success. When kids miss too much school, they miss more than daily lessons. They miss the chance to build social and academic foundations that help with future learning.

To minimize attendance issues:

- Remember that excused and unexcused absences take a toll on learning. Keep track of how often your child is absent or tardy. In general, if a child is out of school 10% or more of the year, absences are considered particularly serious.
- Keep the school calendar handy when making plans. Schedule appointments and trips when school isn't in session. If your child needs to miss school, talk with the teacher.
- Tell school officials about problems that lead to absences. Many families face challenges with health, transportation, child care and other issues. Community programs may be able to help.
- Avoid unnecessary absences by establishing family routines that make life easier. Small changes, such as organizing school supplies at night and getting enough sleep, can make a big difference.

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**Click here to view the  
January EL Activity Calendar**

# Parents still make the difference!

Middle School - January 2010

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## Responsible middle schoolers exhibit self-reliance, persistence

Of course you want your preteen to become a responsible person. But does he know what that means? To help him understand what "being responsible" looks like, talk about the traits responsible people share. Also, suggest ways he can model those same traits.



For instance, responsible people usually demonstrate:

- A sense of duty. They do what they're supposed to do--even if they don't feel like it. For your preteen, that might mean getting to school on time, finishing his homework every night and doing his chores.
- Self-reliance. They value self-sufficiency, so they do as much as they can for themselves. True, your middle schooler is too young to be completely self-reliant. But he can take a big step toward becoming more responsible. Empower him to handle many of his own tasks, such as doing his own laundry.
- Persistence. They don't give up, and they don't abandon goals just because they seem out of reach. Your preteen can demonstrate persistence by hanging in there when the going gets tough. If he doesn't earn a spot on the basketball team this year, for example, he can sharpen his skills in the off-season and try again next time.

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### Setting Expectations

## Setting clear expectations for your middle schooler is key

Don't make your middle schooler guess what you expect from him. Spell it out! When it comes to setting expectations for your middle schooler:

- Be precise. "Clean the basement" might mean totally different things to you and your middle schooler, so make your instructions clear. "Please put your video games away, bring your dirty plate upstairs and vacuum the rug."

- Give a time frame. Attach a very specific time frame to chores. "I need you to empty the dishwasher within the next 15 minutes." It may help avoid foot-dragging on your middle schooler's part.
- Get his input. Your preteen isn't a little kid anymore, so don't treat him like one. Whenever possible, let him put in his two cents when it comes to the house rules. For instance, has he been insisting that he's old enough for a later bedtime? He may be right.
- Trust him. Respect your middle schooler by assuming he'll do what he's told. (In other words, don't hover as he works.) If he falls short again and again, you may need to supervise more closely. But if he does well? Honor him with some breathing room.
- Offer praise. Is your middle schooler doing a great job following the rules and pitching in? Let him know!

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## Peer Pressure

# Guard against negative peer pressure from other adults

Children are not the only ones who face peer pressure at this age. As a parent, you may find yourself battling it, too.

Usually, this parent peer pressure is no better for your child than the kind she gets from her own peers. It involves someone else trying to get her to do what isn't right for her. But this time they are going through you.

Guard against:

- The parent version of "everyone else is doing it." Just because a parent organizes a co-ed sleep-over doesn't mean your child should go. Say, "I appreciate the invitation, but our rule is that Kelsey doesn't attend these parties. That's our final decision."
- Being made to feel guilty. Stick to your values no matter what others say to you.
- Parents who supply children with alcohol. Yes, there are those who say "They're going to do it anyway. They might as well do it safely at home." This is nonsense! And it sends a terrible message. Do not ever let your child attend events chaperoned by such adults.

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# Communication, common sense lead to your child's online safety

Your preteen may be a whiz when it comes to surfing the Internet, but that doesn't mean he's an expert at keeping himself safe online. In fact, his "super surfing skills" might lead him to think he's safer than he really is. And that's where you come in.

Take time to talk with your middle schooler about staying safe online, and don't feel intimidated because he knows more about how the computer works. You're the adult, and you know more about how the world works.

To help your middle schooler stay safe when he's online:

- Enforce some rules. Are chat rooms off-limits? If so, make sure your preteen knows. Is he forbidden from visiting fee-based sites? Make that clear. Establish serious consequences if your child breaks the rules.
- Talk about the dangers. Don't assume your preteen knows the pitfalls of sharing too much information online. Speak with him about keeping all of his personal information private. Also, remind him that "stranger danger" applies online, too.
- Trust, but verify. Tell your preteen that inappropriate sites are forbidden, but also block them with parental-control software.
- Be aware of his online life. Does your preteen have a MySpace or Facebook account? That may be fine--as long as he's not keeping it secret.
- Don't allow the computer in your preteen's bedroom. He's less likely to get into trouble if he's surfing the Internet in the living room or kitchen.

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