

Joshua Center Newsletter

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In this Issue: Joshua Center Forums, Joshua Center Walk/Run, Support Group, Gifts to Joshua Center, Social Skills, Tips for School, Pork Out Help and Auctioneer, Homework Checklist for Parents

Joshua Center Forums

First, you need to register as a member under Resources on the Home Page. When you want to go to the Forums you will need to log in as a member, then you can go to the Forums. The member area has a universal password. The Forum automatically provides a different password for each individual when you register for the Forum. Visitors (members) may view Forum posts but to contribute, you must sign in. There are several topics of discussion and some helpful information. If you are interested in a new topic please let Becky know at becky@joshuacenter.com. We included Becky's annual letter to parents to prepare for the school year.

Joshua Center First Walk/Run - September 18th

Please join us for our first Walk/Run on September 18th at Waterfall Park Trails behind Bass pro Shops in Independence, MO (off of I-70 & 291 Hwy). Registration is \$25/person. Schedule: 8am registration, 8:30am run start and 9:30am the walk starts. Participants may also park in the Bass Pro Shops parking lot. You can register at https://joshuacenter.com/walk_run.htm.

Support Groups

So many of you have asked for us to resume support group meetings. If you are interested in helping with this please let Becky know at becky@joshuacenter.com. I would like to have a meeting to discuss plans.

A Beautiful Gift to Joshua Center

Recently we received a donation for \$400 through the donor page on our website. I called to make sure the number was correct and sure enough it was. This lovely couple in Tennessee and wanted to make a donation in honor of their wedding to an organization that helps kids on the autism spectrum because the groom's family has someone with the diagnosis. As we all live our lives with our children and all the struggles that come with it, it is heartwarming to know that others care and want to help. It's just one more reason I am so glad God encouraged me to start the Joshua Center.






This is just one story. There are so many more. I thank all of you for your support.

Social Skills

Register at <http://www.joshuacenter.com/skills.htm> for Social Skills, Life Skills and Lego Club (social skills) classes. We have a new Pre-K - Kindergarten class. We hope to start a Pre-K class in Blue Springs soon. At this point we will continue to expand our Blue Springs and Joshua Center classes.

Getting Organized Tips for the School Year

The back-to-school bustle doesn't have to be a hassle. Here are some ideas to make your mornings a little less harried. (from homemadesimple.com)

-  If your child takes a lunch to school, make sure to pack it the night before. You will be amazed by the amount of time you will save.
-  Also, have your child pack his or her backpack the night before. It will avoid a last-minute scramble around the house for homework and lunch money. Children sometimes become fearful they will forget essential school day items—let them take control.
-  Ensure everyone is getting the proper amount of sleep. Cranky, overtired children will be slow-moving and add stress to the morning routine.
-  Pick out an outfit and get it ready the night before. Nobody likes finding out minutes before the bus is to arrive that little Johnny won't leave the house in anything other than his favorite shirt, which is currently at the bottom of the dirty-laundry pile.
-  Try an award board. Every morning your child gets up and ready for school without a fuss, he or she gets a star. After so many stars, reward him or her with a treat. **(Don't forget to reward yourself for getting your child off to school smiling!)**

Volunteers, Auctioneer and Donations Needed for "Pork Out"

Please help us get ready for our **annual fundraiser on October 2nd at the Airline History Museum**. If you are an auctioneer or know someone who could help with our event please contact Becky at 816-763-7605. You can register for the event at http://www.joshuacenter.com/pork_reg.htm, become a table sponsor or purchase individual tickets **OR** email Becky at becky@joshuacenter.com for tickets. This is an adult event due to alcohol being served.

We are accepting donations for the Silent and Live auctions. You can bring items to the Joshua Center or call to arrange for pick-up.

We need lots of help serving food. We expect 400 people. We could sure use help with the following:

- Donated lunch for 25 on Friday and Saturday
- Cases of pop for the event – all flavors
- Help with set up on October 1st
- Help with buffet tables (keeping them full) from 4:30 – 9pm October 2nd
- Dessert – We are purchasing cheesecake but welcome homemade cakes!
- 40 cases bottled water for set-up and event
- If you would like to donate or design a centerpiece to go on 1 of 43 tables that would be great! (country theme, no candles and we are using fall colors).

Homework Checklist for Parents

Most important – **PROVIDE A SNACK BEFORE STARTING HOMEWORK.**

Provide a quiet, well-lit space, away from distractions and with all the right study materials - paper, pencils, books, crayons, markers, a desk, etc. (**Joshua Center "Let's Get Organized" Tool Caddy**). Try to find a

separate space for each of your children, or schedule quiet times for homework in designated spaces.

Create a regular schedule, allowing for adequate study and free time.

Limit TV time, and do not allow it during homework.

When possible, be available to answer questions. Try doing a problem or two together; then watch as the child tries the next one. Getting started can be very difficult so it's very important to help them.

Avoid simply giving an answer. Instead, ask questions that let your child see the problem in smaller, sequential steps.

Provide your kids with a notebook or utilize school assignment notebook for writing down assignments. When they're finished, compare the homework and the notebook to make sure everything is done.

See if the school has a homework hotline (that lists your child's assignments) and/or a homework helpline (assistance for your child). If the teachers do not keep it updated talk to them or someone at the school.

Review completed and graded assignments. Discuss errors to be sure your child understands the material. **Purchase a personal copier or scanner and COPY/SCAN EVERYTHING before sending off to school. The objective is for the kids to get credit for their efforts, not redoing the work because they lost it on the way to school. Remember - baby steps. Develop a plan with your child on turning in homework. Check with the teachers – if assignments were not turned in then email them! Make sure all IEP's and 504 Plans allow for extra time to turn complete AND turn in assignments.**

Share any concerns with your children's teachers about the amount or type of homework assigned. Be sure to let them know if your children are having difficulty or are unable to do most of it by themselves.

Things to Consider

There is no accepted standard for the amount of homework a child can reasonably expect to do on a daily basis. However, a common formula is to allow ten minutes a night for a first-grader, and ten minutes per night added for each grade level. Thus, a fifth-grader might average nearly an hour a day of homework while an eighth-grader may average ninety minutes or more.

Unless you know what the homework assignments are and when they are due, you cannot help your child organize his time. While with good intentions, kids cannot begin reading a book the night before his written book report was due. **These kids will completely under-estimate the amount of time required to do an assignment.**

Spelling words, historical facts, math facts, geography, etc., can be reviewed in the car when driving. It's a great idea to use words or facts that the child has already been tested on for review. This is especially helpful for students who take comprehensive exams at the end of a quarter. Keep a list in a notebook to refer to.

Your children will eventually discipline themselves to do homework if you value such discipline. Do you do your work on time? Do the kids see you postponing necessary work and wasting time? Do they see you reading books and eager to learn new things? You will have made a huge, positive step when your children ask permission to watch television instead of your asking them to turn it off.

How to Say It

The most important thing to teach (repeatedly) is that you value education and you value homework as an

essential tool for educating your child. Of course, most kids would rather play than do homework. You can empathize without losing sight of your values. “I know that you'd rather not have any homework. I remember feeling that way, too. But I want you to learn as much as possible because I know you will have more choices when you get older if you do the best you can in school.”

Children need help persevering when assignments get difficult. For that to happen, they need to believe they have what it takes to succeed. At least they need to believe that solid effort will most often yield solid results. Praise specific study skills and praise effort. “You came right home from school and immediately went to your desk to do homework. That was smart. I noticed that you reviewed your chapter when you didn't know how to answer the homework problem. That was a smart idea, too.”

“I can see that you tried to figure this problem out yourself before you asked me for help. That shows good effort.”

When assisting a frustrated child with homework, parents make one of three mistakes: They, too, get frustrated and therefore aggravate the situation; they do most of the work for the child (big mistake – it rewards whining and procrastination); or they pull away and offer less help. The better approach: “I can see that this is frustrating for you. I can help you with the first part of the problem and you can finish it.”

“It seems as if no matter how I try to help, you are still frustrated. Maybe we both could use a five-minute break. How about a game of Go Fish?”

“If you have a homework question, you can always come to me. If I am busy, I'll quickly stop what I'm doing and answer your questions.” Show by your actions that homework issues are very important to you as a parent.

Have your child speak aloud his thinking process as he works through a problem. That can help you detect where his confusion might lie. “Let me show you what I mean. I'll talk out loud while I do this addition problem. Six plus four is ten, so I put down the zero and carry the one...”

Don't make overseeing homework a chore. If it's an aggravation for you, then your child will be less likely to enjoy it or less likely to ask for help when needed. “Oh, good, it's time to look over your homework. Let me finish drying my hands, and I'll be right over.”

Smart Talk

Homework is even more of a hassle when parents disagree on how much help to give their child. Be careful about spousal power struggles. Begin with the premise that the best approach is what works for your particular child. Decide together and support each other. Before your frustration escalates walk away and let the other parent step in. Take a deep breath and count to 10!

Ideally, you want your child to be able to do as much of the work on his own but be able to ask for help when needed. Homework should be challenging but not too frustrating or overwhelming.

Communicate frequently with every teacher. Don't hesitate to call or email.

Daily check the binder. Does he have a folder or section for every class? Check to see if homework is in the binder, the binder is in the backpack, and the backpack is where he will remember it every day. Check the locker at school frequently. Does it need some organization?