BACK TO SCHOOL

TK & KINDER

PARENTING CLASSES

Communicating with Teachers and Administration

Approaching Teachers and Administration

- Remember that you represent Jesus (Galatians 5 – fruit of the Spirit).
- If you're emotional, wait before writing or speaking.
- Be respectful and listen – teachers are people, too.
- Start with something positive before bringing your concerns.
- Ask clarifying questions about resources used in class.
- Collaborate with the teacher – you're a team.
- Summarize and clarify next steps.
- Focus on solution.

Participating in Local Education

- School Board meetings
- Follow Riverside Unified School District Facebook page
- Follow board members' Facebook pages

RUSD – school board

Two podcasts by focus on the family about navigating public schools

Preschool and Kindergarten Development

How does your child learn?

- They are asking the question: "Am I good or bad?"
- They will do most learning through exploring imagination and play.
- They are learning to take initiative through new skills, tasks, and in relationships.

Emotional Development

- They develop a sense of freedom to engage in new things and take the lead.
- Guilt can be a common response at this age, especially in these contexts:
  - Not getting something right
  - Frustrating an adult
  - Embarrassment that can also become personal shaming

Relational Development

- They learn how to assert power and control over their world through play.
  - This is important in peer-relationship play, as well as with family.
- Conflicts can arise when a child is trying to express more individuality in making their own decisions; often this includes who and what they play with.

Identity Development

- They develop a sense of purpose when they learn how to assert their influence over their environment in a healthy and productive way.
- They develop an important sense of self in terms of self-worth through attempting new things, success, and failure.

Parenting Tips

- Encourage a child's natural curiosity with patience and without judgment.
- Encourage your child towards play, so they have permission to take initiative/control in that space.
- Highlight any willingness to take initiative to try new things.
- Allow choices that are safe, which includes not too many choices.
- In your child's first year of school, be mindful to accommodate any additional fatigue from the transition.
- With expanding social circles at school, become acquainted with your child's friends and their families.

Preparing for School

How you talk with and about your teacher impacts your child.

- Using positive words and excitement around school will help to ease your child's nerves and make them excited too.
- TK and K are their first exposure to school, and we want it to be a positive one!

Practical Ways to Help Your Child Prepare for School

- Emotionally preparing
  - Talk about it and get them excited for all the fun things they will do.
  - Pray together about it. Starting school can bring up big emotions.
- Physically preparing
  - Shopping for school items:
    - Make sure your child can unbutton or unzip clothes on their own.
    - Think about shoes that they can tie or latch on their own.
    - Pack an extra set of clothes in a Ziploc in their backpacks and leave it there just in case of emergency.
    - Think about lunch boxes and snacks they can open on their own. This makes it a lot easier for them and the teacher at snack and lunch time.
    - Talk about how you will get to school and make it fun!
  - Write a note to your child's teacher, letting them know what you are excited about and anything you feel the teacher should know about your child or family.
    - This would be a great time to let them know about your beliefs and ask them to inform you if anything will be taught that does not follow your beliefs.

TK Curriculum

Math

- Understand numbers and quantities in their everyday environment.
- Sort and classify objects in their everyday environment.
- Identify and use shapes.
- Compare, order, and measure objects.

Writing

- Spell their first name with letters.
- Copy labels on their own pictorials.
- Combine familiar sight words with CVC (consonant vowel consonant) to create simple sentences.
- Print letters and start to create short words.

Social Emotional Development - Morning Meeting or Community Circle

- Show self- controls.
- Transition into unfamiliar setting.
- Engage in activities and meets new people and makes new friends.
- Role-play ways to follow routines for using or storing classroom materials.
- Begin to understand purpose, rules, and consequences.
- Participate in multiple play activities.
- Demonstrate feelings of competence and independence by making “I can” statements.
- Use language to describe how it feels to help others when they are hurt.

Kindergarten Curriculum

Sitting/focused - Able to sit for 10-20 minutes and pay attention (40 minutes by end of year)

Math

- Count to 100 by ones and by tens.
- Recognize and write numbers 0-20.
- Fluently add and subtract within 5.
- Identify and compare two- and three-dimensional shapes.

Reading

- Recognize and name all uppercase and lowercase letters and the sounds each letter makes.
- Read common high-frequency words by sight.
- Decode and isolate beginning, middle, and ending sounds of simple CVC words (consonant vowel consonant).
- Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.
- Being aware of reading level and material read.

Writing

- Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose complete sentences.

Hot Topics

- **Holidays** – Keep track of the monthly holidays. Many teachers focus lessons on the holidays. Always ask your child what they are learning in school about different holidays or religions.
  - At this age, it is very common that teachers will plan curriculum around seasonal items, such as apples, pumpkins, and turkeys. You may not see as much focus on the actual holiday, but that depends on your child's teacher.
- **Family** – Family is a big topic with our young students. Some of the talk about families will be facilitated by the teacher; other conversations might come from other students. Be aware that different kinds of families may be discussed. Listen carefully if your child mentions titles to books in the classroom that you might consider questionable.
- **Heroes** – Know the "heroes" your child is learning about. Social Studies and Language Arts extension activities may open up discussions about leaders of today who might not align with your beliefs.
- **Enrichment** – Pay attention to the enrichment activities that teachers add on to their lessons, such as Newsela, Brain Pop, and Epic. These websites contain information some parents find objectionable (Transgender, LGBTQ, and Black Lives Matter information).
- **Technology** - Chromebook use for both TK and K depends on the teacher. Each child in these grades is given one. Be aware of what sites they are accessing both at school and at home.

Questions to Ask Your Child

It is very important to have open communication with your child. You will need to ask direct questions if you are concerned at all about what is being taught in the classroom.

- What interesting books have you seen in your classroom library?
- Tell me about your favorite app you use in class. Do you read books online?
- Are you learning about any holidays in your classroom? What about different religions? Do you know why we are Christians?
- Does your class participate in Community Circle or Morning Meeting in your classroom? What was the topic discussed for today?
- What hero are you learning about in school? Can you tell me about a great Christian leader or Bible character?

Miscellaneous School Information

- **Separation Anxiety** – When you stay around too long it is tougher on the kids. Please drop off your kids even when they are crying. They will learn to adapt and adjust to the new environment.
- **Bathrooms** – TK uses individual bathrooms located in the classroom; K uses the public bathrooms for the kids.
- **Relationships** – A lot of grace is shown.
  - Some kids learn social behaviors and some kids have not learned social behaviors. If your kid comes home and talks about it, the teacher is working on it.
- **Volunteers in Class**
  - Talk with the teacher.
  - Talk with admin about the process.
  - It is a lengthy process to volunteer, but that is for the safety of the students.
- **Communicate with your child's teacher!**
  - You and your child's teacher are a team.
  - Consider writing a letter to your child's teacher, explaining your beliefs and asking the teacher to communicate with you if he/she is going to bring in any materials that go against your beliefs.
  - There are several ways you can maintain effective communication.
    - Back-to-school Night
    - Parent/Teacher Conference
    - Regularly checking in via Class Dojo, Remind, Seesaw, or email
    - Teachers have latitude to bring in outside resources (websites, activities, books, etc.) that could be controversial. Almost any English Language Arts standard can be open to outside materials being brought in.

Biblical Response

We are a resource – our Family Team and church are here to support you. **Modeling faith** – We primarily teach our kids through modeling - Deu. 6:4-7 Share with your child what you are learning about God.

The Bible

1. The Bible is God's Word to us. It is true and teaches us how to love and follow God.
2. Read God's Word with them and talk about it together.
3. Talk to your child each weekend about what they learned in class.
4. Memorizing Scripture together – kids are great at this!

Prayer

1. Pray with your kids – and teach your kids to pray on their own.
2. Pray for others.
3. Turn to God in prayer when they feel overwhelmed.

God

1. God loves them.
2. Jesus is God's Son.
3. Point to God in routine parts of life – playing, discipline, friendship, and creation
4. When we look at Jesus, we see what God is like.

The Gospel – It's all about Jesus!

1. God created us. He loves us and desires relationship with us - Genesis 1, John 3:16
2. Sin entered the world and created separation between people and God.
3. Jesus died in our place to bring us back to God - Colossians 1:21-22
4. If we confess and believe Jesus, we will be saved - Romans 10:9

Technology

1. Know what your kids are watching.
2. Be mindful of what your kids are exposed to.
3. Set limits and boundaries (for yourself and your kids).
4. Kids will get a Chromebook at school – even in TK/K.

Creation and Gender

1. God created everything for His glory - Genesis 1:31
2. All people are created in the image of God - Genesis 1:27
3. God created us male and female - Genesis 1:27
4. Marriage is God's idea. It is between one man and one woman - Genesis 2:22-24

All people matter to God

1. All people are created in His image (they are His special creation) - Genesis 1:27
2. God loves every single person and desires them to have a relationship with Him - John 3:16
3. We should also love every single person and desire them to know Jesus - Matthew 22:39

Friends

1. Be a kind and compassionate friend - Proverbs 17:17
2. Set up play dates and help your child navigate relationships.
3. Your children will be attracted to like-minded children. Teach your children to know and love Jesus, and they will be more likely attracted to others with similar values.

Action Steps

1. Capitalize on the time when your child is relaxed and open to conversation.
2. Be intentional about building a relationship with your child's teacher.
3. Think about how you will navigate difficult questions.

Resources

The Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender | Equipping Christian Leaders, Churches & Organizations – Resources for parents on topics of Sexuality and Gender

Chandler, Matt, and Adam Griffin. *Family Discipleship: Leading Your Home through Time, Moments, and Milestones*.

Common Sense Media

Crouch, Andy, and Amy Crouch. *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place*.

Devotional about attributes of God - https://www.amazon.com/Am-Devotional-Devotions-About-Names/dp/0718096738

Earley, Justin Whitmel. *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms*.

Giglio, Louie. *How Great Is Our God: 100 Indescribable Devotions About God and Science* (Indescribable Kids).

The Institute for Creation Research (icr.org) – creation website

Keller, Kathy. *The New City Catechism: 52 Questions and Answers for Our Hearts and Minds* (The Gospel Coalition).

Lloyd-Jones, Sally. *The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name*.

Message from Daniel Bishop - https://thegrove.cc/counterculture-gender/

Tripp, Paul David. *Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family*.

2017-htttycah-online.pdf (focusonthefamily.com) - Article on talking to kids about homosexuality by Focus on the Family