

HOME SCHOOLING FRUSTRATIONS

A quick reminder that learning does **not** need to be paper and pencil or e-learning. Including children in everyday chores will develop/reinforce learning skills and lessen mom/dad's stress.

MEALTIME

- Package directions -- 2nd and 3rd graders are capable of reading directions from food packages. Have them orally read the directions while you or one of your other kiddos follow the directions. Chopping, mixing, peeling, measuring all develop a variety of skills.
- Recipes -- same as above. This is a great demonstration in reading for information, and will discourage those "too speedy" readers. Slow down or "sugar" might be misread as "salt"!
- Table setting -- preschoolers can count out the number of plates/utensils/glasses needed and place them at the table (counting, fine and gross motor skills, left to right orientation)
- Carry-out/Take-out -- older kids can read the menus and write down orders while younger ones can distribute portions and plate. You can discuss helping out local businesses while waiting for your food delivery.

LAUNDRY

- Sorry -- can't find a safe learning component to ironing!
- Sorting is great for preschoolers learning colors, older kids can help with detergent measuring and choices on washer/dryer cycle options, loads, time, water temperature. (Heh -- they'll be ready with this life skill for college!)
- Folding is perfect for developing fine motor skills (especially socks!)

GROCERY SHOPPING

- Older kids improve spelling when they write/type out shopping lists. Math skills are involved in deciding portions, quantity and weight. Also, shopping lists are a good time to discuss healthy options and "rainbow" food groups -- especially timely now while working on boosting immunity.

- Putting away the groceries is another opportunity for preschoolers to work on sorting skills, as well as left to right orientation.
- Washing fresh produce helps build those fine motor muscles and another time to discuss healthy eating options.
- Don't throw out that receipt! Great math options for older kiddos - how much spent on various food groups? which food group was costliest? any discount/coupons applied? quantity discounts? percentage of discounts? tax percentage?

BOOKS/BOARD GAMES

- Of course, I'm a fan of bedtime stories and especially older siblings reading to their younger sibs. But don't forget board games develop learning skills, too, and can involve the whole family.
- Some of my fav board games: For tweens and older kids -- "Apples to Apples", "Balderdash", "Taboo" and "Pandemic" (I know, ironic) Younger kids: "Taboo for Kids", "Ice Creamopoly" and some classics "Sorry", "Chutes and Ladders" and Checkers.

EASTER "READING" EGG HUNT

Consider making your traditional Easter egg hunt a "reading experience". Rather than the usual random search, you can provide a numbered list of clues that lead to egg locations. Or, you can hide written clues that lead to a special treat or basket of eggs. Parents and/or older siblings can get creative and write clever rhyming clues (i.e. Don't be a fool! Look under the red stool.)

OUTDOOR LEARNING

- Take advantage of your breaks outside.
- Compare/contrast emerging leaf shapes. Guess what flower or flower color might be blooming from different buds.
- Get sidewalk chalk and create art or practice letter writing.
- Earth Day is April 22 and a focus on outside greenery might stimulate interest in researching the concept of Earth Day.

I hope this relieves "home schooling" stress by helping you realize your daily chores are developing/reinforcing learning skills. **Applied learning beats paper and pencil every time.**