

# Helping Boys & Girls Learn

Vol 9 - Issue 11E

Parenting for Success in Elementary School

## Helping Your Child Succeed!

There are many daily things parents can do that will increase their boys' and girls' chances to be successful in school.

### *Spend time with your child*

- Ask your child about his or her day.
- If you have several children, try to spend some time alone with each.
- Take advantage of car time to talk and listen to your child.
- Take walks or ride bikes together.
- Find things to do as a family.
- Watch a movie or play a game together at least one night a week.
- Eat dinner together and talk about the day's events.

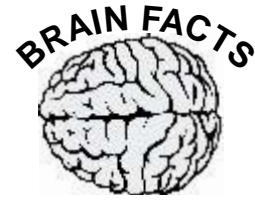
### *Help your child develop routines*

- Have regular homework or reading time.
- Make sure your child has a regular bedtime and gets plenty of rest.
- Give your child age-appropriate chores
- Make sure your child has a nutritious breakfast before school.

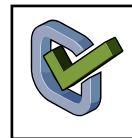
### *Create a study environment*

- Turn off the TV when your child is doing homework.
- Make a study area with paper, pencils, pens, erasers, a dictionary and other materials your child uses for schoolwork.
- Be ready to help your child with homework if needed.
- Check your child's homework when it is finished.

These seem like simple suggestions, but often it's the little things that make big differences!



The human brain is a marvelous organ, but there are some things it can not do. The brain's response to stress can't tell the difference between a true physical danger and a perception of danger. If parents are discussing loss of a job, and one parent says, "We'll end up with no home, nowhere to live!" the child may well believe the family is in danger of being homeless. So be very careful about adult discussions held in hearing distance of young children. Stress response in the brain involves an increase in the hormone cortisol, and elevated cortisol levels can make it hard for children to learn or even pay attention to school. Use discretion around young children and help keep their brain in a healthy state, with a minimum of stress.



## Check This Out

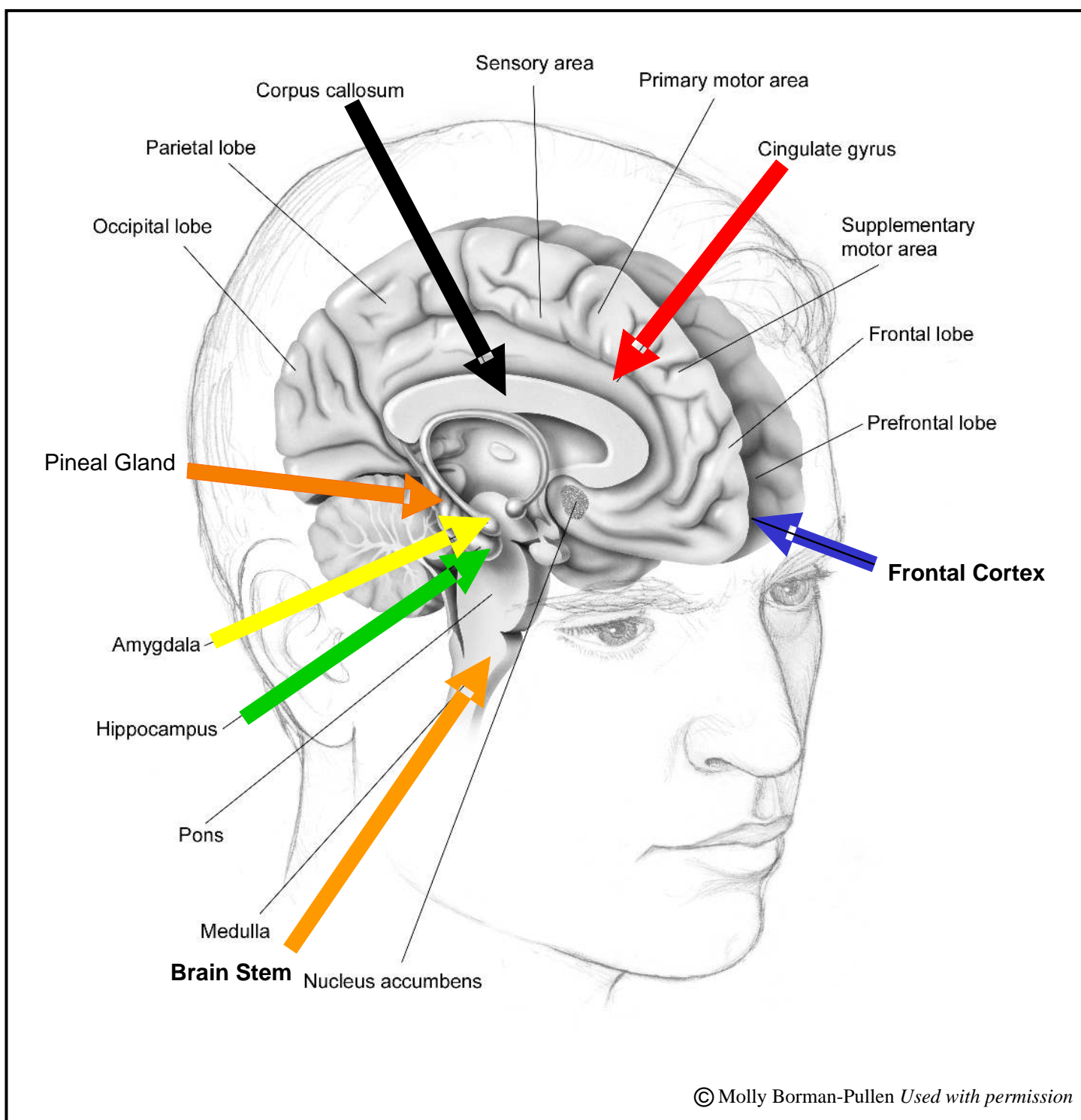
Resources for Parents

<http://www.brainpopjr.com/>

BrainPOP Jr. provides educational movies and homework help for K-3 students. Each animated movie has quizzes, games, vocabulary, and activities for kids. BrainPOP Jr. is a great resource for teachers and parents, offering lesson plans and lesson ideas that develop critical thinking and inquiry skills.

## Your Brain and It's Parts...an annual article.

Each month in our newsletters we talk about different parts of the brain and how they work--and how the male and female brain tend to work differently. The diagram below shows you where different parts of the brain are located, so when you read about the "corpus callosum" or the "pineal gland" you can look at the diagram and locate that part of the brain. Save this page and refer to it when you read about parts of the brain so that the terms will make more sense!



# A-B-Cs

Boys generally develop language skills later than girls, so help your boy by including lots of words in his world. Talk to him, read to him, listen to him, play word games--and by all means possible make words fun!

Many parents of elementary age boys tell us they are concerned because their boys' interest in reading starts to diminish around third grade. They want to know how to rekindle their boys' interest in books. Here are some suggestions from educators and other parents and experts on boys and literacy:

Make sure you let your son choose books to read that are of interest to HIM. The topics may not interest you, but don't make choices for him.

Let your son read whatever he is interested in – comics, graphic novels, video game directions, sports magazines, how to books – the important thing is that he read, and “literature” can come later.

Encourage birthday and Christmas gifts of gift certificates to a book store rather than books themselves – that way your son will be able to choose a book he will really read rather than one that will collect dust!



While girls tend to develop advanced language skills early, their spatial skills may be on a slower track. Including lots of spatial play in their play activities like those listed will be fun and promote early learning of math concepts and skills needed in kindergarten and elementary school.

# 1-2-3s

Visit this great math website to find engaging activities to increase your daughter's interest in math.

<http://www.coolmath4kids.com/>

Many of the games and activities on this site are designed to engage girls! Visit the site and then have your daughter visit it with you. Choose a couple of really fun games or activities and do them with her. If she sees you having fun with math it will encourage her.

The site designer is named Karen, and her story about how she came to love math will be great to share with your daughter. She's way cool – surfs, has cats, plays guitar in a band, and has a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Math!



# Family Fun This Month

*November is  
Peanut Butter Lovers Month!*

A survey of kids showed that:

- Boys like smooth peanut butter
- Girls like crunchy peanut butter

Let your child do a survey of family and friends and see if the results match this national survey!

During November, let your child make homemade peanut butter. You will need:

Ingredients:

- \* 1½ c. unsalted roasted peanuts
- \* 1 tbsp. peanut oil



Utensils:

- \* food processor (help from parent)
- \* bowl
- \* mixing spoon
- \* storage container
- \* measuring cups and spoons



Directions:

For smooth peanut butter:

1. Mix the peanuts with the peanut oil, and pour the mixture into the food processor.
2. Process the mixture until it's very smooth.
3. Store your smooth peanut butter in a sealed container in the fridge. It will be good for 2 weeks.

For chunky peanut butter:

1. Take about ¼ cup out of your 1½ cups of peanuts and set them aside.
2. Mix the rest of the peanuts with the oil, and pour the mixture into the food processor.
3. Process the mixture until it's very smooth, then stir in the peanuts that you had set aside.
4. Process a few seconds more to create the chunks in your chunky peanut butter.
5. Store your chunky peanut butter in a sealed container in the fridge. It will be good for 2 weeks.

Use your fresh peanut butter to make sandwiches or cookies!

(PS: The “peanut” is really not a nut at all, but a fruit that grows underground.)

## THE LIGHT AT TERN ROCK By Julia Sauer

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This book tells the story of Ronnie and his aunt Martha Morse. The two are tending the lighthouse as volunteers so the official lighthouse tender can spend time with his daughter. They must take care of the Tern Rock Light until December 15. They must dust, clean, and take care of it. But the fifteenth of December comes, and no one is there to pick the two up. Will they have to spend Christmas in an isolated and remote lighthouse? In this wonderful book, Ronnie and his aunt learn that Christmas is beautiful anywhere, and the importance of a promise.



## THE COURAGE OF SARAH NOBLE

*By Alice Dalgliesh*

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A favorite book of little girls, this story is about Sarah, an eight year old girl in 1707, who goes into the wilderness with her father to help build a new home for her family. Before she leaves, some children frighten her with stories about Indians who will capture her and eat her or chop off her head. As she travels with her father, Sarah Noble must conquer all her fears. Finally, in her new home, Sarah meets Indian children who frighten her at first, but turn out to be nice kids who become her friends.