

Helping Boys & Girls Learn

Vol 10 - Issue 11/12E

Parenting for Success in Elementary School

Boys & Girls In A Scary World

The ongoing economic crisis in the United States (and around the world) is hard for adults to handle--but can be even harder for your young child. When there is stress in the family, children can sense it, and problems may arise as a result. Stress that continues over long periods of time can result in "chronic stress" for the brain.



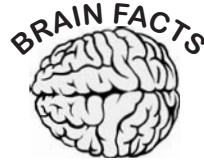
Behavior that children have outgrown may reappear, such as bed-wetting, thumb sucking, baby talk, or a fear of sleeping alone. They may complain of very real stomach cramps or headaches and be reluctant to go to school. It's important to remember that these children are not "being bad" --they're afraid. Here are some suggestions to help them cope with their fears:

- Reassure young children that they're safe.
- Provide extra comfort and contact by discussing the child's fears at night.
- Telephone home during the day when possible.
- Offer extra physical comforting--hugs are important.

Boys may well show more acting out behavior--giving them opportunities to use their boy energy by running, jumping, climbing, and spending time on the playground will help them channel that energy in positive, appropriate ways and keep them from being aggressive in negative ways.

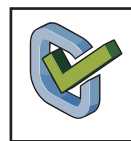
Girls may respond to their fears by being less willing to be away from mom and dad, tears may come more quickly when they are disciplined.

Again--remember that children tune into those around them. Young children need to believe that the adults in their lives can keep them safe. They count on you for their sense of security, so even when the world is throwing challenges your way, help your boys and girls feel that you are in charge and they will be OK.



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 have no money. How will we even buy groceries!" the child may well believe the family is in danger of going hungry. 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.

Food Research & Action Center, Washington D.C.



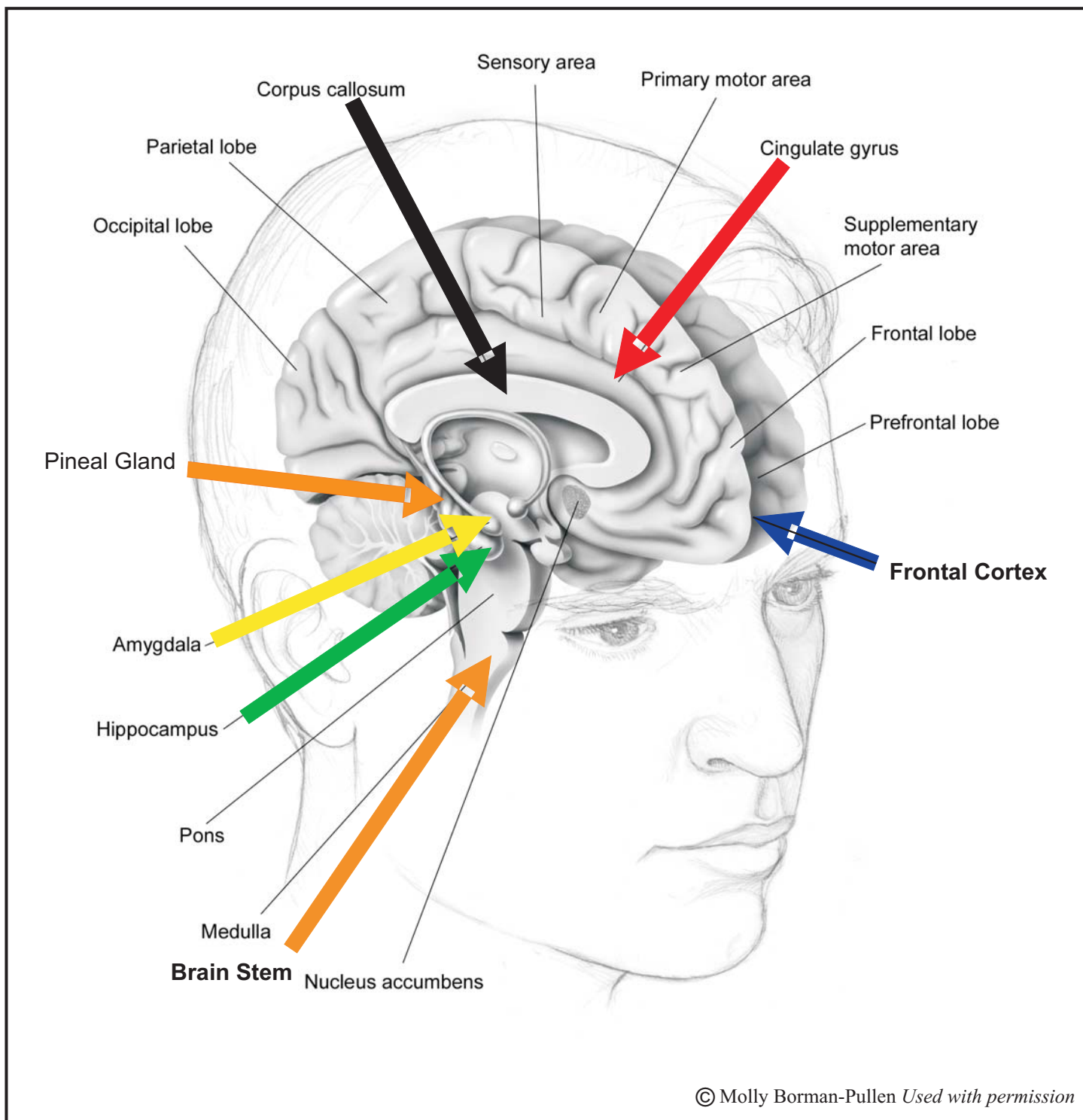
Check This Out Resources for Parents

<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 reminder!

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!



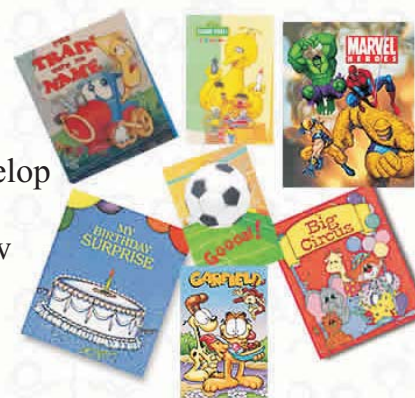
A-B-Cs

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!

Tag-A-Long Book Bag

Collect a group of books that are age-appropriate for your son, including magazines, comics, and other kinds of reading material that relate to topics of interest to your son. Put the book collection in a cloth bag or back pack that can be kept in the car. When you are going somewhere that a wait will be involved (like to the doctor or dentist or even to renew your license plates!), carry your book bag with you. Let your son choose what he wants to read from among the collection. Periodically change the books in the bag – and let your son change the selections – keeping some of his favorites and some new ones to add novelty.

Seeing reading as a positive way to pass time will help your son develop a good attitude about reading and improve his reading skills. Letting him help choose the books will allow him to make choices and show you what kinds of material he is interested in!



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

Handy Nines! A quick way to learn the nines times table

1. Hold both your hands in front of you with your fingers spread out.
2. For 9×2 bend your second finger of your right hand down. (9×3 would be the third finger etc.)
3. You have 1 finger to the right of the bent finger and 8 to the left of the bent finger
4. Thus the answer must be 18.
5. For 9×3 bend your third finger of your right hand down.
6. You have 2 fingers to the right of the bent finger and 7 to the left of the bent finger
7. Thus the answer must be 27.

This works all the way to 9×10 !!



Family Fun This Month

Read A New Book Month

Ways to celebrate this month—

Visit the local public library with your child. Try to find books about a variety of holidays and traditions that are written for children. Find out if there are any special displays of activities planned for children this month that you could attend with your child.



Have fun reading or telling stories with your child. The best way for your child to learn to love reading and books is to **have a reading experience each day**. Reading can be done anywhere -- in a car, a fast-food restaurant, a bus, an office, in the park, or at home. Keep books or other reading material handy, so it's always an easy activity to choose.

Show your child that there are things to read everywhere. Make a game of finding things with words on them (like soup cans, cereal boxes, comics). This will help your child to see how important it is to be able to read.

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Charlie's Raven

by Jean Craighead George

Having heard from his Teton Sioux Indian friend that ravens can cure people, Charlie brings home a baby raven in hopes of helping his ailing grandfather, setting the stage for a learning experience that brings new life to everyone in his family.

Satch and Me: A Baseball Card Adventure

by Dan Gutman

With his ability to travel through time using vintage baseball cards, Joe takes Flip with him to find out whether Satchel Paige really was the fastest pitcher ever.

Haunting of Granite Falls

by Eva Ibbotson

When twelve-year old Alex's Scottish castle of Carra is sold, dismantled, and moved to Texas, the ghosts that raised him from a child have difficulty relocating.



Willow Run

by Patricia Reilly Giff

Set during World War II, eleven-year-old Meggie learns about different kinds of bravery from all of the people around her after moving with her parents to Willow Run, Michigan, where her father gets a job in the B-24 bomber-building factory.

The White Giraffe

by Lauren St. John

After losing her parents in a tragic fire, eleven-year-old Martine must live with a grandmother she has never met on a wildlife preserve in Africa, where she learns about a mystical white giraffe.

Buttermilk Hill

by Ruth White

When her parents divorce and gradually begin to make new lives for themselves, Piper faces the difficult changes by finding solace and a means of self-expression through her poetry.