

ROCKBRIDGE REPORTER

A Newsletter for Rockbridge Academy

September 2002

TEN WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED AT ROCKBRIDGE ACADEMY

by Leslie Collins

1. See yourself as their first teacher. We are commanded to train our children to think with a Christian worldview all day long (Deut. 6:4-5). Rockbridge Academy was founded on the principle that while all parents are given the responsibility of education, many parents do not have all the resources to provide such an education. Rockbridge seeks to assist parents in fulfilling their responsibilities through delegation. However, delegation is not the same as abdication—shirking your responsibility by handing your job over to someone else. Don't just send your children to Rockbridge; let them have a sense that you are directing their steps educationally. Debrief at dinner, dialog during driving, demonstrate your devotion by actively listening to your children.

2. Discipline your children according to God's Word. Rockbridge Academy strives to create an orderly and warm environment because the children are trained to display kindness to others and self-control in their conduct. While many parents are attracted to this type of an environment, there is a temptation for some families to seek out a school which will provide the type of discipline and training that they are unable or unwilling to provide themselves. This will inevitably lead to difficulties in the school-family relationship because the

child is not trained consistently. God's Word, the Bible, provides all the encouragement, wisdom and practical understanding we need as parents to adequately train our children for life. If you feel that this is an area in which you may need to improve (and who



“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

doesn't), we encourage you to seek wisdom from the scriptures, in addition to reading an excellent book about biblically training children called *Shepherding a Child's Heart*, by Tedd Tripp. For parents of older children, an excellent book about shepherding young adults into adulthood is *Age of Opportunity*, by Paul Tripp. Both are

available for sale in the school office. (Several books will be mentioned here, our book sales are for ministry only, we do not sell them for a profit.)

3. Become a life-long learner. Let your children see you learning, reading, and discovering. Your children will assume the view of education that they see in you. If you think of education as something that happens at school, then they will begin to think in this way as well. But if you think of education as a lifelong pursuit of wisdom and knowledge and understanding, then they will begin to pursue this as well.

4. Read to your children. This can hardly be emphasized enough. This one task can help your child improve his self-control, imagination, creativity, vocabulary, writing skills, and auditory processing. Fostering a love of books will lead to your child becoming a lifelong reader, thus a lifelong learner. By ages three and four most children are capable of learning to sit through short novels such as *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Little House on the Prairie*, *The Adventures of Homer Price*, etc. If you would like to learn more about what to read to your child, *Honey for a Child's Heart* is an excellent resource and is also available in our school office.

5. Communicate with the school. Communication is the weakest link in any organization whether it's family, church, or school. Communicating

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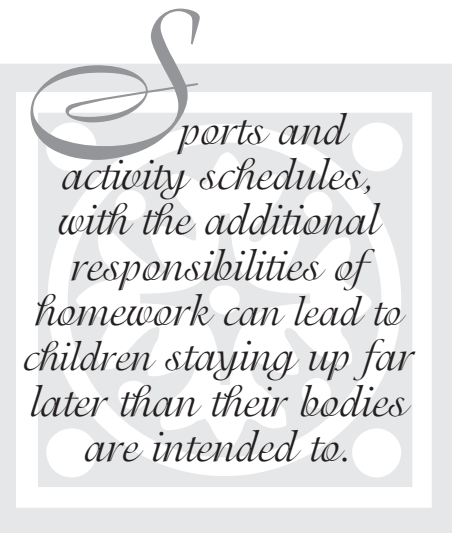
our appreciation, concern, fear, and disappointment should be a natural and regularly occurring event in the classroom, hallway, or on the phone. Doing this within the parameters of scripture will enable us to bring glory to God and build up others instead of tearing them down. An excellent book on communicating with others is *Peacemaker* by Ken Sande.

6. Develop friendships. Rockbridge is not just a school, it's a family. We rejoice in the good in each others' lives. We mourn with those who mourn. If you want more out of your school than an educational environment, then take the first step to develop relationships. Serve brunch and invite other parents. Have a Bible study to parallel what your children are learning in their Bible class. Develop a reading circle and read books that are on our high school reading list, or start a parent-child reading circle and read books that are on their level. Be creative. Rockbridge has several arenas for this. Be on the lookout for information regarding our Teacher Support Team, Mom's in Touch group, and other volunteer groups in your child's backpack.

7. Establish priorities for home life. The first school your child will experience is home. At home your child will learn how to play, work, worship, relax, eat, and interact with others. While these activities do not involve grades and exams, they are measured in the daily application of faith to life. It is crucial to the Christian life to understand how to perform these activities in a way that celebrates and brings glory to the Lord. "Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do it all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). Childhood flies by in an instant. In our culture, there are so many choices and activities available, there is a great temptation to fill the day running from one activity to the next. The children who are the most successful at Rockbridge or anywhere else come from homes that have made family time a priority by

limiting extracurricular activities. Godly home life is not something that can be appreciated in rare tropical storms of spiritual teaching. If we are to be effective, it will be accomplished by keeping the relative spiritual humidity very high.

8. Establish consistent sleep habits. Sports and activity schedules, with the additional responsibilities of homework can lead to children staying



up far later than their bodies are intended to. Sleep is very important to the healthy development of children. Parents who want their children to be successful would be wise to carefully select extracurricular activities and make sure that sleep is a priority.

9. Get involved. Rockbridge would not function without the help of parents who volunteer their time and skills to assist our teachers and staff. Parents have helped start and maintain our library, clean our classrooms, put up bulletin boards, assist students who need individual reading time, even grade papers. Teachers need the help of the parents in their classrooms. Parents who volunteer their time in their children's school feel more connected to what is going on, more appreciative of the overall goals, and better able to positively affect their child's education. Ask your child's teacher how you can help.

10. Develop and maintain good homework habits. Many parents are thrilled when they learn of our

homework policy. We believe that family time is important to our success as a school. To assist families, we have made it a policy that only homework that is essential to the child's mastery of a skill or concept should be assigned. This should not be interpreted to mean that we are "light" on homework or that homework is optional. We expect and require that assigned work be completed in a timely manner as determined by the teacher. And some students may need to do more homework than others because they work at a slower pace in class. With this in mind, parents may benefit from the following suggestions: Students do their best work when in a consistent environment with good lighting and proper seating. A personal study area that is free of distractions works well. Parents should keep in mind that homework is designed to increase independence. If a child is unable to do his work independently, this may be an indication that there is a deficit in his skills which should be discussed with his teacher. Or it may mean that he is having difficulty transferring his skills from one environment to the other. The best course of action is to relax and attempt to change directions given and vocabulary to make it more consistent with the teacher's if possible. Share your concerns with your child's teacher the next day. Parents do well to encourage their child to be independent, even if that means making mistakes. Ordinary children doing their work heartily and making their mistakes with integrity while receiving ordinary grades brings as much honor to God as an exceptional student receiving straight A's.

Above all, relax and enjoy your child, let him become what God has made him to be, and enjoy the incredible adventure you are beginning!

NEW FACULTY

Rockbridge Academy would like to welcome our new faculty members:

Mrs. Allison Godfrey/2nd Grade,
Mrs. Debbie Cavallaro/3rd Grade,
Mr. David Rowe/4th Grade,
Mr. Nick Scotten/6th Grade,
Mrs. Jill Wilson/7th & 8th Grade Literature and 4th & 5th Grade Latin,
Mr. Grant Colvin/6th–10th Grade Latin,
Mr. Doug Baldrige/8th–11th Grade Math,
Mr. Eric Sauder/8th Grade Bible, and
Mrs. Hanneke Mader, Office Assistant.

In the months ahead, new faculty members will be featured in the Rockbridge Reporter to help you to get to know them better.



EUROPE TRIP SUMMER 2003

Rockbridge Academy will be taking the rising senior class to Europe in the summer of 2003. The trip is planned for June 9–23* and will include tours of Italy and Greece, including Athens, Corinth, Olympia, Rome, Assisi, Siena, Florence, and Venice. We invite parents of the rising seniors, faculty, staff and parents of the Rockbridge Academy Association to join us.

Trip package includes: roundtrip airfare, accommodations, breakfast and dinner daily, local specialist on Greek archeology and culture, local guides in Italy, coach transportation, boat crossing from Greece to Italy, entrance fees to sites, and gratuities to drivers. Please visit the school office to pick up a brochure. Initial deposit of \$300 due September 2002.

**Originally scheduled for June 8–22, the dates were moved forward so as to avoid traveling on the Lord's Day.*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where may I park? The main parking lot is located behind the school. If you will be leaving shortly, the front parking lot is probably more convenient; feel free to use it, but please do not use the spaces reserved for the church for any reason.

Should parents check in at the office upon entering the building? All visitors are required to check in at the office and leave their driver's license with us during their visit. We also provide them with a badge so that everyone will know they are a welcomed visitor.

Where can I find...

The bathrooms? We are permitted to use the bathrooms on the second floor. For emergencies, there is a bathroom located in the Kindergarten room. Adults may accompany their small children in the handicapped accessible bathroom on the first floor but it is not to be used during the school day by children unaccompanied by an adult.

The water fountain? A water cooler is located on the first floor in the kindergarten and first grade hallway. We do not recommend using the water fountains located in the building. Students are permitted to use the water cooler during the school day as needed. We ask that students bring a filled water

bottle to school and request that they not refill their water bottles from the cooler.

Who do I talk to if I have a question? Most of the time your child's teacher will be able to answer any question you have about your child, their progress, classroom policies, etc. The best time to talk with them is before or after school. Your child's Communication Book is designed to be an aid in communication. Feel free to write your questions in the Communication Book (for Grammar School only), and they will usually respond the same day. Mr. McKenna, our headmaster, would be happy to talk with you at anytime he is available about school policies or questions that don't pertain directly to your child's class. If you would like to communicate with the Board of Directors, you may do so in writing via Mr. McKenna. He is the one through whom communications to the board must be directed.

To whom should I speak when my child is having a conflict with another child in class if the teacher is unaware? It would be best to speak with the other child's parents, with a follow-up to the teacher as well. We make every effort to resolve conflict in a manner that is consistent with scripture. Please refer to the Parent-Student Handbook, and the *Peacemaker* brochure available in our school office for more information.

Thank You from the Miller Family

Dear Rockbridge families, staff, and Board of Directors,

We want to thank you for your prayer and support during the loss of our son, James. We were overwhelmed by the number of people praying for our family. Your prayers were such an encouragement to us.

We are thankful for Rockbridge and its ministry to our children. We have been blessed by the school and its commitment to our children. We pray that God will continue to use Rockbridge to assist us in training our children to be strong and faithful servants of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

God obviously had an unexpected purpose for James. Although, this was not our plan for James, God did answer our prayer that James would love God with all of his heart and serve Him each day of his life. We are confident of that. We continue to pray that God will be glorified by the life and death of our son, James Brian Miller.

Thank you,
Brian and Leigh Miller