

Challenger News

Keeping Parents and Campuses Connected

January 2012



January at a Glance

- **January 3 (NV)**
Priority Enrollment Begins
- **January 9 (CA, ID, TX, UT)**
Priority Enrollment Begins
- **January 16**
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—
No School
- **January 17 (NV)**
Open Enrollment Begins
- **January 23 (CA, ID, TX, UT)**
Open Enrollment Begins
- **January 26–27 (PS–K)**
Small World Days



CHALLENGER
SCHOOL

“It’s Hard to Adhere to My Own Guidelines”

“I KNOW guidelines are necessary for children—so **why can’t I maintain my own guidelines?** I set them, but I can’t hold firm to them.” Parents often say things like, “I’ve told my daughter she cannot sleep with me—my children know they must be in bed on time—my son knows he cannot pinch his little sister—”

It’s comparatively easy to keep children from deadly behavior, like running in front of cars—choking other children—playing on a gas stove—or putting fingers in an electrical socket. It’s more difficult to stop a toddler who runs up and down the aisles at church—gets into forbidden cabinets—throws food during dinner—refuses to go to bed. Why do we indulge these kinds of behaviors?

Since firm guidelines are the basis for maintaining appropriate behavior, parents and teachers must insist that children follow the rules. **Why is it so difficult for us to hold firmly to our rules?**

Feeling Sorry

GUIDELINES change when we feel sorry for children, because then we allow poor behavior. There are many excuses for feeling sorry for children:

“Poor baby, you were premature, or had health problems, or—you were adopted, your parents are separated, you are an only child—the middle child—have too many siblings—you’re too fat—too thin—you’re just like your grandfather . . .”

One very common excuse is: “He’s too little. He can’t be expected to do what other children can.”

When we allow misbehavior, children lose self-worth and self-confidence, so they accomplish less. More devastating, they view themselves as less capable than their peers. “Mom and Dad haven’t stopped me, so I *am* different. I am not as smart or as capable as others.” The result is that children do not take responsibility for their actions, and their behavior continues or gets worse.

Feeling Guilty

GUIDELINES change when we parents feel guilty, because we allow poor behavior. We can find many reasons to feel guilty:



Don’t undermine your child’s confidence by making excuses for her.

continued on p. 2

Guidelines (continued from p.1)

“Poor baby, I’m not a good parent—I was too young to have children—I’m a single parent—I don’t show enough affection or spend enough time—I don’t like being a parent . . .”

When we feel guilty, we lose confidence. Children sense our lack of sureness and challenge the rules. We become frustrated and abandon our guidelines, allowing the children to take charge. We may yell, nag, and become angry, but still we finally acquiesce to the children’s demands.

The results are that not only are parents unhappy, children are also unhappy. Knowing that they are not behaving well, children also become insecure. They don’t know what may happen. “What if I drive Mom or Dad away? What if they don’t like me any more and give me to someone else?”

I Love You So Much, I Will Help You Stop This Damaging Behavior



Children crave boundaries and strong, just adult guidance.

PARENTS **must be strong.**

Children cannot envision future damage, so they *want* strong leaders. When parents are weak and uncertain, children feel that *someone* needs to be in charge, so they *will* take over for you!

Parents are capable of seeing future damage. A one-year-old hitting Mom may seem cute, but future disrespect is not cute. A two-year-old sleeping with Mom and Dad seems okay, but what will be the long-term damage?

Here is a simple formula that works:

Be sure that **what you are doing is good** for your child.

Have a plan for accomplishing better behavior.

Hold to the plan tenaciously, saying, *“I love you so much, I will help you stop this damaging behavior.”*

In the Spotlight—

Philip H. of Middlefield (CA)

Middlefield (CA) first grader Philip H. earned a gold medal in the 2011 Japan Karate Association/American Federation Nationals in Miami this fall. This accomplishment is especially noteworthy since Philip, whose skill level is beyond others in his age division, competed against athletes in the age division above his own.



Karate prodigy Philip H. of Middlefield (CA)

Philip, who only started karate two years ago, has advanced rapidly in the sport. He currently holds a first-degree brown belt and will test at the black belt level in the next month.

Congratulations on your achievement, Philip!

Previews for Challenger Students and Parents (PS–7)

This month, both students and parents will have opportunities to sit in on classes to get a peek into what the next grade level will be like. Come meet teachers and observe class activities.

You’ll receive an invitation containing details about times, dates, and locations for Parent Previews.

Open Houses for Prospective Parents

In the coming weeks, prospective Challenger parents will have several opportunities to visit Challenger campuses to learn more about our powerful programs.

Consult our website at ChallengerSchool.com for specific dates and times in your area, and spread the word to your friends who are interested in enrolling their children at Challenger.

Priority Enrollment This Month

Current students must reapply every year before open enrollment begins to ensure priority placement.

Current Challenger students and their siblings have an opportunity to enroll for the 2012–2013 school year before enrollment opens to the public. An application packet will be sent home with your child this month.

Small World Day (PS–K)

This month, Challenger preschoolers and kindergartners will be learning about other lands and peoples. They will explore and share traditions, songs, dances, and stories.

On Small World Day, parents may send preschool students to school wearing clothing that is representative of their family’s heritage or country of origin. Kindergarten students will wear the Challenger uniform, but they may add a scarf, vest, pendant, or other accessory representing their ancestry or one of the nations they have studied. (Please be sure to consider safety when planning attire.)



Challenger preschoolers enjoy learning about the customs of other cultures.

We encourage children to bring photographs, books, or other items about their ancestry or heritage for this in-class curriculum event. Please mark pieces carefully with your name and phone number so we can make sure they are returned to you afterward.

Note: This is an in-class curriculum activity. We will provide a snack for the festivities, so please do not send treats with your child.

Alumni Corner

Berryessa (CA) alumna Jessica S. is making quite a name for herself in the world of figure skating.

Jessica, who graduated from Challenger this past June, recently qualified to compete in the U.S. Figure Skating Junior Nationals. From a field of 30 girls, Jessica was one of only four skaters from the Central Pacific Region (Northern California, Hawaii, Nevada, and Utah) whose combined long and short program scores were high enough to advance to the national championship.

According to her former teacher and Headmaster Sheela Vijay, Jessica is “very graceful and full of values, displaying a quiet strength.”



Challenger alumna Jessica S. competes in the Central Pacific Region Figure Skating Championship.

Science Fair (K–8)



Challenger students are conducting investigations and experiments in preparation for the Science Fair.

In preparation for next month’s Science Fair, students will be conducting experiments using the scientific method. A few short weeks from now, they’ll be displaying the results of their investigations. Our clever Challenger students would love to have you stop by to peruse their exhibits and discuss their projects with them.

The fair will feature ingenious and thought-provoking demonstrations, experiments, and inventions. Science Fairs will be held the week of February 21–24.

Tax Number

For those who need it for their tax returns, Challenger’s tax ID is

94-1709563.

Learning Curve



Heard It in the Halls

Boise Bloom (ID) campus—As Miss Kandice reviewed the Spanish words her four-year-olds had learned, she asked the children if they remembered how to say *pants* in Spanish.

Will offered confidently, “*Pantalones.*”

“That is correct, Will,” acknowledged the teacher.

Miss Kandice then asked if anyone knew how to say *shirt* in Spanish.

Will’s hand shot up again. “*Shirtalones?*”

Everest (ID) campus—

Three-year-old preschooler Gavin stopped at the Headmaster’s office as he was leaving school. “Miss Karren,” he said excitedly, “I am so impressed.”

He opened his Challenger bag and pulled out his first Challenger reader. “I can read my book.”



Gavin and his first Challenger reader

Preschool

Previews of Kindergarten

To prepare parents for the transition from preschool to kindergarten, classroom previews occur this month. Please come to meet our kindergarten teachers, and watch the kindergarten activities.



We will send invitations containing details regarding specific times, dates, and locations.

Enrollment Considerations

Are morning classes always better for preschoolers? Some studies, including Challenger studies, actually indicate that preschool and kindergarten children who attend half-day afternoon classes perform better academically, on average, than those who attend morning classes!

Full of energy in the morning, children often can amuse themselves, but by afternoon they become bored. Thus, they are quite receptive to settling down to “learn, sing, and play” with friends and teachers. This leaves parents free for their own afternoon activities. Traffic is often more friendly in the afternoons, too.

Children who may be accustomed to napping in the afternoon can easily adjust to an afternoon schedule by going to bed earlier or rising later in the morning.



Whether you choose morning or afternoon, we will provide lots of wonderful activities for your child.