



Avona Elementary School PTA
Editor: Bill Smyth

www.AvonaPTA.org

Upcoming Events

PTA Meeting	Mar. 16
6:00 pm	
Early Dismissal	Mar 21, 22, 23
Grades 1 st – 5 th only	1:05 pm
Chocolates on Broadway	
Pick up	Mar. 28
Trick Tray	Apr. 7
ShopFest	Apr. 7
Skate-A-Way	Apr. 11
PTA Meeting	Apr. 20
BookFair	Apr. 25
Science Fair	Apr. 27

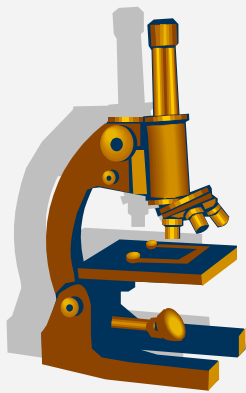


Tricky Tray and ShopFest 2006

On Friday, April 7 from 4 pm until 8 pm, Avona PTA second annual ShopFest and Tricky Tray will take place. It will include the following vendors: Amy B's Sweets, Big Yellow Box, Creative Memories, Gourmet Ice Cream, Home Interiors, Longaberger, Mad Creations, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Pampered Chef, Stampin Up and Tastefully Simple. Food and beverages will be for sale as well. So come on out to support Avona PTA and the vendors who are related to Avona students. All proceeds directly benefit Avona students.

Tricky Tray items include the following items with many, many more on the way:

- (2) 4 free passes for The Land of Make Believe valued at \$68
- Bagels and Cream Cheese for a year from Panera Bread valued at \$135
- Red Robin gift certificate valued at \$14
- 2 All Day Hand stamp passes for Knoebels valued at \$45
- 6 General Admission Tickets for the Reading Phillies valued at \$36
- 4 free Combo Meals for Wendy's valued at \$24
- \$15 gift certificate for Beck's Land and Sea House
- \$25 gift certificate for Wegmans
- \$30 gift certificate for Wal-Mart
- 3 prints from Chris Soentpiet valued at \$20 each
- 4 free passes for Regal Cinemas valued at \$34



From the Principal's Desk

I wanted to share an article I recently read written by Leslie Matula, the founder of Project Wisdom. Project Wisdom produces the morning messages your child hears each day.

They're Watching You, The Importance of Role Modeling

We all know that telling a child "Do as I say and not as I do" is pointless, right? They're too smart. They get the hypocrisy of that statement even before they are old enough to know the definition of the word. I understand that. When I was the tender age of eleven, two adults in my life – role models I thought were surely the final authority of all things good – fell from grace with a hard thud when I witnessed them acting in a way that directly contradicted all they had been preaching for years. I didn't need to know what the definition of the word hypocrisy was. I just knew that what they were doing was wrong and ran counter to all the character lessons I was supposed to be learning from them. I lost respect for the two adults that day. Even sadder, I lost respect for what they had been teaching me.

The importance of role modeling cannot be overstated. It doesn't mean we have to be perfect. We're not and never will be. But it does mean that as adults who have influence over the lives of children, we must strive to model all that we want to teach. When we fall short of that mark, which we will do often, then we have a great opportunity to model appropriate responses to poor choices, such as humility and regret. We can do what we can to make amends and then get back to the business of being a good role model.



“....they expect us to help them navigate life’s complex journey.”

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.AvonaPTA.org

From the Principle's Desk Continued...

Anyone who spends time in or around children is a character educator. It comes with the territory. Children are indeed the “ever-attentive witness” to all that they hear us say and all they see us do. The question is what values, principles, and qualities are they learning from us? Are they learning to be respectful, kind, responsible, and fair? Or are they learning that adults can throw temper tantrums seemingly without consequence, that they can viciously gossip without giving any thought to the harm they cause, that they can bully others to get what they want without thinking of the victim and their promises have little or no value?

There is another childhood memory that stands out. Mrs. B. was our “across the street neighbor” when I was growing up. I thought the world of Mrs. B. She introduced me to homemade tacos and the Beatles. This one morning, I was standing in her front yard, books and lunch bag in hand, waiting for her daughter to join me on our ten-block walk to our elementary school. Her daughter was struggling as she tried to haul a heavy garbage can to the curb. Had I been more thoughtful in that moment, I would have put my things down and rushed to help her, but I didn't. Mrs. B. started yelling at me, wanting to know why I wasn't helping her daughter (as she stood by doing nothing herself), and calling me a selfish child. I was so ashamed. Fighting back tears, I began to get a little angry and confused because Mrs. B. was yelling at me when she wasn't being of any help either.

Now here's what's sad about all this. Mrs. B. was one of the many character educators in my life, whether she had signed up for that job or not. She had, in fact, taught me many wonderful lessons during the course of my childhood, like how to share and how to be loyal family. Unbeknownst to Mrs. B., in that particular situation, she was faced with a teachable moment. She could have walked over to me and respectfully said, “Leslie, let me hold your things while you go help Kay. I've got a bad back or I would help her myself.” She would have called to my attention (in a respectful way) the right thing to do in that particular situation. She could have also helped me understand her inaction, or, she could have said, “Leslie, I'm so sorry I snapped at you. That wasn't right of me. My back is hurting or I'd help Kay myself. Would you mind giving her a hand while I hold your things?”

What's amazing to me about these childhood memories is that they still bring up strange and uncomfortable feelings, even through the filters of whatever wisdom I have managed to accumulate over the past forty-plus years. Sadly, when I think of Mrs. B., this is the memory that surfaces first. That's the power of our actions as adults who influence children. It's scary, really, but that doesn't change the reality of it.

In our homes, schools, businesses, and sports events, they expect us to help them navigate life's complex journey. It simply isn't reasonable to expect them to be respectful to others when they witness us being disrespectful. We cannot expect them to be honest when they hear us laugh about cheating on our income taxes. We cannot expect them to be fair and just when they witness our unfair, unjust actions.

The most fundamental truths are more often the most simple. Sometimes they are the hardest to hear. This may be one of those truths. We are always and forever teaching values to the young people around us whether we do it with conscious intent or not. We can't complain about disrespectful, selfless, angry, and irresponsible kids unless we as adults are willing to take a long look in the mirror and begin to own up to our own angry, untrustworthy, and uncaring behaviors. And we sure can't expect them to be “good children” when we aren't practicing what we preach. In fact, better not to preach at all and avoid kids altogether, but why would anybody want to do that?

That concludes the article and I hope you understand as I do, that our children look at us each day. How we behave is how they think they should behave. I will end this with five tips for character educators.

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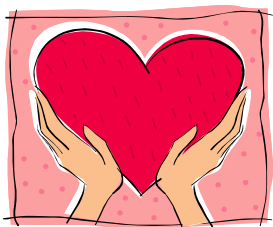
Special Programs

Reminder to please keep on collecting Box Tops for Education. The winner of our last contest will be announced shortly. Log on to Box Tops 4 Education and register your Weis Shopping Card for additional bonus certificates. See the website for more details.

Campbell's Labels for Education, Redner's Save-A-Tape receipts, and Tyson A+ labels are also welcome. If you have any questions regarding any of these programs, please contact Dawn Purcell at 610-258-1660.

Jump Rope for Heart

Mrs. Skutches would like to thank all the volunteers, students and faculty for their contributions for yet another successful year . The American Heart Association will receive just over \$3,000 for all your efforts. Great job everyone.



Spring Fundraiser

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Spring Fundraiser. You did a fantastic job of selling chocolate this season. Pick up is scheduled for March 28th in the library from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm. If you are not available to pick it up at this time, please call Etta Sortino at 610.559.1912 to make other arrangements. THANK YOU!



BMI Results

In the Spring, parents of Kindergarten through 4th grade students will receive in the mail, the results of their children's Body Mass Index (BMI) as mandated by the PA Department of Health.

Vision and Hearing screening will also be recorded on this Health Report Card. You would have received notification already of any failures with the vision or hearing screening. However, it is recommended that if you have any concerns with the BMI results, you should consult with your child's primary care physician.

Back Packs for Donations Sale

If any one is interested in an extra Avona All Star Back Pack that the students received at Christmas time, they are available for purchase. Each bag is just \$6.00. They are waterproof and make a great bag for carrying wet swim suits and towels. Please contact Toniann Johnson at 601.559.3897.



Many local companies have donated products, gift cards and money to help support the PTA and all of its' efforts. Log on to www.AvonaPTA.org and see who has made donations, then support those patrons to show our appreciation for all they do for us.



From the Principal's Desk Continued...

char-ac-ter ed-u-ca-tor (kar'ik taer ej'ae-ka'taer) n. Any adult human who is ever in the presence of children.

1. Choose the values in which you believe.

It's been said that decisions are easy to make when we are clear about the principles in which we believe. It could also be said that when we live principle-based lives, we are more likely to make wise choices. Make decisions about what values you want to live by, and it will be easier to model those values.

2. Accept the fact that anytime you are in the presence of children, you assume the role of character educator.

There is no question about that. When we are in the presence of children, we are character educators. The only question is, what kind of character traits are we teaching?

3. Be aware of what you are modeling.

Be especially aware of your conduct in the presence of children. Know that they are "ever-attentive witnesses" and are easily influenced by the words and actions of adults, for better or for worse. And remember, children have finely tuned "hypocrisy radar."

4. Pay attention to teachable moments.

You may be surprised how many teachable moments present themselves when you are in the presence of children. This doesn't mean jumping on every opportunity to lecture, preach at or generally berate them. It simply means taking advantage of moments when they may be struggling to make a decision or dealing with the consequences of a bad choice. These are moments when they may be open to a little wisdom respectfully shared, or perhaps a wordless demonstration of caring and appropriate behavior.

5. Embrace the notion that you can have a positive impact on a child's life in one meaningful moment.

Most of us can remember a moment in our lives when an adult modeled something that impacted us for the better. Perhaps the wisdom learned in that teachable moment – a moment the adult may have long forgotten – helped us make a better choice or even changed the course of our lives. Be the adult whose good character ripples out and positively touches the lives of children. It may or may not take a whole village to raise a child, but children are influenced by the village in which they live.

