

As summer winds down, children's thoughts across Southwest Orlando will inevitably turn to the first day of school. The school year, which begins Aug. 20, is only a month away, and students and their families can get a head start by preparing now. The beginning of school is an exciting time, but some might worry about what the coming year may hold.

Southwest Orlando Bulletin's 15th annual Back to School guide provides a comprehensive look at a variety of school-related topics. In the following articles, area experts offer insights into different concerns often brought about by the start of a new school year. For students, there are articles about becoming confident, getting a new look and building self-esteem. For parents, there are tips about educational tax credits, protecting against illness and helping children reach their fullest potential.

Teachers Are the Heartbeat of America

*by Tim Euler, M.Ed., head of school
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Every organization rises and falls on those who are the heartbeat of the organization. In schools across

They should be passionate, trained and experienced in the areas in which they work, and be actively involved

Robert Fried, author of *The Passionate Teacher*, wrote: Passionate teachers share their commitment to

The classroom is vital to teachers, but it is outside the classroom where the essential training occurs. It is

A teacher should view his job as a calling and mission, rather than a job. Society needs teachers who go

Helpful Tips to Ensure Healthy Children

*by Keri Cormier, office manager
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Surprisingly enough, school will soon be back in session, and so will the germs that come with it. Being
Another great way to prevent illness when washing with soap and water is not available, is the use of an
These are just a couple of simple and easy ways to help keep children happy and healthy during the up

Technology in the Classroom

*by Neena Dhanji & Sandy Graf, principal
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Online gaming, online chatting and online TV are all trends of this generation. It is difficult to keep even t
Many educators believe that marrying technology and education is the key. A digital learning platform is
In this new paradigm, students continue to learn via class lectures, and yes, they still use paper and pen
With digital courseware, there are no textbooks. Coursework is Web-accessible, along with student plan
Combining instruction with technology is the future of education. Blended learning environments provide

How to Help a Child's Classroom

submitted by Children's Lighthouse Child Care Learning Center of People of Faith
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www.childrenslighthousepof.com

Some parents may be concerned about the growing size of school classrooms. Lawmakers and school

- Volunteering in the classroom. Those who have the time and want to make the commitment can ask to
- Get involved with the school by joining the PTA or another group committed to improving schools. Volu
- Obtain a list of classmates and their telephone numbers. This may help a child reach out to peers in or

Etiquette Tips to Remember

*by Debby Tapia, vice president, certified
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Proper etiquette and manners are important.

The following are a few tips all students should practice and use in everyday situations:

- Students should understand the importance of writing thank-you notes, especially for gifts given to them
- Students need to be taught table manners at an early age. They should come to the table with clean fa
- Students should keep their telephones on vibrate or keep the ringtone volumes turned down. They sho
- Occasionally, students should be taken out to a nice restaurant so they can begin to use etiquette skills
- Along with "please" and "thank you," other courteous words and phrases should include "you're welcom

Dyslexia: A Parent/Teacher Perspective

by Katherine Nash

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Once a child begins to learn how to read, many parents are confronted with a disparity in their child's learning. Awareness of dyslexia and recognizing learning disparities are essential first steps in helping a child overcome these challenges. The ability to compensate diminishes as a child ages. Learning to read is essential in preparing children for the future.

How to Prevent Bullying

by Carol Grosshans, middle school principal

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Parents are filled with joy when handed their newborns, believing they are beautiful, smart and have the potential to succeed. Bullying is not just taking place in schools, but also through the use of texting, Facebook postings, instant messaging, and social media.

Some studies report that between 15 to 25 percent of school-age children are frequently bullied, and the

Adults need to keep the lines of communication open and ask their children questions. They should be a

If bullying is occurring, they should discuss with the child what led up to the bullying. There may be thing

Parents also should not ignore the fact that their child may be a bully. They can work with school person

Parents + School = Successful Child

by Gail Hatmaker, middle school principal

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What does it take to help a child become successful in school and life?

This is a question most parents ask as they try to navigate the choppy waters of raising children in today

Even though a child does not come into this world with an owner's manual or navigational chart, there is

- Higher grades, test scores and graduation rates.
- Better school attendance.
- Increased motivation and better self-esteem.
- Better behavior.

It is important to find a school that believes in sharing the educational boat with parents. The family is the

Parents should get involved in their children's schools and remember that parenting is "heart" work.

Play It Safe With a Mouth Guard

by David L. Goldstein, D.M.D.

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According to the American Dental Association, more than 200,000 oral injuries are prevented annually in this country by sports mouth guards.

Mouth guards protect not only the teeth, but also the lips, cheeks and tongue. In addition, they help prevent

A mouth guard should be worn whenever a child is participating in an activity that risks falls or head contact.

It is important to choose a mouth guard that the child can wear comfortably. Sports stores offer a variety of

Lay the Foundation for the Best School Year

by Scott Bergin

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Parents and children look forward to summer and a break from the school-day routines — vacations, camps,

To ensure a successful upcoming school year, any questions or concerns from the last school year should be

Back to School 2012

Written by Southwest Orlando Bulletin Staff

Now is also the time to begin preparing for exams, such as the SAT, ACT, FCAT, ISEE and HHSA. The

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