



THE DINNER TABLE PROJECT

A program to encourage families to eat together, have fun, and grow closer through conversation.

AUGUST 2026

EASY PASTA SALAD

Ingredients:

- 1 (16 oz) package uncooked rotini pasta
- 1 (16 oz) bottle Italian salad dressing
- 2 tablespoons of sugar
- 1 English cucumber, chopped
- 1 (16 oz) container cherry tomatoes, chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup diced bell or sweet peppers, multicolored
- 1 small, sweet onion, diced (Vidalia)
- Optional, add sliced green and/or black olives, julienne carrots, celery etc.
- 4 ounces grated Parmesan cheese
- Black pepper to taste

Directions:

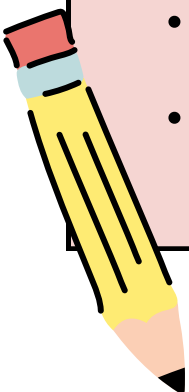
- Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Place pasta in the pot, cook for 8 to 12 minutes, drain and rinse with cold water, let drain.
- In a large bowl, toss cooked pasta with Italian dressing, add sugar and mix until pasta is coated with the dressing.
- Add diced cucumbers, tomatoes, onions and peppers (or whatever vegetables you decide to use), black pepper and cheese then toss to coat with dressing.
- Refrigerate pasta salad until chilled, for best results, at least 30 minutes before serving. This pasta salad can be made ahead of time and refrigerated for up to 3 days.

QUESTIONS TO ASK EVERYDAY

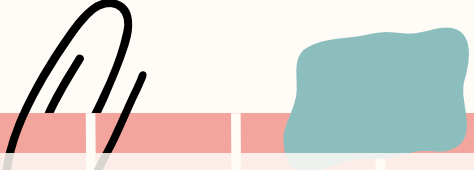
- What did you **learn** today?
- What was your **favorite moment** of the day?
- Who **helped** you today, and how did it make you feel?

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What is something you are looking forward to this school year?
- What makes a good friend?
- Tell us about a time that you learned something new.
- If your school had a theme song, what would it be?



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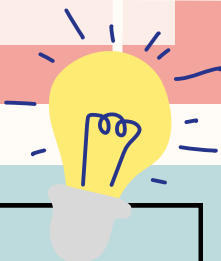


DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

Achievement Motivation

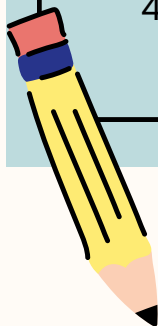


As the new school year begins, Achievement Motivation helps young people take pride in their effort and stay motivated in school and beyond. When kids see that hard work matters, they build confidence and persistence. A simple way to support this at home is by making a vision board together—set goals, add inspiring words or pictures, and display it as a daily reminder of what they're working toward.



THE CUP GAME

1. Find a partner and stand facing each other with a cup on the floor (or on a table) between you.
2. A parent or sibling will call out body parts (e.g., "touch your nose," "touch your knees," "touch your shoulders").
3. When the parent or sibling says, "Cup!" both players race to grab the cup.
4. The first player to grab the cup wins the round!



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DTP ON THE GO...

The back-to-school season can be hectic—early mornings, packed schedules, and constant reminders to stay on top of everything. Amid the rush, small gestures can help families stay connected. **One simple idea:** tuck a quick note into your child's lunch bag or book bag. It does not have to be fancy—just a few words of encouragement, a fun joke, or a positive reminder that you are thinking of them. These small notes can brighten your child's day, offer comfort during a tough moment, and remind them they are supported even when you are apart. It is an easy, meaningful way to keep family connections strong all school year long.

Try writing your first note this week—your words might be the best part of your child's day!

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