



Welcome 2012! We're back at Pepperell Elementary School for the beginning of a new "school year" – report cards, school-wide spelling bee, breakfast with Dads, and of course, the regular classroom and activity schedules – how busy we are here at PES!

In the 4th grade we are having classroom guidance sessions on cliques, stereotypes, discrimination, peer pressure, and the need "to belong" – teaching the students that everyone is special in their own way. We also discussed "bullying" and "cyberbullying," and how it is up to each one of us to make our school a "safe place" to work and play! In the 5th grade, we are having a visiting speaker, Shannon Bond, present a program in each classroom that centers around personal safety.

I am attaching some articles from "The Parent Institute Newsletter" that you might find beneficial:



Help Your Elementary Schooler Make, and Keep, Resolutions for 2012



The start of a new year is a great time for kids to make some resolutions. There's still time for a child to pull up a low grade in math ... get into the habit of doing homework without a fight ... or read every day. But if your child makes those resolutions, will he be able to keep them? Here are some ways you can help your child turn his resolutions into reality:

- Be specific. There's an old saying, "If you can dream it, you can do it." So help your child see what success looks like. What grades would he like to see on the report card? What student council office would he like to hold?
- Write it down. Have your child write down his goals. Place them where he can see them every day. They will help him stay focused.
- Eliminate obstacles. It's hard to study if your desk looks like a blizzard hit it. Help your child think of the things standing in his way. Then, one by one, help him tackle those problems.
- Start small. If he's never been in a play, perhaps he shouldn't try out for the lead role. Help your child set a few small, achievable goals.



Attendance Matters / Talk to your child about attendance and why it matters

"It's just one day, Mom," your child says as he begs you to let him stay home from school. "Missing one day won't hurt, will it?" In fact, it will and here's why:

- Students today are expected to learn more than students in the past. Since each day's learning builds on what was done the day before, if your child misses a day he has missed an important building block.
- Going to school regularly teaches your child important habits. He learns about responsibility and dependability. He learns how to manage his time. These are things he'll need to know as an adult.

So what can you do?

- You can help your child get organized. Kids are often late to school because they're looking for a lost sneaker or misplaced homework. Take five minutes every night to get ready and organized for the next day.
- Know school rules. What is the school policy on absences? Be sure you call the school if your child is going to be absent for any reason. Make school the top priority. Letting your child stay home from school because he's not ready for a test sends the wrong message.