

FAMILY MATTERS

■ WHEN PARENTS DRINK, CHILDREN SUFFER

That is why the Children of Alcoholics Foundation has set up a 24-hour toll-free number to offer children and their parents confidential help information and referrals. The foundation has a national database and offers a variety of services. For more information, call 1-800-355-COAF.

■ KNOW IT BEFORE YOU NEED IT

Baylor Health Care System and the Dallas Area Chapter of the American Red Cross will sponsor a mass CPR training event on May 16 at the Radisson Hotel, 1893 W. Mockingbird Lane (between Interstate 35 and Harry Hines Boulevard). Five training sessions will begin every hour on the hour from 8 to 11 a.m., and then again at 1 p.m. Each session will last between three and four hours. The training is designed for those age 12 and older. Participants will receive an adult CPR certificate upon successful completion of the skills and written test. Cost is \$10 and pre-registration is required. Call (toll free) 1-800-4BAYLOR.

■ SAY CHEESE, MOM!

Women who give birth on Mother's Day (Sunday) and apply to Eastman Kodak Co. will receive a free Advantix Photo System camera valued at about \$200, as well as free processing of the first roll of film. This year, Kodak is expanding its promotion to include women who adopt babies on May 11. Participating parents must be U.S. residents. To receive the free film and camera, a certified copy of the newborn's birth certificate or adoption papers must be mailed to: Kodak Advantix Cameras Picture Perfect: Mother's Day, P.O. Box 6542, Young America, Minn. 55558-6542. Must be received by Aug. 31.

■ FREE DISCIPLINE SEMINAR

The North Texas Center for Learning & Behavior at the Baylor Health Center at Irving-Coppell will sponsor a free seminar for parents called Smart Discipline. It will be from 7 to 9 p.m. on May 14 at Coppell Middle School West, 1201 Wrangler Drive. Based on the nationally acclaimed program, Smart Discipline offers simple, specific strategies and guidelines, as well as age-appropriate rules and expectations. When properly implemented, program officials say, the techniques take the anger and emotion out of



The Dallas Morning News/Arline Katsch

Mary Catherine Huffines goes over a poetry verse with her oldest son, Colin, while her other children listen.

Lessons from life

By Kara Douglass

Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

When 8-year-old Bennett hits the tennis court, he does more than keep his eyes on the ball. Tennis lessons often get matched with a math lesson when his mom, Susan Shake, a former teacher who now home-schools her children, tosses balls over the net. Rather than keeping score, Bennett practices his subtraction as the number of balls his mom holds in her hands dwindles.

Having no designated hours for learning is one of the advantages for home-schoolers.

"I try to make every life experience a learning affair," says Ms. Shake of Dallas, who also home-schools sons Elliott, 11, and Nelson, 10. "It all just blends together. We don't have to have a math book or science book out."

She says her kids are not as intimidated by learning because they don't even know it's happening.

At the core of all home schools is the goal of making learning a family affair. And that's something that works for kids even when they attend more traditional school. All it takes is a certain mind-set.

Here home-schoolers share

Parents use everyday activities to help their children learn



The Dallas Morning News/Arline Katsch

Ms. Huffines teaches phonics to (from left) Terence, Devin and Deirdre. Son Russell sits watching the group.

activities and tips to turn everyday life into lessons.

"Take any situation you can and relate it back to whatever it is your kids are having trouble with," Ms. Shake says. For instance, another way she helps her kids learn math is to compare prices at the grocery store.

"I give them a partial list, and each kid picks out one or two things. Through the process, they have to think mathematically: Is it cheaper to buy the bigger box of cereal or the smaller box? Maybe they'll decide it's cheaper to buy the cereal that comes in the bag."

Mary Catherine Huffines of Dallas puts a high priority on the arts. When she teaches about classical music, the kids — Colin, 8; Devin, 6; Terence, 5; Deirdre, 5; and Russell, 1 — first hear a brief composer biography and talk about the music's historical context. Then, Ms. Huffines lets the music speak for itself.

After that, the kids get to speak for the music, by creating a story to follow the tempo. Each child pitches in his or her own idea of what the melody means.

The Huffines children also spend two to three weeks at a time memorizing poetry. They tackle a verse a day of such works as "The Sin of Omission." Please see FOR on Page 6C.

For home-schoolers, life is a classroom

Continued from Page 5C.

by Margaret E. Sangster and "If I Can Stop One Heart From Breaking," by Emily Dickinson.

Whatever you teach your children, keep them physically close to you, Ms. Huffines suggests.

"I like to get me and as many of my kids as possible into one chair," she says, adding that the proximity allows her to easily distribute rewards for work well-done — a pat on the head, a kiss on the cheek.

"I want them to feel secure and know that school isn't a threat," she says.

Leslie Frank, a former architect, is teaching her children to draw and to apply that skill to other studies such as penmanship. She allows her kids to experiment with her architecture tools and supplies. For children learning their letters, she suggests writing thick, oversized words on a big piece of paper, covering it with tracing paper and letting children copy the handwriting.

Getting children to think requires staying a step ahead of their inquiring minds. Children usually ask the questions, but Ms. Huffines likes to turn the tables on them. She suggests asking them the questions, such as, "Why is the sky blue?" before they have a chance to ask you. She is always amazed by their answers.

Parents can also teach kids by asking them to help with running the household. For example, folding laundry doesn't have to be a chore. Ms. Frank reads to her children, James, 9; Andrew, 7; Grace, 4; and Natalie, 1, while the kids sort and fold clothes.

Finding common learning activities for children of different ages and abilities can be challenging. Home-school families generally believe that parents should teach to the level of the highest ability.

"Younger children can pick up

"Younger children can pick up what they can through osmosis. My younger children want to do what the older ones are doing."

— Mary Catherine Huffines,
home-schooling parent

what they can through osmosis," Ms. Huffines says. This also makes them feel included. "My younger children want to do what the older ones are doing."

So, her older children practice their reading skills by reading to the younger ones, who can never get enough storytelling.

Even playtime — when most kids think they're getting an education break — is an opportunity to learn. Don't take the fun out of it, but choose games that teach, such as blocks and crafts.

Of course, as kids get bigger, so do the challenges of stretching their abilities. But that's what parenting is about, Ms. Shake says. If you make teaching part of their everyday life with you, "You are always in a tutoring situation."

Kara Douglass is a Dallas freelance writer.

"TWO THUMBS UP!"
SISKEL & EBERT
"AMBITIOUS AND ABSORBING."
David Karger, NEWSWEEK
"'HE GOT GAME' IS A TRIUMPH!"
Neil Rosen, NY 1 NEWS

DENZEL WASHINGTON

HE GOT GAME

 www.hegotgame.com
Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound. © 1998 COLUMBIA PICTURES

HOLLYWOOD USA
24th & N. Hwy. 218-8800

MOVIES 14
501 Lancaster Ln. 248-3300

AMC GRAND

CINEMARK 17 MEGAPLEX
North Dallas 241-1100

AMC CENTRAL PARK
2418 & Park 241-7244

AMC CENTRAL PARK

STAR CINEMA
VISTA RIDGE
1000 Glenhurst Ave. • 972-3111
BARGAIN MATINEES
MAN IN THE IRON MASK (PG-13)
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00
THE OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION (R)
1:00 2:30 5:15 7:45 10:30
PRINCE OF TENDERS (PG)
10:30 2:00 5:00 7:00 9:30
MY GIANT (PG)
1:00 2:30 4:55 7:30 10:00

IRVING C
2424 W. Summer St.
\$1.00 BEFORE 6 PM
\$1.00 MOVIES ALL DAY
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG-13)
1:10 4:10 7:10 10:10
TWILIGHT (R)
12:30 2:00 4:30 7:30 10:00
FULL MOON (R)
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
SENSELESS (R)
12:15 2:40 4:55 7:15 9:35
REPLACEMENT KILLERS (R)
1:00 2:15 5:30 7:45 9:55

MESQUITE C
11001 E. Collins Rd.
\$1.00 BEFORE 6 PM
\$1.00 MOVIES ALL DAY
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG-13)
1:30 4:10 7:10 10:10
TWILIGHT (R)
12:30 2:00 4:30 7:30 10:00
FULL MOON (R)
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
REPLACEMENT KILLERS (R)
1:00 2:15 5:30 7:45 9:55
HARD RAIN (R) 7:15 10:15

"EXCELLENT SMALL-TOWN DANCE"
PG
MUSIC BY JOHN WILLIAMS
CAST BY JAMES NEWTON HOWARD
amc MESQUITE 11
11001 E. COLLINS RD.
Check

FOR SHOWING

LES
mandalay
NOW
Cinema Director's Choice
Insultion
11001 E. COLLINS RD. 972-3111
Insultion

Landmark's Inwood Theatre
540 W. Lovers Ln. (214) 352-6642 • 540 Lovers Ln. is the Address Place. Call (972) 347-7272 #004
THE SPANISH PRISONER (PG) Only 1:00, 2:30, 4:55
FRENCH KISS (R) Only 1:00, 2:30, 4:55, 7:15, 9:35
THE BIG ONE (PG-13) Only 1:00, 2:45
GABRIEL (NR) Only 1:00, 2:45
Valid For Tuesday, May 5, Only • #10010

THE GRANADA
WALKER THEATRE
\$1 ADMISSION DRAFTS POPCORN
AS GOOD AS IT GETS (PG-13)