

ASK P&C

Developmental psychology expert Michelle Anthony answers your questions about your child's social, emotional, and behavioral development at home and in school. **THIS MONTH:** learning the value of money, a superior younger sibling, and shyness in class

MY HUSBAND AND I have chosen not to give our kids (9 and 6) an allowance at this point. However, we do want them to learn the value of money and how to spend it responsibly. Any suggestions?

—Rebecca L.,
San Bernardino, CA

CHOOSING TO wait on allowance in no way limits your ability to help your children learn about money. Try making these introductory ideas part of your overall teaching about the importance of saving and spending wisely: **GIVE** your children a certain amount of holiday or birthday money to spend how they like. They are less likely to beg for the latest trendy toy when they have to fork over their own money to pay for it. **BRING** your children food shopping and talk about the items on sale compared to brands you usually buy. Discuss which items are better values for the cost, taking into account the amount of the item and its taste or quality.

START the school year by giving your child \$20 to spend at bake sales and book fairs for the year. Allow her to use the money how she likes, but remind her that if she spends too much at the first opportunity, she will have less money to spend later in the year or at another event.

MY CHILDREN ARE 14 months apart and my younger daughter seems to be catching up or surpassing my older daughter in almost every area: socially, academically, physically. How do I support my older daughter without having to hold back my younger one?

—Susie T., Annapolis, MD

EVERY CHILD wants to shine and feel special. In most families, the older sibling has the coveted spot of getting to do things first and best, so it can be hard when

the family superstar is the younger sister. In this case, you want to build your older daughter's confidence, and you also want to help your younger daughter shine—but not at the expense of her sibling. First, help your older child find one or two of her strengths (soccer, art, dance) and try to protect them. Often, superstar younger siblings like to do whatever their older sibling does and do it better. Encourage your younger child to find a different hobby.

Point out smaller things that your older child excels at, too. Do you count on her help in the kitchen or the garden? The more you can identify the ways your older child shines, the more she will carry that sense of her own value and skill inside. Giving her some privileges that come simply from being older (like chewing gum or staying up later) can also help.

Michelle Anthony, M.A., Ph.D., is an expert in developmental psychology, a certified K-3 teacher, and co-author of the upcoming *Little Girls Can Be Mean: Four Steps to Bullyproof Girls in the Early Grades*.

MY 7-YEAR-OLD never speaks in class and gives one-word answers when directly asked. I know she has great ideas to share, but when I try to talk to her about it, she shrugs her shoulders and looks away. What should I do?

—Sarah J., Macon, GA

LEARNING TO speak up in school takes time for some kids. Try role-playing so she can practice question-and-answer scenarios and to help build her confidence. Then, let her try it out in other settings. For example, she might order her own meal at a diner. (Let her know in advance when you expect her to speak up, so she can mentally prepare.)

Enrolling her in a theater class can also help get her used to speaking in front of others. Another idea: Team up with the teacher to reinforce what you're doing at home. She might tell your daughter when she can expect to be called on. Above all, avoid pleading and prodding. Ridicule, shame, and embarrassment are your worst enemies. **P&C**



Have a question you'd like P&C to answer? E-mail it to AskPC@scholastic.com.