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Connect with Kids

Make This the School Year of Empowered Parenting
Connect with Kids' Top Ten Back-to-School Tips for Parents

Atlanta – With the start and promise of a fresh school year just weeks away, have you resolved to be a better, more involved parent this coming school year? You're not alone, says Stacey DeWitt, founder and CEO of the *Connect with Kids* Network.

"We talk with parents – and kids – across the country about the issues they face everyday. While many of our kids have more 'things' and information than ever before, they tell us – and research confirms – their anxiety and stress are approaching record levels. I truly believe parenting has never been more complicated and challenging," DeWitt says.

So what can parents do to make this their "The Year of Empowered Parenting?" Now in its 10th year of creating programming designed to encourage conversations between parents and kids, *Connect with Kids* offer parents Ten Tips to Empowered Parenting this coming school year:

- 10. Understand Your Kids' Technological World** -- Don't be intimidated by your kids' online world. Learn what they're saying and who they're "talking to" online and set appropriate limits. The Internet is NOT a private venue.
- 9. Set limits** – Whether study habits or rules about drinking or drugs, set the standards. Kids of all ages thrive on structure. What decent coach sends the team out on the field without instructions and expectations? Set the limits and standards that your family believes in – and enforce them.
- 8. Learn to Listen** – Put down your own cell phone and Blackberry. Take the time – and every opportunity – to really listen to what your kids are saying, especially at the times they are ready to talk.
- 7. Be Involved at School** – No matter what the grade level, attend parent programs, conferences and keep in touch with teachers. Too many middle and high school parents think their kids don't want them there – but there are too many opportunities missed to interact with other parents and share perspectives. "Middle and high school is the time for parents to check-in, not check out," says DeWitt.
- 6. Model Healthy Behavior** – The decisions kids make, especially during their teen years, have a substantial effect on their life-long health and mortality. Resolve to exercise and eat healthfully – and your kids just might model that behavior.
- 5. Be on Time** – Teach your children to respect others and themselves by being on time. Show them that showing up on time – for school, for team practices, for music lessons and even for dinner – shows respect and responsibility.
- 4. Know What They're Watching** -- Whether on TV or online, know what your kids are watching and try to watch it together. Some material is simply inappropriate, depending upon your child's age, and some material may offer an opportunity to start an honest discussion about your own values and expectations and the mixed messages that media sends about body image and sexuality.
- 3. Watch Your Language** – Our society today has been called "a culture of cruelty." Bashing and bullying others has become a way of life – so watch what you say about others and how you say it.
- 2. Be the Parent, Not the Friend** – Parenting is not a popularity contest. Have confidence in your abilities and don't be so concerned that your child and their friends will like you or your decisions.
- 1. See the Big Picture** – Childhood is not all about being happy. Remember that the goal of parenting is to raise healthy, productive adults. Allow your children to fail – and to learn from their mistakes.

For more information visit www.connectwithkids.com

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About Connect with Kids

Founded in 1998, Connect with Kids/CWK Network Inc., produces the Emmy® award-winning *Connect with Kids* television series targeted to parents about the issues kids face everyday. These inspiring half-hour specials, broadcast on television stations nationwide, feature real kids sharing their true stories.

Connect with Kids has developed hundreds of multimedia programs with curriculum for elementary, middle and high school students – and their parents. The largest school districts in the country successfully use *Connect with Kids* programs in classrooms and with parent groups. *Connect with Kids* DVDs and videos that parents and children use to learn together at home. Every program features a peer-to-peer format that engages children and parents in a way that moves them to action.

Research shows that the *Connect with Kids* programs are changing student behavior in the classroom and inspiring parents to talk with their children about today's issues.