

Home And Garden Classes

WESTMINSTER, Md. – The Carroll County Cooperative Extension will be offering the following classes at the Second Annual Home and Garden Show April 8-9 at the Westminster Agricultural Center. All classes are free with the 2\$ admission fee.

Saturday, April 8
 10:00-12:00 Maintaining your Well and Septic System
 12:00-1:00 Deer Management (and other wildlife)
 1:00-2:00 Waterwise Gardening (Gardening for drought)

Sunday, April 9
 11:00-12:00 Redefining Groundcovers
 12:00-1:00 Color and Drama with Fabulous Foliage
 1:00-2:00 Growing vegetables without Pesticides
 1:00-2:00 Joy of Daylilies (concurrent with above)

Registration is not required, participation will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Penn State Pointers ▶ **Hearty Potted Plants**

Graphics / Illustration: Tom Larrd, College of Agricultural Sciences © Penn State 2000

Follow this checklist to assure that your potted plants thrive indoors or outdoors...

- Isolate New Plants**
 Before purchasing, carefully inspect plants for insects, mites and diseases. Regardless of the results, isolate new plants from your other plants for at least two weeks.
- Prepare the Ideal Soil**
 Pasteurize any garden soil before adding it to the mix. Add 10 percent sand or vermiculite to potting soil to improve drainage and texture.
- Maintain Adequate Moisture Levels**
 Potted plants must remain moist once they're established. Even a short dry period can affect the plant and its roots.
- Meet the Plant's Environmental Needs**
 Research your plants' light requirements—and avoid sudden changes in light intensity and temperatures when moving plants inside or outside.
- Selectively Fertilize Your Plants**
 Fertilize potted plants lightly and only during their active growth stage when they need the additional nutrients. Never apply fertilizer while a plant is in bloom.
- Periodically Flush Out Impurities**
 Leaching is done by adding rain or soft water in an amount four to five times the soil volume to flush any mineral salts out the pot's drain hole. Remove the pot from standing water after leaching is complete.

Additional graphics and information available on the Internet at aginfo.psu.edu/psp

Notes For Dads

LOIS KILLCOYNE
 Northampton County
 Correspondent

Teaching Problem Solving
 One of the most valuable skills you can pass on to your child is the ability to deal with problems and conflicts as they arise. They are a fact of life from toddlerhood to adulthood. How can Dad contribute to helping children resolve problems?

Children learn what they live. Research has shown that what a parent does has a much greater effect on a child than what he tells his child to do. In essence 'actions speak louder than words.'

When a dad encounters a child who has a problem (or whose behavior is viewed by him as a problem), how is it handled? I asked a dad to share his philosophy of problem solving and conflict resolution. He had to think a minute. Is this an issue we consciously think about? We need to.

When you realize that your approach to the problem will determine how your child reacts to problems or confrontations in the future, the answer acquires great importance. In our society of road rage, children killing other children, teen suicide, drug usage and violence, will your son or daughter have the tools to find constructive ways to resolve differences?

Dad, you are one of your child's first and most influential teachers. Do you get angry and strike out when someone does or says something you don't like? Do you scream obscenities or insults when things don't go your way? Do you use drugs or alcohol to numb the pain? Do you intimidate or force others (including your child) to do what you want?

The dad I interviewed shared some important points:
 1. Get emotionally detached before attempting to resolve the situation. We cannot think clearly, or hear another's point

of view, when we are upset. The parent and the child may need a cooling down period before discussing the problem. Providing a 'time-out' for a child can accomplish this goal. For the parent, imagine a friend or stranger came to you with this particular problem so you can view the issues in the third person and look at it objectively.

2. Find out the other person's point of view. This requires good listening skills like eye contact, attentiveness and paraphrasing what you hear them saying. Showing that you understand the thoughts and feelings of another defuses anger and creates a positive atmosphere for moving to the next step.

3. Analyze the situation. Explore suggestions together. In conflict, try to find a middle ground. Examine the values involved. How important is the issue in the larger scheme of things?

4. What is an acceptable solution? Sometimes a compromise is in order. Sometimes an impartial third party is the best mediator. If two siblings are squabbling, that could be you, Dad!

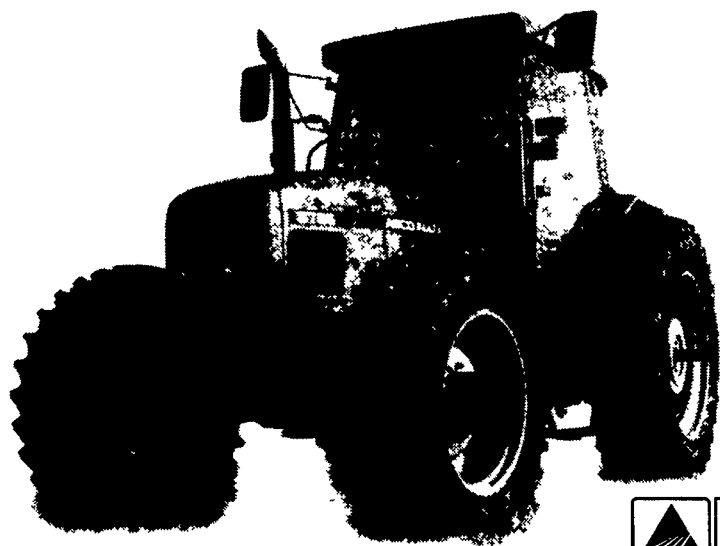
So, take the time, dad, or grandpa, to teach your child the skills of problem solving and give them a gift that will last a lifetime!

Then your child, when he grows up, may be sending you greeting cards that thank you for always being there—caring, listening and guiding.

Be prepared, for he or she will continue to call you for advice. What a compliment!

In order to teach these skills, taking a workshop or reading a book may be helpful. There are many good ones out there. Parent Effectiveness Training by Thomas Gordon is an excellent resource. Look for something that includes active or reflective listening, 'I'-messages and problem solving. You and your child will be glad you did.

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