

Family Living Focus

by

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Rx For Report Card Anxiety

Report card time is just around the corner once again for most students. And for many of them, this is a time of high anxiety. This excessive worrying may stem from a fear the child has of what his or her parents might do when they see the grades, but often this anxiety is self-imposed.

What is a parent to do with a child who is a perfectionist? First

of all, parents need to distinguish between a high achiever and a perfectionist. Does your child set reasonable goals that are achievable, or are they beyond reach and reason?

Does your child enjoy what he is doing or he is he solely focused on an absolutely perfect product?

Does your child bounce back from failure and try again, or does she wallow in disappointment?

Does she have a level of anxiety that energizes her to try her hardest, or is she consumed with fear of failure?

Does your child react to criticism fairly positively, seeing it as a learning opportunity, or does he become defensive, expressing feelings of being a total failure?

Parents of over-achievers have an added task on their list of things to do for their child.

If you feel that your child falls into the perfectionist category, report card time can be a great opportunity for you to assist your child in becoming a healthy achiever instead of a perfectionist seeker.

When the report card envelope reaches your door, whether your child is a perfectionist or not, here are some strategies for using the report card as a way to talk about goals, accomplishments, and disappointments:

Begin by focusing on the positives. Talk about the A's and B's before the C's

and D's. Read the positive teacher commentary.

Stay calm when talking about the grades that your child feels are not so good. Ask him how he feels about the mark he received. Use empathy and understanding.

Let your child know that aiming for 100 percent is a great goal, but is often not achievable all at once.

Sometimes a goal is first reached at 80 percent, then 90 percent. Explain that lower grades allow for improvement. Set a reasonable goal for the next marking period.

Together take a look at the total picture. What else has your child been doing and doing well? It may not be reasonable to expect straight A's during football season or spring play practice.

Success does not only mean high grades in school. Talk about

the other things he does often and well.

Do not compare children. Recognize each one's uniqueness.

Continue to set the standard that your expectation for your child is that he or she simply does his or her best. Doing one's best is not the same as being perfect.

Come up with a few reasonable goals for the next report card such as a B+ instead of a B in algebra.

Decide on strategies for achieving the goal such as hiring a tutor or spending an extra 20 minutes a day practicing.

Report card day can be an anxiety producing time for parents and children. Or it can be a time for parents to help their children set reasonable goals and put achievement in its proper perspective!

Art And Farming Cross Paths

SCHAEFERSTOWN (Lebanon Co.) — Art and farming cross paths at artist Judy Eberly's farm, Juben Hill Llamas. A painter for most of her life, Judy began exploring the fiber arts with her llama wool and makes clothing and sculpture from this unique resource.

Get a unique chance to meet Judy and her gentle llamas during the Art Studio Tour taking place on Saturday, Nov. 8, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 9, noon-5 p.m. Judy is one of over 26 central Pennsylvania artists opening their studio doors for the tour. This popular event gives residents and visitors alike a chance to interact with art that they can love — for themselves or as a truly unique gift.

Judy and her husband have had Juben Hill Llamas for 14 years, starting their herd soon after they retired. "I just always loved the way they looked," said Judy, "so elegant and regal."

About 10 years ago Judy began collecting their fiber for yarn. She discovered felting about 5 years ago and became part of the Llama and Fiber Friends, (LAFF), a group of felters from around central Pennsylvania. She makes clothing, hats, gloves, slippers, masks, and even pictures of felt. Within the last two years she started making figures. LAFF members have even collaborated in April 2003 on a special sunflower motif felt chair, donated to the American Lung Association of York Co. LAFF members will be demonstrating at Judy's studio during the Art Studio Tour.

"The Art Studio Tour is such a wonderful opportunity for people to get out there and see what's happening (in the arts) and to look to see what they like," stated Eberly.



Artist Judy Eberly works on a painting in her Schaefferstown studio.

Some of the other participating artists stretch the use of their materials in new and exciting ways, while others start with smooth and familiar traditional forms and allow that to be its own subtle expression. Sylvia Lehman creates baskets that display an unending variety of shapes, all inspired by other non-typical or found materials, such as paper or metal, which she incorporates into her compositions. Woodturner Bill Hackett creates simple forms with clean lines and a soothing feel from rough raw logs that he has stacked right outside of his studio.

Brochures with maps include directions to each tour stop and brief descriptions of the artist's work. They are available by calling (717) 832-2182 or by visiting www.art-studio-tour.com.

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