

## Paying attention is a skill that must be learned by youth

The ability to focus your attention where you want may seem simple to you. But paying attention is a skill, and like all skills, it must be learned. Many students cannot control their attention energies. If a child has not learned to pay attention, orders to "pay attention" simply will not help. Instead of ordering or threatening, parents can help their children improve their ability to concentrate by teaching them a few simple techniques. The following are three good methods to use in helping your children improve their ability to pay attention.

1) Using positive self-talk and positive images.  
Positive self-talk simply means using words or sentences to help control attention. Just as we can use words to give directions to others, we can use them to direct our own actions.

People also improve their attention span by controlling the images they see in their mind. Positive image of succeeding can serve the same purpose as self-talk. Positive images help keep attention focused on a difficult task and they increase motivation to complete the task.

When you are helping your children learn to use positive self-talk and images, you can suggest that they tell themselves: "As I read this paragraph, I must think about what I must learn from it. I must find its central message. If I look away from the page, I must be able to explain to myself the meaning of what I have just read." Sentences like these will help students pay attention to their homework.

2) Asking questions about the work.

Another way to direct the attention is to ask questions while study-

ing. Some general questions you can suggest to your children are: "What is this paragraph about? Who did what and why? What is the evidence that supports the central idea in the passage or paragraph? Is the argument true or false? Why? What is the principle presented in the text?"

Asking themselves questions serves two purposes. First, it helps students bring their wandering attention back to the task at hand. Second, it helps them keep their attention on the task.

3) Setting specific study goals.  
One way that often improves attention is to give your children specific goals to work toward as they study or read an assignment. Ask them to study a book or lesson until they have achieved the goal you gave them. The goal you set will depend, of course, on the lesson and on your child's age. You might want them to

study until they can tell you the main point of the paragraph, until they can solve a specific math problem, or until they learn the specific names, dates, and places mentioned in the text. Discuss each goal with your children. Then together set reasonable goals, remember that many small goals, presented one after another, are better than a single large one.

## Successful students accept responsibility for own education

Successful students are motivated students who accept some responsibility for their own learning and who understand that success comes from their own efforts. They are the ones who do their best in school. They have the ability to pay attention and concentrate on school-related tasks. They can ignore or reduce distractions in the environment or from their own thoughts that would in-



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terfere with learning.  
They have skills to understand the ideas that are presented in school and in their textbooks, and they know how to get help if they have trouble understanding. They can remember the facts and ideas they need to

achieve in school and to do well in national tests. In addition, successful students can do all this in a relatively relaxed or stress-free way. They might be concerned about doing well in school, but they do not create excessive pressure for themselves.

## Just what are those creepy, crawly, long-legged things?

Have you noticed a lot of big, brown long-legged spiders around your home lately?

Many a homeowner's first reaction upon sighting one of these critters is that it is one of the dreaded brown recluse spiders.

"It is not," says Jack DeAngelis, Oregon State University (OSU) Extension entomologist. "The brown recluse spider does not occur in Oregon, or anywhere else in the Pacific Northwest. The big brown spiders, common at this time of year, are male giant

European house spiders or male aggressive house spiders, out searching for females.

"Normally both of these types of spiders are pretty secretive, but during the mating season males tend to wander into the open," says DeAngelis. "The giant European house spider is essentially harmless, although frightening. However, the aggressive house spider can inflict a serious bite that often leads to an ulcerating, slow healing wound."

"Care should be taken with any of

these spiders since it is nearly impossible to tell them apart," he says. Call your local county office of the OSU Extension Service for help with identification.

## Fathers continue to serve as role models

In today's society, men (and women) have more choices in how they parent — choices ranging from being a traditional role model to being an egalitarian parent who shares the parenting tasks with their spouse. These choices present opportunities for husbands and wives to search for a parenting style and division of child care that are suited in individual personality.

Today men are taking a more active father role beginning before their infants are born. Researchers Hanson and Bozett (1) in a review of studies about fatherhood report an increase in the number of fathers from all socioeconomic levels and ethnic groups who are joining their wives in childbirth classes. These increased self-confidence, knowledge of pregnancy and birth, and knowledge of the father role.

Men have increased the amount of time they spend with their children, but women are still the primary caretakers. LAMB (2) states that mothers and fathers interact differently with their children, depending on how each views their parental role and whether the mother works outside the home. In general, mothers are the caretakers of the children while fathers spend more time playing with the children.  
Mothers spend more one-on-one

"For control of these and other spiders, household insect sprays are effective," says Gary Parsons, OSU Extension entomologist. "A vacuum cleaner is one alternative to chemical control."

time with their children and assume nearly all responsibility for such things as what the child wears and doctor appointments. In dual career homes, fathers have greatly increased the time they are available to their children for help in homework or play.

During the childhood years (ages 6-12) fathers serve as role models for their sons and daughters, much as their own fathers did for them years before. According to Hanson and Bozett (1) fathers spend more time with sons than with daughters.

Little research exists concerning father interactions with their adolescent children. Mothers continue to be the primary caretakers of children. In all homes, fathers are increasing their one-on-one time as well as spending lots of play time with their young children. As mothers work outside the home, fathers are helping with their children more.

Sources:  
(1) Hanson, S.M., & Bozett, F.W. (1987). Fatherhood: A Review and Resources. Family Relations, 38, 333-40  
(2) Lorossa, R. (1988) Fatherhood and Social Change. Family Relations, 35, 451-457.

Research by Linda Ladd Ph. D. Multnomah County Extension Agent.

## Extension asks for volunteer 4-H club leaders this fall

Dear students and parents,

Welcome to a new 4-H year and a new school year. With the new 4-H year comes the need for many new 4-H

leaders in a variety of project areas in our community. This year we need leaders for culture projects, livestock, clothing, foods, and Natural Resources.

So please help spread the word about this need or contact us if you or someone you know is interested in helping youth in our community. We are always happy to talk with potential project leaders.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Here's some 4-H statistics for the 1990-91 4-H year.

- 45,496 4-H members
- 20,287 in project clubs
- 17,260 in school enrichment programs

- 7,518 in special interest groups
- 8,852 4-H Leaders

Our phone number is 553-3238 ask for Carol Stevens or Arlene Boileau 4-H program Extension Services.  
Thanks for your help!  
Carol Stevens,  
Arlene Boileau

### 4-H!

# It's THE place to be this fall!

## Successful garden depends on proper seed collection, selection, storage, germination

One of the first requirements for growing a successful garden is finding good seed from plant varieties that have been adapted to your area. Many companies provide such seed. When you calculate the value of the food you grow, you will find that high quality seed is a bargain.

At some time, though, you may want to collect, store, and plant seed from your own garden rather than buy the seed. These facts describe how.

### COLLECTING SEEDS

Don't save seeds from vegetables or flowers labeled "hybrid". Seeds from hybrid varieties produce a mixture of plant types, most of which are inferior to the parent. Many varieties could be hybrids but may not be designated as such. The following sections describe how to save seeds for a variety of different plants.

### SEEDS EASILY SAVED

**Tomato**  
1) Save seed from the fully-ripe fruit of the desired tomato plant.  
2) Squeeze the seeds onto a paper towel or a piece of screen.  
3) Leave the seed at room temperature until it is thoroughly dry.  
**Pepper**  
Select a mature pepper, preferably one turning red, and allow it to turn completely red before extracting the seed. Place seeds on a towel or a piece of screen until they are thoroughly dry.

**Eggplant, Husk Tomato, Ground Cherry, Garden Blackberry**  
Separate seeds from the mature fruit and dry thoroughly at room temperature.

**Beans, Peas, Soybeans, and Other Legumes**  
1) Leave pods on the plant until they are "rattle dry."  
2) Watch the pods carefully because some varieties split and scatter the seeds when they are dry.  
3) Pick dried pods and place them in a well-ventilated area at room temperature. When the pods are completely dry, remove the seeds.

4) To control possible weevil infestation, place seeds in a freezer for 24 to 30 hours.  
**Lettuce**  
Lettuce seeds are more difficult to collect, but you can save them.

1) Leave a plant or two to produce a seed stalk.  
2) After the plant blooms and the flower forms a miniature "dandelion head," gather the seeds.  
3) Separate the seeds from the chaff by rubbing them with your fingers.

**SEEDS DIFFICULT TO SAVE**  
Vine Crops: Cucumber, Melons, Squash, and Pumpkins  
It doesn't usually pay to save these

seeds. Without controlled pollination, these crops cross with other varieties and sometimes other types. Muskmelons do not cross with cucumber, however.

You can control pollination in your garden, but it requires careful attention. First, you need to distinguish the difference between male and female flowers. Male blossoms are on a longer stalk and do not have a miniature fruit at the base as do female blossoms.

1) With careful observation, note the blossoms that open the following day. They have a light yellow color and a distinct pointed tip.

2) In the evening, select male and female flowers on the same plant. With a paper clip for small flowers or a rubber band for larger flowers, prevent the flower from opening. Flowers only open early in the day.

3) In the morning, pluck the male blossom and touch the cluster of pollen (called anthers) to the center of the female flower (called the stigma).

4) Close the female flower again so bees can't get in.

5) Tag the blossom.

6) Grow the fruit to maturity for the desired seed.

The fruit must be very ripe for seeds to germinate correctly. Cucumbers must be entirely yellow, and squash and pumpkin must be thoroughly mature. Separate the seeds from the fruit flesh and dry them at room temperature.

**Biennials:** Carrot, Beet, Onion, and Cabbage family

Biennials are questionable for seed collection. It takes a lot of work to carry over the plant root from the first season to the second year when seed stalks form. Many members of the cabbage family intercross and can also cross with native wild crucifers such as mustard, cress, radish, or turnip.

- Carrots cross with the prevalent wild carrot. Select desirable beet or carrot roots and keep them cool and moist, perhaps buried outdoors in sand. In early spring, plant the roots in an uncrowded area of the garden because they grow very large.
- Keep onion bulbs cool and dry during winter, then plant them in early spring.
- After spring growth, seed heads form. When heads are quite dry, gather the mature, plump seed before it falls to the ground and complete the drying at room temperature.

**Flower Seeds**  
You can save many flower seeds, though crossing some varieties can cause deterioration from the original over time.

- Gather mature seed pods (stock

and poppies) or seed clusters (zinnia, strawflower).

- Leave sunflower heads on the plant as long as birds don't bother them.
- When the top of the blossom separates from the seed, or birds start eating the seeds, cut the head and finish curing the seed in a warm, ventilated area. You can also eat seeds or use them as bird seed after the seeds dry.

**STORING SEEDS**  
Keep seeds in a labeled container or envelope in a cool, dry place where they are protected from insects. Storage life of seeds varies widely. Here is a guide:

- Short-lived seeds (1-2 years): corn, onion, parsnip.
- Intermediate seeds (3-4 years): bean, carrot, leek, pea
- Long-lived seeds (4-5 years): beet, chard, cabbage family (broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower), turnip, radish, cucumber, eggplant, lettuce, muskmelon, pepper, pumpkin-squash group, tomato, watermelon.

An ideal way to prepare seed for long-term storage is to place seed

## Volunteers essential component of various OSU programs

The partnership of volunteers working with Oregon State University specialists and agents make Extension what it is.

Although it's the Extension Service mission to extend information from OSU to the people of Oregon, OSU couldn't give all the individuals and families the information they need each year without volunteers.

An estimated 510 volunteers help with County Extension programs each year, giving about 7,600 hours. At the rate of \$8 an hour, the donated time is

valued at more than \$60,000. Although \$8 may seem high, volunteers are filling more responsible roles through the increasing number of master volunteer

programs.

We see increased training efforts for volunteers as a trend in Extension to make the partnership more effective.

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## Youth of America are "deprived"

Children are the poorest class of our society. Nearly one-fourth live below the poverty line. Millions live in environments where families are chaotic, the drug dealer and pimp the only visible role models, and the police the only agents of discipline. Public schools, running on tightened budgets, can do little more than physically restrain the inwash of hopeless, brutalized adolescents. Every major city bears the signs.... common civic life swamped by the wrathful indifference of your people to whom society offers little but eventual shelter within the world's biggest penal system. In the middle class, the young, reared on seven

daily hours of television watching, are simply less educable, as slumping SAT scores show. Their high schools no longer look like castles but like second-rate airports, low-slung and shabby, while the society riches are reserved in a curious gerontocratic shift to the old, with their social security, their pensions, their Medicare, and the governments entitlements that account for close to 30 percent of the national budget. A nation where the old are coddled and the young are deprived.... is surely one where people are entitled to feel bad.  
-John Updike in Forbes-

## Dahlias need digging now

While winterizing flower beds around the home landscape this fall, don't forget to dig and store dahlia tubers. They won't survive left out in the cold.

"Dig dahlias any time after a killing frost, or after continued cold rains have blackened the plant," says Ray McNeilan, Oregon State University (OSU) Extension home gardening agent.

First, cut the plant above ground level leaving a six-inch stalk of old cane as a convenient handle. Then dig carefully to avoid breaking roots. Since feeder roots extend in all directions from the clump, loosen the soil around the root clump about 16 to 18 inches from the stalk with a spading fork. Lift the clump gently and most of the soil should fall away. Turn the clump upside down, wash with a hose and place it in a shady spot to cure for several hours.

When the root clump is dry, trim off all extraneous feeder roots. Dust scratches or cuts on the flesh roots with sulfur. Divide the roots so each carries a section of the stem with eyes on it. The large, fleshy roots taper to a neck where the stalk is attached. The eye, or bud, for next year's growth is located in the neck area.

McNeilan recommends labeling the bulbs with a name tag or indelible ink so the bulb's type and color can be identified at replanting time. Rather than storing the root clumps whole, divide them soon after digging so they will take up less storage space.

Store dahlia roots in an area with good air circulation, constant humidity and a temperature range of 30 to 40 degrees F. A root cellar, crawl space under the house, detached garage or outbuilding are good storage locations.

To prevent freezing and moisture loss, place the roots in a porous insulating material such as vermiculite, perlite, peat moss or new sawdust. Use wooden boxes for storage. They are easy to stack and can be arranged to create good air circulation. Examine stored roots periodically and remove diseased roots.

## Popcorn theme perfect for kids' party

Looking for a birthday party idea sure to delight youngsters? A popcorn theme is just the answer. A popcorn fantasy cake, real enough to top with birthday candles, and popcorn ball clown favors for each guest to take home and eat, are novel and attractive yet easy and inexpensive to make.

**Fantasy Cake**  
1 cup butter  
1 package (1 lb) marshmallows  
3 qts. popped Jolly Time Pop Corn  
1 cup peanuts  
1 cup M & M's chocolate candies  
1 cup gum drops

In a large saucepan, melt butter and marshmallows together over low heat. In a large, deep bowl, mix all other ingredients; add the butter-marshmallow mixture and stir well. Pack in well-greased tube pan. Cool in refrigerator. Remove from pan. Cut into wedges at serving time.

**Pop Corn Ball Clowns**  
1 cup butter  
1 package (1 lb) marshmallows  
2 cup popped Jolly Time Pop Corn  
1 pointed Ice Cream cones (one for each clown)  
large gum drops  
M & M's chocolate candies  
8 paper doilies (one for each clown)  
Styrofoam cups (one for each clown)

Melt butter and marshmallows over low heat reserving small amount for gluing; fold in 2 quarts popped corn (enough to make 8 pop corn balls). Shape into 3 inch diameter balls. Let set until firm. Face: attach M & M's to ball using reserved marshmallow mixture to make eyes and nose. Cut a U shape out of large gum drop for mouth and glue in place. Ears: attach a large gum drop to each side of head. Hat: attach 3 M & M's in a vertical row to ice cream cones. Smear marshmallow mixture around cone rim and press gently to top of head until firm. Collar: fold doily in half, half again, then fold in half again. Unfold. Gather up center and twist into 1 inch stem. Spread out

edges to form ruffle. Stand: cut off top 3 inches of Styrofoam cup to form a ring. Place doily on ring; place clown on top of doily.

A pop corn ball maker, available exclusively from Jolly Time, forms perfect pop corn balls fast and easy. No burned or sticky fingers. To order, send \$1.00 for one or \$1.75 for two along with name, address and zip to: Jolly Time, P.O. Box 178, Sioux City, Iowa 51102.

A recipe folder featuring 20 recipes for pop corn lovers, plus a "how-to" crafts section also is available by sending the pennant from any Jolly Time product or 25¢ to cover postage and handling to the above mentioned Jolly Time address.

TEST GERMINATION  
To test seeds for germination before planting:  
1) Moisten two or three layers of paper towels.  
2) Place 25-50 seeds on the towels and roll the towels loosely. Place

them in a plastic bag.

3) Keep the towels in a warm place such as on a kitchen counter or on top of a water heater.

4) Some seed such as radish germinates in 2 or 3 days. Peppers can take 10 to 14 days. Observe the seed at 2-day intervals to determine the degree of germination.

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