

# My Wonderful PAX School

How the PAX Good Behavior Game  
Changed My Class, My School, and My World

by Dennis D. Embry, Ph.D.



*A Read-Together Book for Children  
and the Adults Who Love Them*

Draw a star in each finished chapter's box.

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6

## **A Note for Families**

This booklet is designed to be shared between a child and family adults. Either the adult or child may read the book, depending on the child's age.

### **The Story behind This Booklet**

This booklet tells the story of a game your child is playing at school. The game, called the PAX Good Behavior Game (or PAX Game for short), was developed about 40 years ago by a classroom teacher.

Since then numerous research studies have shown that the PAX Game decreases discipline problems, increases student learning, and even reduces drug and alcohol use, aggression, and other delinquent behaviors later in life. Your child's teacher has more information on these research studies, if you want to know more.

The purpose of this booklet is to help you understand how the PAX Game works so you can encourage your child's participation at school.

This booklet also contains ideas on how you can use the PAX Game at home.

Note about children with special needs: If your child has special needs such as ADHD, conduct problems, or learning difficulties, the PAX Game can be very helpful as a part of his or her educational plan.

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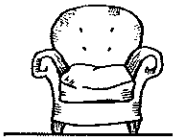
## How to Use This Book

Read the book yourself before reading it with your child,  
so you are prepared to talk about the activities.



### Time

The book is divided into six chapters. Each chapter should be read on a separate day.



### Place

When using this book with a child, make sure the place to read

- is quiet and private, if possible.
- is cozy, so that the child can sit next to you or on your lap (as appropriate).
- can have the phone and TV turned off.



### Shared Reading Activity

Please use the book as a way to build your relationship with your child. Thus, follow the lead of the listening or reading child and read at his or her pace.

Also take time to discuss the *Talk about It* questions.



### Family Activities

The end of each chapter has a *Family Activities* page. Your child may need to show these finished assignments to his or her teacher. Cut them out along the dotted line.

PAX Motto:  
I better my world, and  
I better myself.



PAX is . . .  
Productivity. Peace.  
Health. Happiness.





I opened the door and  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_ asked, "What  
 happened at school today?"<sup>1</sup>

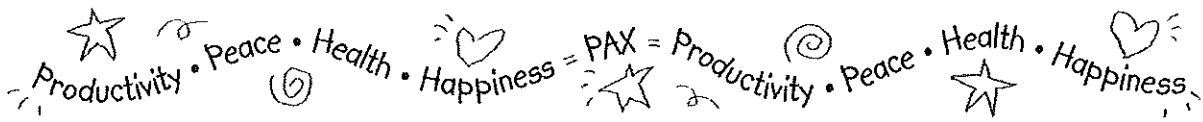
"It was a terrible, awful, mean, and horrible day. The principal  
 got mad because so many kids were bad. My teacher was  
 sad because the class acted worse than yesterday. We learned  
 nothing and had no fun. The day was very, very bad."

"What a dreadful day," said  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_.

	<p>_____, tell me about a horrible          (Child's name)          day you or your friends have had at school.</p>
--	---

<sup>1</sup> Adults please note:

Making the book about your child, your child's teacher, and you  
 helps children remember and learn more from the story.



“I wish I had a magic tool to make a wonderful school,” I said.


- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_


asked, “What would happen **More** at


a wonderful school?”<sup>2</sup>

“In a wonderful school I would . . .

 **See** more smiles, kids listening to and helping each other.

 **Hear** more nice words and laughter.


 **Feel** smarter, safer, and happier.

 **Do** more exciting work and learn more.”

- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_

agreed, “That **does** sound like a

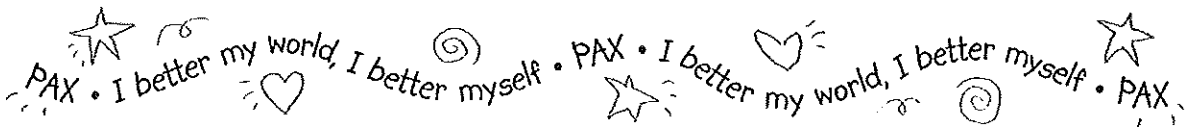
wonderful school.”

	<p>_____, what makes a wonderful (Child's name)</p> <p>day at school for you?</p>
---	---

<sup>2</sup> *Adults please note:*





Your child is helping to create a vision for a wonderful classroom at his or her school.






Then,  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_ asked, "What would happen **Less**  
in a wonderful school?"<sup>3</sup>

The answers were easy. "In a wonderful school I would . . .

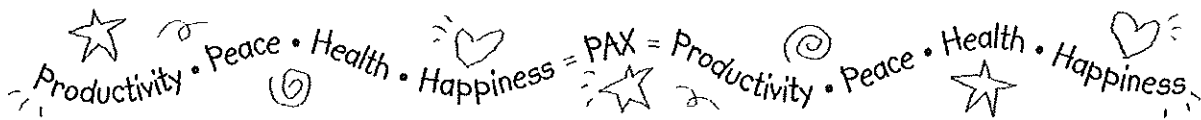
-  See fewer mean actions and interruptions.
-  Hear fewer hurting words, less noise, and yelling.
-  Feel less worried, scared, mad, sad, or dumb.
-  Do fewer things that hurt my school or class."

Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_ said, "All of this **would** make a wonderful  
school, too."

	_____, tell me what more you would see, (Child's name) hear, feel, or do in a wonderful school or classroom.
---	--

<sup>3</sup> **Adults please note:**

Positive behavior and negative behavior are not like a teeter-totter. Just making the positive go up does not make the negative go down. The PAX Game has been proven to help increase positive behavior and decrease negative behavior.



Mom

Dad

\_\_\_\_\_

looked very wise and said, "Maybe you

and the other kids could help make a wonderful school."

"How could we do that? We are just kids!" I said.<sup>4</sup>

Mom

Dad

\_\_\_\_\_

just smiled and said, "Maybe you could

make up a game to create a wonderful school."

The next day I talked to my friends about the idea.

\_\_\_\_\_

(My friend's name)

said, "Why not?"

\_\_\_\_\_

(Another friend's name)

agreed, "It would be fun!"

So we told \_\_\_\_\_

(My teacher's name)

about inventing a game to

make a wonderful school.



**This is a good place to stop for today.**

Do the *Family Activities* on the next page and then draw a star in the chapter 1 box on the front cover.

<sup>4</sup> **Adults please note:**

The PAX Game fosters children's self-responsibility and resiliency by encouraging them to make their immediate world a better place.





Chapter I

# Family Activities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interview the adult who helped you read this chapter.  
Write his or her answers in the space below.

Interview Question 1:

- “  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, what do you think you would see,

hear, feel, and do MORE of at a wonderful school?”

See more:

Hear more:

Feel more:

Do more:



*continued on other side*





## Chapter 1 Family Activities

(continued)

### Interview Question 2:

- “ Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, what do you think you would see,

hear, feel, and do LESS of at a wonderful school?”

See less:

Hear less:

Feel less:

Do less:

### Optional Family Activity:

Draw a picture of a wonderful school on a separate piece of paper.





“What a clever idea, a game to make a wonderful school,”

exclaimed \_\_\_\_\_.”<sup>5</sup>  
 (My teacher’s name)

**FORMING TEAMS**

“Will you have teams to play this game?” asked \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (My teacher’s name)

\_\_\_\_\_ said, “Yes, we thought the teacher should  
 (My friend’s name)

pick the teams, and the kids could pick the team names. But no bad words or mean names.”

	<p>_____, who is on your team at          (Child’s name)          school and what is your team’s name?</p>
--	--

<sup>5</sup> **Adults please note:**

This chapter outlines the basic rules of the PAX Game. They are simple, yet powerful rules that will create a more wonderful classroom environment for your child.

**KEEPING SCORE**

\_\_\_\_\_ asked, "How are points scored in this game?"  
 (My teacher's name)


I explained, "If a team member breaks a rule of our wonderful school or classroom, it is a point **against** that child's team. You, the teacher, decide when that happens."

\_\_\_\_\_ asked, "What is it called when somebody  
 (My teacher's name)

breaks a rule?" \_\_\_\_\_ answered, "We call it a **SPLEEM!**"  
 (Another friend's name)

A **SPLEEM** is a mean thing that hurts your team!"<sup>6</sup>

"How clever," praised \_\_\_\_\_ .  
 (My teacher's name)

	<p>_____, what are some examples                  (Child's name)</p> <p>of <b>SPLEEMS</b> in your school or classroom?</p>
---	--

<sup>6</sup> *Adults please note:*

The PAX Game creates positive peer pressure to improve the classroom and school. Your child will be able to tell you how many **Spleem**s his or her team got today, if the PAX Game is being played consistently.


## WINNING THE GAME

\_\_\_\_\_ asked, "How does a team win the game?"  
(My teacher's name)

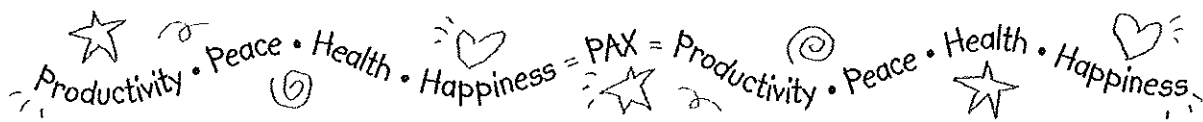
"Oh," I explained. "In order to win, a team cannot score more than three **SPLEEMs** during a game."<sup>7</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ jumped in. "When we first start the game,  
(My friend's name)  
we play for only 3 to 5 minutes. Then, when we get better, we play for 30 to 60 minutes."

\_\_\_\_\_ asked, "How do we keep track of the  
(My teacher's name)  
time?" I said, "We use a timer!"

	<p>_____, how many <b>SPLEEMs</b> (Child's name) did your team have today?</p>
---	--

<sup>7</sup> Adults please note:  
Setting a low number of SPleem<sup>®</sup> helps children learn self-control faster.



## USING THE SCOREBOARD

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ spoke together.  
(My friend's name) (Another friend's name)

“We use a scoreboard to keep track of the total number of games won over the week.” The teacher looked at the scoreboard. “Wow!

Say, what does the word **PAX** mean?”<sup>8</sup>

I said, “My  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_ told me **PAX** is a Latin word.

It means people have peace, and they are happy and healthy.”

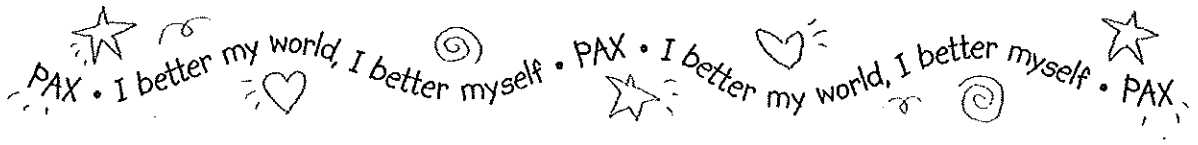
\_\_\_\_\_ added, “We thought a wonderful school  
(My friend's name)  
 would have lots of **PAX**.”

“Oh,” said \_\_\_\_\_, “so we’re playing the **PAX** Game!”  
(My teacher's name)

	<p>_____, what does the word  <small>(Child's name)</small>  <b>PAX</b> mean?</p>
--	---

<sup>8</sup> **Adults please note:**

Children like new words. The Latin word for peace (**PAX**) was chosen for this game because it means something much bigger than the English word “peace.”



## AWARDING PRIZES


I explained, "Teams get prizes for winning game rounds."

\_\_\_\_\_ looked confused. "What kinds of prizes?"  
(My teacher's name)

We showed our ideas.

\_\_\_\_\_ laughed. "Ho, ho, ho. Ha, ha, ha. These  
(My teacher's name)

look fun. I think I'll make up some prizes, too!"<sup>9</sup>

 <p>talk about it</p>	<p>_____, what are some of the (Child's name) PAX Game prizes you have at your school?</p>
--	--



**This is a good place to stop for today.**

Do the *Family Activities* on the next page and then draw a star in the chapter 2 box on the front cover.

<sup>9</sup> *Adults please note:*

Prizes are typically simple, brief activities such as sending notes to friends, playing tic-tac-toe, or jumping in place. Prizes help the children's brains connect stopping classroom disruptions with feeling good.





Chapter 2

# Family Activities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interview the adult who read this chapter with you.  
Write his or her answers in the space below.

Interview Question 1:

“  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, what **SPLIBMS** do you think our

class should try to cut down on?” \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Question 2:

“  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, what prizes or activities should

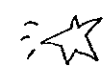
teams earn for winning the PAX Game for a whole week?”

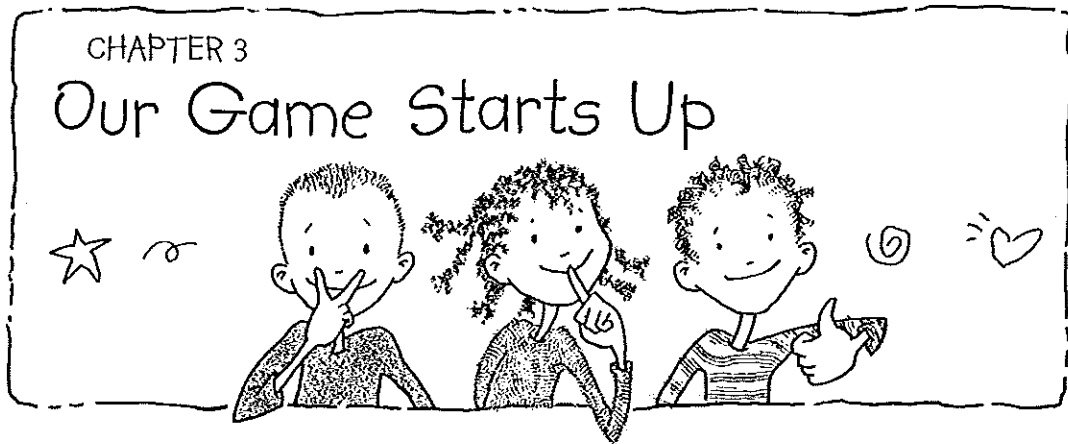
\_\_\_\_\_

Optional Family Activity:

As a family, offer PAX Game prizes for your child’s classroom. Here are some ideas:

- Bake cookies.
- Teach the children something fun or interesting.
- Buy stickers.
- Throw a party with decorations.
- Help organize a field trip.
- Check with your teacher for more ideas.



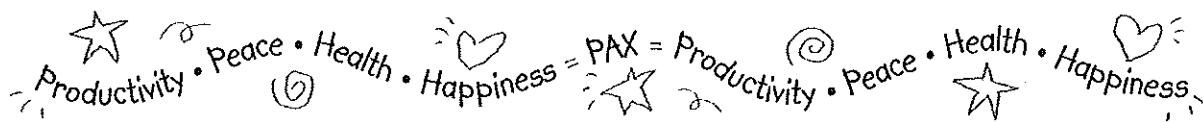


Soon, our teacher started playing the PAX Game with our class.  
Here's how:

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_ wrote down our ideas of a  
(My teacher's name)  
wonderful school or classroom on a big sheet of paper.

Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_ explained the rules of the  
(My teacher's name)  
PAX Game.

Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_ asked, "What should we do  
(My teacher's name)  
if somebody keeps making **SPLATS** just to get  
attention?"




Our class decided that the child would have to play by himself or herself until he or she won a game. Then the child could go back to his or her team.

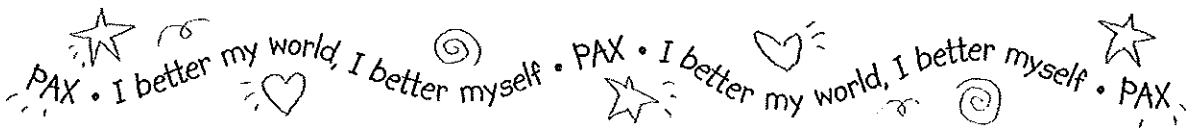
**Step 4:** Our class learned a promise to become PAX Leaders, and we signed our names on the promise. We say that promise every day. It says,

**PAX PROMISE . . .**

I am a PAX Leader, as you will plainly see.  
So I better my world, and I better me.  
I honor good acts, offer help and stop harm and blame.  
I make my amends and rejoin the game.  
I find trusted guides to show me a PAX way.  
I strive to improve, a little each day.  
I am proud to be a PAX Leader—at school,  
at home, in the world and at play.

We also have a PAX Leaders' motto. It says,  
**"I BETTER MY WORLD, AND I BETTER MYSELF."**

	<p>_____, do you have a PAX Game (Child's name)</p> <p>Promise and Motto? Can you say them?</p>
---	---



Step 5: \_\_\_\_\_ taught us some ways to help  
(My teacher's name)  
the game:<sup>10</sup>

- **PAX Quiet:** This is a signal to stop what we are doing and pay attention. Our teacher uses a harmonica and the “peace sign” hand signal.
- **PAX Hands:** We cross our hands behind us or put them at our sides. This keeps us from pushing, shoving, or fiddling with things.
- **PAX Voices:** We learned to have five levels of talking:
  - 0-inch voice means you cannot hear anything.
  - 3-inch voice means you can hear 3 inches away.
  - 3-foot voice means you can hear across a table.
  - 10-foot voice means people can easily hear you in a room.
  - 30-foot voice is only used by adults in an emergency.

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<sup>10</sup> *Adults please note:*

PAX Quiet, PAX Hands, and PAX Voices reduce the amount of pushing, shoving, and yelling in the classroom and in the hallways. Teachers find that they have an hour or more per day for teaching when they don't have to take time to stop children from misbehaving. These techniques also reduce injuries.



Productivity • Peace • Health • Happiness = PAX = Productivity • Peace • Health • Happiness

- **Stop Spleems and Go PAX Signs:** When we are doing great, the teacher taps on a **Go PAX** sign. When we are getting a bit off, the teacher taps on a **Stop SPLEEMS** sign.

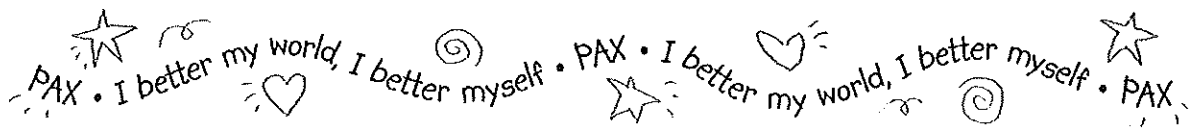


- **PAX Tootle Notes:** These are notes we write to each other about doing things to make our classroom better and help each other. We tootle instead of tattle.<sup>11</sup>

	<p>_____, show me PAX Hands.  <small>(Child's name)</small></p> <p>Show me PAX Quiet. Now show me PAX Voices.</p>
--	---


<sup>11</sup> *Adults please note:*

Research shows Tootle Notes dramatically improve positive behavior, cooperation, and academic skills. The stop-and-go signs also improve classroom teaching and learning.



Step 6: \_\_\_\_\_ also gave us jobs on our  
(My teacher's name)  
teams. They are:<sup>12</sup>

- **PAX Captain:** Tells the class when to play the game, keeps track of the score, and announces rewards.
- **PAX Coach:** Helps his or her teammates to play the game.
- **PAX Tootler:** Keeps track of the good things his or her teammates do and praises them.
- **PAX Go Getter:** Picks up materials or handouts for his or her team members during the lesson.
- **PAX Reminder:** Reminds children to play their roles if they forget.

	<p>_____, what jobs have you (Child's name) had on your team?</p>
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**This is a good place to stop for today.**

Do the *Family Activities* on the next page and then draw a star in the chapter 3 box on the front cover.

<sup>12</sup> **Adults please note:**

Meaningful roles improve academic success and reduce problem behavior much more than nagging and scolding.





Chapter 3

# Family Activities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interview the adult who read this chapter with you.  
Write his or her answers in the space below.

Interview Question 1:

- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_, what is the PAX Quiet signal?

How will it help kids at school?" \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Question 2:

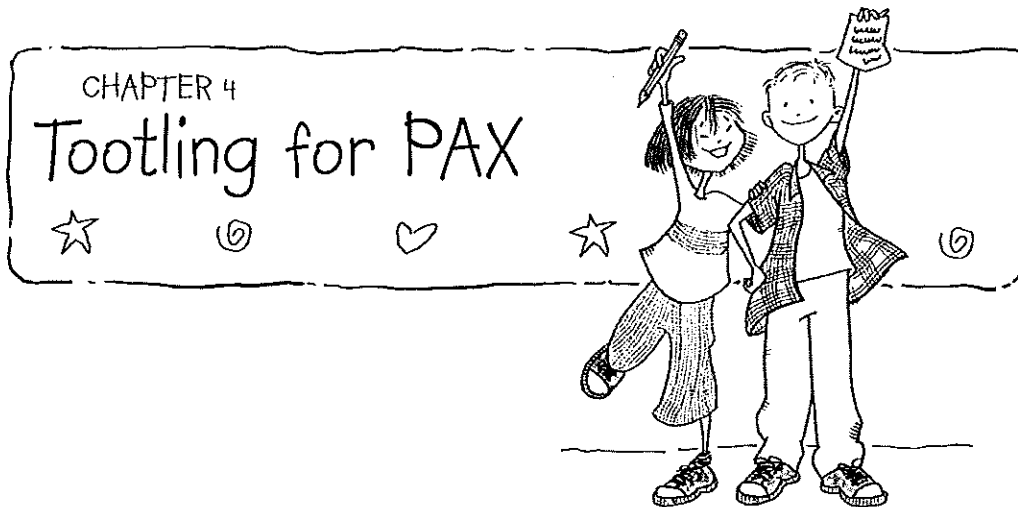
- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_, what do PAX Hands look like?

How will PAX Hands help kids at school?" \_\_\_\_\_

Optional Family Activity:

Practice PAX Quiet, PAX Hands, and PAX Voices at home, at meals, or while shopping.





I ran home excited about my wonderful PAX school day.

- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_ said, "You are so happy. You must really

love that PAX Game."

"Our whole class won every game today, so we all got a PAX Tootle Note from my teacher. See?"

- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_ said, "This is something to cheer—hip,

hip, hooray!"<sup>13</sup>

	<p>_____, tell me how tootling is  <small>(Child's name)</small>  different from tattling.</p>
--	--

<sup>13</sup> **Adults please note:**

Please make a big deal about any PAX Tootle Notes your child brings home. It strengthens your child's positive behavior both at school and home.

“You know, when we want to say something nice to each other at home, we could write a PAX Tootle,” I said. “That’s a great

idea!” said  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_ .

I explained to  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_ how to write a PAX Tootle

Note. “You write the name of the person who gets the note and the good thing the person did. Then sign your name or sign it ‘secret friend.’”<sup>14</sup>

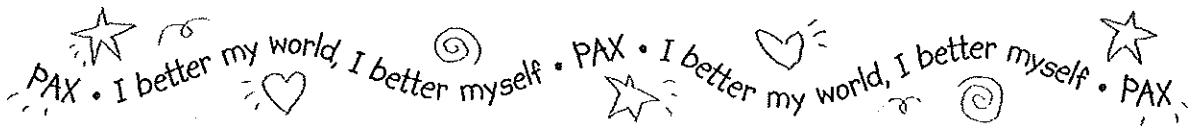
You can get a tootle for helping somebody, doing a nice thing, doing what was asked quickly, or saying nice or kind words.



	<p>_____, let’s write a PAX Tootle Note  <small>(Child’s name)</small>                  right now. Who would you write one to? What                  would you thank the person for?</p>
--	--

<sup>14</sup> Adults please note:

Writing Tootle Notes helps children see the good in others and reinforces the positive actions you want them to do as well.




“We have a special place to put up PAX Tootle Notes at school.

We could have a special place at home, too, like the:

- \_\_\_ Refrigerator
- \_\_\_ Bathroom mirror
- \_\_\_ Another place \_\_\_\_\_ .”

Everybody at home started tootling each other. We even wrote secret Tootle Notes.

I put one in  Mom's  Dad's  \_\_\_\_\_ shoe. I got one in my backpack.

	<p>_____, how many Tootle Notes (Child's name) do you think each of us should do each week?</p>
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**This is a good place to stop for today.**

Do the *Family Activities* on the next page and then draw a star in the chapter 4 box on the front cover.



Chapter 4

# Family Activities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interview the adult who read this chapter with you.  
Write his or her answers in the space below.

Interview Question 1:

“  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, where would you like to show our

PAX Tootle Notes in our home?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Interview Question 2:

“  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, what kinds of things could we write

PAX Tootle Notes for at home?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Optional Family Activity:

- Write a PAX Tootle Note with your child to your teacher, principal, or other adult at school.
- Write a PAX Tootle Note with your child to another family adult or friend.
- Write a PAX Tootle Note to families of children who behave well at your home.





“I love the PAX Game so much, I want to play it at home, too,”  
 I said. “That’s a great idea,” exclaimed  Mom  Dad  \_\_\_\_\_ “but  
 how do we do that?”

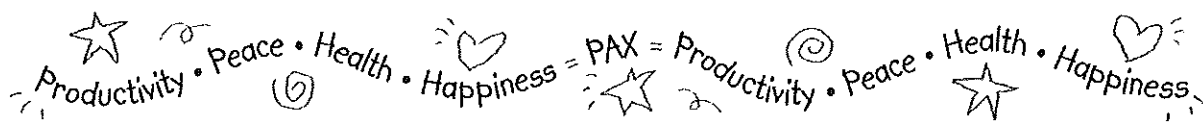
I thought, and I thought, and I thought. . . . Then, I had an idea.

“We could play the PAX Game at mealtimes! Here’s how:<sup>15</sup>

- We decide what PAX and **SPLEEMS** will be at the table.
- We set a timer for 5 minutes at first and then for more minutes as we get better.
- We take turns as scorekeeper and calmly write down any **SPLEEMS**. We give tootles to each other, too.
- After the meal, the whole family gets a simple prize for winning—if it has no more than three **SPLEEMS** — like a tickle fest, a card game, or a special dessert.”

<sup>15</sup> *Adults please note:*


Mealtimes and riding in the car are times when families can more easily play the PAX Game. Common mealtime **Spleems** include put-downs, grabbing food, interrupting others, and any other poor table manners.



So we started playing the PAX Game at mealtimes. We talked more. We laughed more. People said more nice things.

Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_ exclaimed, "Your mealtime PAX Game is so good, I'll write a PAX Tootle Note to your teacher."<sup>16</sup>

My teacher liked the PAX Tootle Note from home. My teacher gave bonus points when children brought PAX Tootle Notes from home signed by a grown-up. "You are spreading PAX everywhere," said \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(My teacher's name)

 <p>talk about it</p>	<p>_____, how will playing PAX at (Child's name) home make the world a better place?</p>
--	--



**This is a good place to stop for today.**

Do the *Family Activities* on the next page and then draw a star in the chapter 5 box on the front cover.

<sup>16</sup> Adults please note:

Sharing your PAX Game home successes with your child's teacher will help your child's behavior both at school and home.



Chapter 5

Family Activities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interview the adult who read this chapter with you.

Write his or her answers in the space below.

Interview Question 1:

“  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, what kind of **SPLÈEMS** could we  
cut down on at meals?” \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Question 2:

“  Mom  
 Dad  
 \_\_\_\_\_, what should we do if people argue  
about a **SPLÈEM** at the table?” \_\_\_\_\_

Optional Family Activity:

Watch TV or read a book together. Talk about who the  
PAX Leaders are or what the **SPLÈEMS** are in the story.  
Ask what a PAX Leader would do.





CHAPTER 6  
 Making Your School and Your World Better



Soon, everyone began to hear about our PAX Game.

- Our principal heard about it . . .
- Our school board heard about it . . .
- The mayor of our city heard about it . . .
- The governor of our state heard about it . . .
- Even famous scientists came and learned about the PAX Game.

I am a grown-up now. The PAX Game is being played by millions of kids around the world.<sup>17</sup>

	<p>_____ , why do you think the PAX  <small>(Child's name)</small></p> <p>Game became so famous?</p>
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<sup>17</sup> Adults please note:

Scientists who have studied the PAX Good Behavior Game found that it helps to reduce ADHD symptoms. Plus it can increase teaching time, learning, and achievement.

Productivity • Peace • Health • Happiness = PAX = Productivity • Peace • Health • Happiness

People often ask me why we invented the game, and my answer is always the same. All we wanted to do was create a wonderful school, but we ended up creating a wonderful world, too!

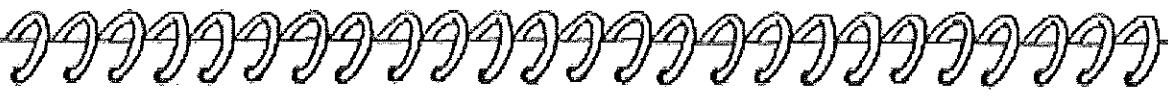
Maybe you can do the same. After all, you're a PAX Leader, too!

	<p>_____, how would you feel if you had (Child's name) invented a game that helped kids all over the world?</p>
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**This is the end of our story.**

Do the *Family Activities* on the next page and then draw a star in the chapter 6 box on the front cover.



Chapter 6

# Family Activities

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Interview the adult who read this chapter with you.  
Write his or her answers in the space below.

Interview Question 1:

- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_, what part of the PAX Game do you

like the best?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Interview Question 2:

- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_, what do you think a PAX Leader

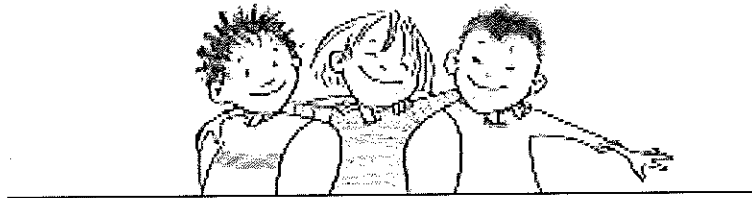
would be like?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Interview Question 3:

- Mom
- Dad
- \_\_\_\_\_, how will playing the PAX Game

help me in school?" \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





## **More about the *PAX Good Behavior Game***

### **Does the PAX Game help children develop self-control?**

Absolutely. The PAX Game trains a child's brain for better self-control. The team competition, the group rewards, and the fact that young people help set up the game rules all encourage self-control.

### **Does the PAX Game take away from academics or learning?**

No. A teacher actually uses it while teaching. Studies show that using the PAX Game increases learning time by 25 percent.

### **Where can I learn more about the PAX Game?**

To learn more about the recognized science about the Game, please go to: [www.pubmed.gov](http://www.pubmed.gov). This is the National Library of Medicine. There you can search some the best studies. You search by typing in, "Good Behavior Game". Be sure to put it in quote " " marks. You might also check out, "[www.GoodBehaviorGame.org](http://www.GoodBehaviorGame.org)"

### **Can families help spread the PAX Game to other places?**

Yes. Please contact PAXIS Institute at 520-299-6770 or send an email to [gbg@paxis.org](mailto:gbg@paxis.org).

