

National History Day Parent Survival Tips

1. **Make yourself sit down and read through Mrs. Kragen's NHD information** on her web site (kragen.net). Follow all links. Investigate the resources available to you!
2. **Make note of all dates:** field trips to Kitsap Regional Library in Bremerton, Downtown Seattle Public Library, ESPECIALLY University of Washington Libraries, due dates for the classroom, the regional contest date, the state contest date. Seriously consider committing to go along and assist your student. *The UW trip is logistically challenging even for veteran NHD kids.*
3. **Sit down with your student and go over their "to-do" list.** These should include: the estimated number of primary and secondary research resources they need; an annotated bibliography; *one or two interviews with an expert*; a process paper; and then depending upon their chosen category—the designing, shopping for materials and construction of their exhibit or costume and sets; scripting and preparation of their performance; acquiring of needed technologies for and creation of their web site or documentary; or writing, editing and rewriting of their paper.
4. **If your student is a group project member,** then contact the other parents involved and *discuss how this is going to be handled.* The students will need to schedule time together to go over sources, share research, and create their entry. Having one adult be a mentor through the planning/time organizing phase is practical. Other adults can monitor work sessions—loosely or more strictly as the group gains skill working together. (It's up to the students to do the project, but maturity and focus vary greatly. Just be aware.) Adults available to the group with needed skills such as carpentry, computer knowledge, sewing, etc. should be approached to request their advice and expertise.
5. **Form a partnership with your student.** Someone (a parent) should read through and offer editing tips on all work. Offer brainstorming about interviews, resources, what to do next. Share your brainpower!
6. **Use the local and long distance libraries.** Never let your student head off to a field trip without having done online research of the catalogue and having printed out call numbers. There is not enough time on the day of the trip to find and photocopy all the information. *There is no time to search for sources on the field trips!*
7. **Stay in the game, but let your student own the process.** First timers especially need monitoring—*just checking in can avert disaster.* Remember the teacher is the coach—yours is the role of cheerleader/team manager.
8. **Good luck!**

Tips offered by Mrs. Christman from the Poulsbo branch of the Kitsap Regional Library.