

## **Fun Ways to Share History with your Children**

- **Remember the beauty of the words, “when I was little…”**

Children of all ages, even very young ones, love hearing stories of how things used to be. Tell them about your own first day of school or share with them the favorite games you liked to play, or what type of vacations your family took. Those stories never grow old.

Remind your kids to ask their grandparents about what it was like for them, too. Grandparents will love it, and your kids will hear wonderful family stories of how things used to be.

- **When you’re reading the newspaper or cruising the Internet, tell your kids about newspaper boys:**

Today, most parents get much of their news from the Internet, but most households still have one or two papers delivered in printed form. Explain to your children that the primary way for families to get the news used to be via the printed newspaper and that children were key to delivering the papers. Young boys would take jobs as paper boys, which would involve getting up very early and then delivering the newspaper on their bicycles. Once a month they would visit their route in the evening to collect payment for the newspaper.

- **The Important role of music in our military.**

In elementary school, many children start a band instrument, which offers the opportunity for talking about music and its importance in the military. Boys as young as age 9 were part of the military during the Civil War. Drummer boys were key to setting a pace for marching units. Buglers (explain that a bugle is like a trumpet) would sound calls to tell soldiers to move forward or to retreat. They played a very important part in all military maneuvers.

- **Election Day offers a “teachable moment” about the importance of voting.**

Right now communities are filled with election-related billboards and signs about the mid-term elections. Explain to your kids how important it is to pay attention to the issues being discussed and to vote. If possible, take your kids with you to the polling place so they can see what it is like. You might also add that originally only white men who owned land could vote, and that it took years for women and people of ethnic backgrounds to win the right to vote.

- **Do they want their own phone? Regardless of what you decide on this issue, explain to them how different things are from only a few years ago.**

Not everyone grew up having a phone. Explain to them that this phenomenon of most people having a cell phone is relatively recent. Parents today would have likely been 16 or older before

phones were a common accessory. And when parents describe the days “before personal phones,” there may have an additional teaching moment if you walk by a phone booth. What’s that? Children today will likely never hear a busy signal...another moment where parents can talk about how technology has advanced very quickly.

- **Hard to wake your child for the school morning? Remind them it could be worse!**

You might tell them that until 1938 there was no national labor law that kept children from working as hard as adults. While some states had regulated against it, in many locations some children would work a 12-hour day in a factory or in the mines.