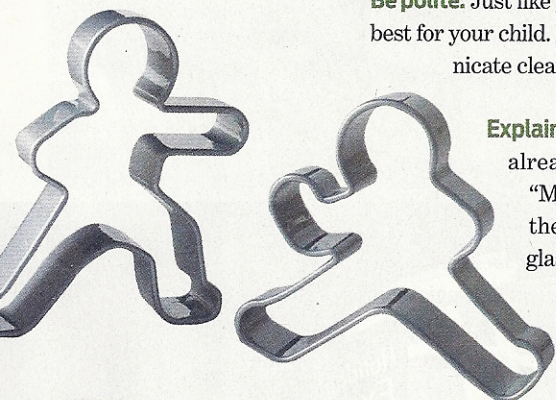




## Ninjabread Men COOKIE CUTTERS

These cool tools give a whole new meaning to the term "tough cookie!" Think beyond gingerbread—they make a mean sugar cookie, too. Fred, \$14.



## GotSitter.com

An online community for parents and their trusted babysitters, this site allows you to create a profile and invite the caretakers who regularly watch over your child to do the same so you can streamline scheduling and communication.



## I'm Here for You

Tips from teachers on how to best communicate your concerns at your child's school

**Set up a meeting** with your child's teacher. Provide her with an idea of what you'd like to discuss so that she has time to prepare.

**Be polite.** Just like you, the teacher wants the best for your child. It will be easier to communicate clearly if everyone is calm.

**Explain the issue** and what you've already tried. For example, "My child has trouble seeing the blackboard. She wears glasses, but it's not enough."

**Focus on solutions,** not problems. Come

with a few ideas of your own ("A seat closer to the front of the room might help."). With the teacher, create an action plan that you can both set in motion when the meeting is over.

**Approach the principal** if you feel that the teacher is not hearing your concerns. If you know other parents with similar concerns, you might approach the teacher again together. You have the right to make sure that your child is getting what she needs at school.

—Melissa Taylor

**Sources:** Kristen Hyde, second-grade teacher in Morrison, CO; Patty Hanrahan, director of elementary education in Parker, CO

