

## Director's Corner: Healthy Mind & Body



This year, we chose the whole school theme of **HEALTHY MIND & BODY** so that together we can learn how to take good care of ourselves and others. We will explore balanced strategies for healthy eating, exercising, sleeping, keeping ourselves clean and safe, etc. We will also talk about the ways we can feed, exercise and rest our minds so that we can do our best thinking and learning at home and at school. We invite you to join us in focusing our own efforts so that we can help the children build healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

As part of our staff preparation for the new school year, we read and discussed Dr. Wendy Mogel's book, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee: Using Jewish Teachings to Raise Self-Reliant Children* (Penguin Compass, 2001). Though our staff comes from diverse religious backgrounds, we all found that our experience resonated with Mogel's key points. Here are some of my personal favorites, all of which relate both to parenting and educating children.

"The only things that are certain to be valuable are character traits such as honesty, tenacity, flexibility, optimism, and compassion – the same traits that have served people well for centuries." (p. 44)

"The family is the laboratory, and you are teaching the science of living." (p. 83)

"Your most lasting legacy, the only one that really matters, is how your children will treat their fellow creatures and the world you're leaving them. It begins and ends with honor." (p. 88)

"Real protection means teaching children to manage risks on their own, not shielding them from every hazard." (p. 95)

"Chores give us a unique opportunity to teach our children family citizenship, self-reliance, responsibility, and a sense of the holy potential in every action." (p. 157)

"We are offering them ourselves, and we are showing them the path to a rich and meaningful life." (p. 234)

"Building strength and self-reliance in our children requires an investment of our time and thought, it requires planning and discipline, it requires a long view both backward to our heritage and forward to the future." (p. 258)

At this point in our individual and family journeys, we have the opportunity to collaborate to enhance our children's living and learning. Watch the monthly newsletters for ideas you can use at home, as well as opportunities for involvement in the school and the community. Enclosed with this newsletter is the Pennsylvania Department of Health guide for children and grownups, entitled "Let's get MOVING! With Healthy Snacks and Play."

In my future columns, I'll discuss how educators and parents can together foster the "seven essential life skills every child needs", as proposed by Ellen Galinsky in *Mind in the Making*. We hope you'll join us in pursuing a healthy lifestyle for our minds and bodies this year!

## Habits for Healthy Minds & Bodies

In preparation for our Whole School Unit exploring **Healthy Mind & Body**, we are planning a Staff / Parent Discussion on Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 11:00am. Preschool 4's and Kindergarten children will be in school, and child care will be provided in the Red Room for 3's and younger siblings. Because school will be in session, please park in the East Campus garage or at one of the metered spots near the school.

According to the Scholastic Parent web site, "Teaching your child how to maintain the right balance of diet, exercise, and relaxation is the key to her well-being — for life."

<http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/staying-fit-in-mind-and-body>

Come join our discussion of ways to foster young children's healthy body care, nutrition, exercise, rest, mental & physical challenge, stress reduction, and giving.

## Snow Day Ideas for Healthy Minds & Bodies

A little planning ahead will go a long way to helping you and your family have positive and constructive snow days this winter. Here are a few ideas for creatively using snow days to reinforce important lessons about Healthy Minds & Bodies.

- **Rest** – Let everyone sleep in, lounge in pajamas, and have a slower pace to the day.
- **Healthy Body Care** – Open a new toothbrush, practice brushing, and photograph each others' smiles, take a leisurely bath and use a washcloth to carefully clean all the body's nooks & crannies.
- **Nutrition** – Freeze leftover vegetables, rice, potatoes, etc. in advance so that you have lots of ingredients to make a warm and healthy vegetable soup to enjoy together.
- **Exercise** – Make playdough together (see recipe below) and then play with it to strengthen small muscles, use the Sound Play movements children have learned to creatively move large muscles to music, allow children to play dress up with adult clothes and shoes.
- **Mental Challenge** – Play board games together or start a family puzzle (available with 3 sizes of pieces so that family members of all ages can participate).
- **Stress Reduction** – Snuggle with a book, and practice the yoga positions children have learned.
- **Giving** – Focusing on others and the ways that we can encourage and support them helps children have a healthy perspective. Make pictures or cards for friends and family, or sort clothes, books, and toys to select ones to share with others.

### Children's School Playdough (NOTE: We usually double the recipe.)

1 cup White Flour	1 cup Water
½ cup Salt	1 tablespoon Oil
2 teaspoons Cream of Tartar	1 teaspoon Food Coloring

1. Combine flour, salt, and cream of tartar in a saucepan. Mix water, oil, and food coloring in a separate bowl and stir them gradually into dry ingredients until the mixture is smooth.
2. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until a ball forms.
3. Remove from heat and when the mixture is just cool enough to handle, knead until smooth.
4. Also, you can add vanilla, instant coffee, etc. to add aroma, or add glitter to enhance the visual sensation. Be creative!
5. Store in a ziplock bag in the refrigerator when not in use.

## 2012 Email Invitation

### **Habits for Healthy Minds & Bodies**

**As we prepare for our Whole School Unit on HEALTHY MINDS & BODIES, let's discuss how we can help children build healthy habits for a lifetime. CMU's 2012 slogan re: building healthy habits is "Strive to Thrive", so let's consider how we can promote our children's ability to thrive.**

**Please join us for a discussion of opportunities for building healthy habits at school, at home, and in the community!**

**CMU Children's School  
Staff / Parent Discussion**

**Friday, January 27, 2012  
9:30 – 11:00 AM, West Wing Lounge (the dorm between the Children's School and the track)**

**Preschool 4's and Kindergarten Children will be in school. Child Care will be provided for children 3 and under in the Red Room.**

**Because school will be in session, please park in the East Campus garage or at one of the metered spots near the school.**

Come join our discussion of ways to foster young children's healthy

- body care,
- nutrition,
- balance of exercise and rest for our bodies and minds
- safety and appropriate risk-taking
- coping with emotions and managing stress,
- connecting with people in ways that involve both giving and receiving,
- etc.

**Please RSVP to this email, indicating how many adults will attend and the ages of children needing child care.**

**We look forward to our dialogue with you about healthy habits!!**

**Dr. Carver**

## Habits for Healthy Minds & Bodies

What are your family's top three priorities for your children's physical and mental health?

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What are the three biggest challenges you face with respect to building healthy habits for mental and physical health in your child(ren)?

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- 
- 

What suggestions can you offer to Children's School educators for the Healthy Mind & Body Unit?

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## **Habits for Healthy Minds & Bodies**

**CMU Children's School**

**Staff / Parent Discussion 1/27/12**

According to the Scholastic Parent web site, "Teaching your child how to maintain the right balance of diet, exercise, and relaxation is the key to her well-being — for life."

<http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/staying-fit-in-mind-and-body>

**The goal for families and educators is building foundations NOW for lifelong healthy habits. Meeting this goal requires consistent modeling, direct instruction, and frequent coaching and reinforcement.**

**During this unit, we will emphasize balanced strategies for healthy eating, exercising, sleeping, keeping ourselves clean and safe, etc.**

- **Healthy Body Care** – Basic Hygiene & Safety, with Appropriate Risk Taking  
<http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/all-about-my-body>  
**Strategies for Success**
  - Handwashing has a huge impact so learn it well (see procedure & song).
  - Recognize the "Blessing of a Skinned Knee".
  - Emphasize "Pay attention" rather the "Be careful."
  
- **Nutrition** – [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)
  - Focus on Fruits
  - Vary Your Veggies
  - Make at Least Half Your Grains Whole
  - Go Lean with Protein
  - Get Your Calcium-Rich Foods (Switch to Fat-Free or Low Fat)
  - Strategies for Success**
    - Involve children in shopping and cooking.
    - Try at least one new food per week.
    - Know that multiple "taste tests" might be needed to adjust to a new food.
  
- **Exercise** – Fitness includes endurance, strength, and flexibility.  
[http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition\\_center/staying\\_fit/exercise.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_center/staying_fit/exercise.html)  
See attached Preschool Recommendations.
  
- **Rest** – For preschoolers, the recommendation is 10-12 hours per 24-hour period.  
[http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/sleep/sleep\\_preschool.html#](http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/sleep/sleep_preschool.html#)  
Sample Book highlights the key message: Sleep is for Everyone (Showers)

**We will also talk about the ways we can feed, exercise and rest our minds so that we can do our best thinking and learning at home and at school. [Note that there has been much less work with preschoolers on building skills for healthy minds.]**

- **Mental Nutrition**

- Positive Outlook & Humor
- Connecting with Nature
- Relating with People
- Make a Difference in the World

- **Mental Exercise**

- Open-Ended Play & Imagination
- Appropriate Challenge
- Focus (selective and sustained attention), Memory & Inhibitory Control
- <http://mindinthemaking.org/> (7 essential life skills)

- **Mental Rest**

- Personal Time
- Relaxation
- Coping with Emotions
- Managing Stress <http://www.stressmanagementtips.com/kids.htm>

**Related Parenting Resources**

[www.familieswithpurpose.com](http://www.familieswithpurpose.com) (helping families build their best life)

[www.thesoulfulparent.com](http://www.thesoulfulparent.com)

# Hand-washing Song

*(sung to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")*

Slide, slide, slide your hands,



Make a bridge like this.



Don't forget both bracelets,



Then you have to twist!





*American Alliance for  
Health, Physical Education,  
Recreation and Dance*

## **Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children From Birth to Age 5, 2nd Edition**

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/standards/nationalGuidelines/ActiveStart.cfm>

### **Guidelines for Preschoolers:**

- Guideline 1.** Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes of structured physical activity each day.
- Guideline 2.** Preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes -- and up to several hours -- of unstructured physical activity each day, and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.
- Guideline 3.** Preschoolers should be encouraged to develop competence in fundamental motor skills that will serve as the building blocks for future motor skillfulness and physical activity.
- Guideline 4.** Preschoolers should have access to indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large-muscle activities.
- Guideline 5.** Caregivers and parents in charge of preschoolers' health and well-being are responsible for understanding the importance of physical activity and for promoting movement skills by providing opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.



### **Stress Management for Kids** (<http://www.stressmanagementtips.com/kids.htm>)

From the bogeyman for small children to the bogies of SATs and final exams for the college-bound, stress affects kids of all ages. The first thing a parent can do to help their child manage stress is to build a strong family unit. Include your children in family discussions and be on the lookout for stress in your kids.

**Recognizing Stress in Children** Especially small children with under-developed communication skills may display stress very differently than an adult does. Often kids' stress is internalized and most noticeable in physical symptoms such as frequent flu-like symptoms including headache, stomachache, and even nausea.

Children under stress may regress to behaviors like bedwetting, clinginess, and frequent crying. Behavioral symptoms may be extreme at both ends of a behavior spectrum. A normally active child becomes either listless or hyperactive, a usually docile child has fits of anger or a child that "acts out" becomes docile and introspective.

Some signs of stress in kids are easily confused with children's mental disorders. For instance, if schoolwork slides or your child's circle of friends undergoes a drastic change, it isn't a sure sign that your child is on drugs. Situations like these may simply indicate a child's inability to handle a stressful situation.

**Helping Kids Reduce Stress** Children primarily learn by example. The best way to teach your child how to manage stress is by using the tools and articles at Stress Management Tips to learn to effectively manage your stressors. In addition, you can develop skills and child-oriented stress management techniques to help your kids recognize and manage their stressors.

- Eat healthy. A healthy body is better able to withstand stress-induced illness. Schedule regular meals and snack times. Don't allow your child to skip meals.
- Vigorous exercise is a good stress reliever. Just like adults, kids need time to unwind. If your kids are bound to video games, television, or a computer, get them on their feet by providing and encouraging the use of active toys like balls, punch bags, and bikes. If your child presently appears to be stressed, make a point of playing with them. Time spent with your kids is a great vehicle for getting them to open up the lines of communication.
- Be clear in setting rules and consistent with discipline. Kids live in a "black and white" world. Blurred guidelines and inconsistencies are even more confusing for them than they are for adults.
- Gentle physical touch is a great healer. Sometimes a hug is worth more than a thousand words. Another physical stress reliever can be a gentle massage of your child's neck and shoulders. Like you, your kids can also get knotted up with stress!
- Learn to be a good listener. When your child wants to talk about his or her problems, don't criticize. In addition, it isn't always necessary to give advice. Sometimes kids just need to talk. Encourage them with open-ended questions like, "So what happened next?" "How do you feel about that?"
- Teach your kids that everyone (including you) makes mistakes. A good start is admitting your mistakes to your children with an "I'm sorry" or "My mistake" when you goof-up. If the situation warrants, use personal examples of stressful situations you encountered during your childhood. Even if you were unsuccessful in dealing with your situation, you'll teach your kids that you can learn from and even laugh at your own mistakes.
- Finally, teach your kids stress relieving exercises and help them find stress reducing games they can play to reduce their stress.



# Carnegie Mellon University Children's School February 2012 Family Newsletter



## Whole School Healthy Mind & Body Unit

Beginning on February 6<sup>th</sup>, both Preschool and Kindergarten classes will begin a thematic unit to explore balanced strategies for healthy eating, exercising, sleeping, keeping ourselves clean and safe, etc. We will also talk about the ways we can feed, exercise and rest our minds so that we can do our best thinking and learning at home and at school.

Plan now to bring your entire family to the **Family Healthy Mind & Body Festival** on Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup> from 4:30 – 6:30 pm. Consider bringing a camera to capture your family's healthy fun!



NOTE: There will not be an Extended Afternoon Program on the Family Festival day so that the staff can prepare the school for the event. If your child is enrolled in the Extended Afternoon Program, we will dismiss your child at 3:15 with the afternoon preschoolers. Thank you!

## Enrollment Reminder



Registrations for the 2012-2013 Preschool Programs are arriving steadily and the Extended Morning Program is filling quickly, so please submit your re-enrollment materials as soon as possible. It is especially important that families let us know if you are NOT planning to re-enroll so that we can notify families on the waiting list that we have space for their children. Even if you are not re-enrolling, families need to return the corrected and signed "Child Information Form". Thanks!

Registration packets for the Kindergarten Program will be sent home in backpacks on Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. Remember that we will send more re-enrollment packets than we have spaces available, so we expect to have a full class. If you intend to re-enroll, please respond as quickly as possible to ensure that your child has a space. Mrs. Rosenblum will begin accepting completed packets and deposits at 8am on Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about admissions, please contact her at [rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:rosenblu@andrew.cmu.edu).

### February & Early March Dates

Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> Re-enrollment Packets Sent Home in Backpacks to Current 4's Families  
Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> School Photos for AM 4's, PM 4's, and PM 3's  
Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> School Photos for AM 3's and Kindergarten  
Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> Deposits DUE for 2012-2013 Preschool  
Monday, February 20<sup>th</sup> Presidents' Day Holiday (NO SCHOOL)  
Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup> Last Day for Current Families to Re-enroll for 2012-2013 Kindergarten  
Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 4:30-6:30 pm, FAMILY HEALTHY MIND & BODY FESTIVAL

NOTE: There will be no Extended Afternoon Program on that day!

## Habits for Healthy Minds and Bodies

Thanks to the parents who participated in our Staff / Parent Discussion on Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> in preparation for our upcoming Whole School Unit. We began by listening to each other's priorities for our children's mental and physical health and the challenges we face in reaching those goals. We agreed that both families and educators need to focus on building foundations NOW for lifelong healthy habits by consistently modeling them, teaching them directly, and frequent coaching and reinforcing children for their efforts. At the same time, we recognize the serious constraints of time, as well as the value of balance, particularly when multiple positive options exist.



The handout from the session, with multiple web references for the relevant attachments, will soon be available in the "For Parents" section of our web site. Here are some of the key recommendations:

- Frequent hand-washing, using the procedure taught at school
- Fruit, veggies, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat, calcium rich foods
- 60 min. of structured and 60 min. of unstructured physical activity per day for preschoolers
- 10-12 hours of sleep per day for preschoolers
- Mental nutrition via humor, time in nature and with people, and helping others in the world
- Mental exercise via open-ended play and appropriately challenging games
- Mental rest via personal time, relaxation activities, and learning strategies for coping with emotions & managing stress

## Health & Safety Pointers



**PASSENGER SAFETY:** Pennsylvania's new Child Passenger Safety Law has ramifications for child passenger safety enforcement throughout the state of Pennsylvania. Learn details of the requirements at [www.drivesafepa.org/Traffic-Safety-Information-Center/Child-Passenger-Safety](http://www.drivesafepa.org/Traffic-Safety-Information-Center/Child-Passenger-Safety). Concerning child seats and restraints, the updated law makes it a **primary offense** to not use a booster seat for a child 4 to 8 or not use a seatbelt for a child 8 to 18. Primary enforcement is the focus of police priority and officers can stop you and write a citation for these offenses without another offense having occurred. Also, according to child passenger safety experts, 9 out of 10 car seats are installed incorrectly. To view a video of proper installation, go to [www.patechs.com](http://www.patechs.com).

**PACIFIERS & SIPPY CUPS:** During the recent speech and hearing screening, the Easter Seals professionals provided us with several handouts that review the negative aspects of prolonged use of pacifiers, bottles, and sippy cups for infants and young children. From the speech pathologists' viewpoint, the use of pacifiers and bottles increases the number of ear infections, which in turn can delay speech development, and it can lead to crooked teeth and a narrowed palate, which then impacts both swallowing and speech sound production. Similarly, by using a sippy cup rather than a regular cup, the child continues using sucking and slurping motions instead of learning the more sophisticated tongue motions of swirling and gulping, which means that their development of clear articulation will be delayed. Using any of these items past the age of 12-18 months can also decrease the frequency of children's verbalizations simply because their mouth is otherwise occupied. Pediatric dentists also express concerns about the extended exposure to sugary liquids increasing the risk of tooth decay.

# KINDERNEWS

## HEALTHY MIND & BODY



February kicked off our Healthy Mind and Body unit. The objective of the unit was to build a foundation for lifelong healthy habits. The children were excited to have the opportunity to examine the human body inside and out. We studied many areas of our bodies and mind such as the brain, the skeletal system, the circulatory system, the digestive system, the respiratory system, nutrition, dental care, the five senses, and caring for the mind. The children undertook a variety of projects to reinforce their learning of these concepts.

### Reminders

- There is no school from March 12th to 16th due to Spring Break.
- Even though we are moving into spring, please be sure to dress your child in layers.

**THE BRAIN**

We learned that the brain can be thought of as the boss of the body. It controls just about everything we do, even when we're asleep. The children were introduced to the cerebrum, the cerebellum, the brain stem, and the functions of the right and left side of the brain.

As a special treat, Mr. Carver lead a lesson about fish, which the children learned is a healthy food for the development of our brains. Using two bluefish he brought into the classroom, Mr. Carver showed the children how to fillet the fish, which we then cooked and tasted. As a bonus, Mr. Carver provided a biology lesson and encouraged the children to explore the external features and the internal organs of the fish.



Mr. Carver showing us the insides of a fish.



Julia and Nikou dissect the innards of the fish.



Oscar and Charlie examine the fish with Mr. Carver.



Nina H. and Ryan enjoy tasting the fish.

During the week, we made available many brain and logic games for the children to play with such as Checkers, Jenga, Sudoku, Mastermind, and 100/200 piece puzzles. Because these games involve logic and spatial reasoning, they require the use of the left side of the brain.



Mark and Nina H. play a game of Guess Who as Trey watches.



Peter, playing Bone Jenga, carefully tries to move a bone.



Michael waits patiently as Elias contemplates his next move playing checkers.

NUTRITION



My Plate, the new alternative to the food pyramid, teaches children the different food groups and the recommended amounts they need to eat of each group in order to build healthy bodies. The children sampled a variety of foods from each of the My Plate categories (fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy) including beets, homemade fruit/vegetable juice, Ugli fruit, kumquats, lentils, coconuts, and many more. Maryella's mom gave us an introduction to green and black tea, which the children enjoyed learning about and tasting. Also, Mrs. Okonkwo prepared and baked healthy granola bars with us. Yummy!



Harrison adds **grapes** to the juicer.



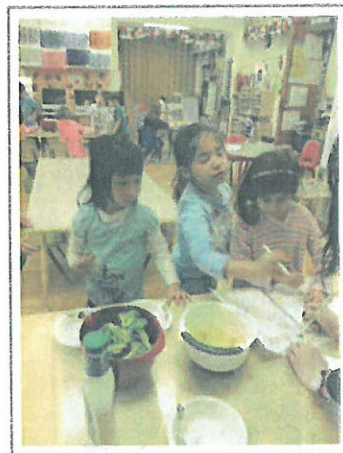
Peter enjoys the baked turnips.



Julia cuts **sweet potato fries**.



Maryella, Ryan, and Trey think their **oatmeal** is yummy.



Nina H., Sydney, and Delia taste **broccoli and pineapple**.



Delia and Kabir try **quinoa** as Michael looks on.



Michael, Peter, Nikou, and Oscar taste **Ugli fruit and kumquat**.



Caroline, Trey, and Charlotte chart whether they liked/disliked **avocado**.

## THE SKELETAL SYSTEM

The children were excited to learn that their skeletal system contains 206 individual bones and that this system of bones protects the internal organs such as the heart, stomach, and liver. We discussed how we use our muscles, which are attached to the individual bones of the skeletal system, to move the parts of our bodies. We had a variety of activities to enable the children to better understand and visualize the skeletal system, including building our own skeletons using Q-tips; making life-sized drawings of our bodies, and learning the song Dem Bones.



Kasim creates his skeleton using Q-tips.



Mrs. Perovich measures Charlotte's arm so she can draw her body to scale.



Mark puts his final touches on his Q-tip skeleton.

## THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM

The heart is a muscle that pumps blood through the body. The children discovered where their heart is located and got to use a real stethoscope to hear their own heartbeats before and after exercise, which we decided sounds like this - lub-dub, lub-dub. We used a diagram depicting red oxygenated blood flowing out to parts of the body and the darker "blue" blood flowing back to the heart/lung system to be re-oxygenated before being pumped back out.



Michael runs fast then checks his heartbeat.



Delia, Sydney, and Ryan play with the red blood vessels.



Sebastian and Ryan work with the heart pumps.

THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

To demonstrate the action of our lungs, we lay on the rug and watched our chest go up and down as we inhaled and exhaled air. We learned new vocabulary words such as lungs, oxygen, rib cage, windpipe, and diaphragm. We made our own "artificial lung" from a plastic pop bottle, a balloon, and a plastic bag. We simulated the workings of the lungs by having the children pull on the "diaphragm" (plastic bag), which made the "lung" (balloon) inflate with air.



Jacob and Nina H. work together.....



Friends try to control the amount of air they blow into the paper party horn.



Caroline uses her lungs to blow paint across the paper.

THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

Using our own digestive system model, we observed the path of the food through the system. The food (smashed cracker mixed with water) was placed into the mouth and then proceeded down the esophagus, into the stomach where it mixed with the "stomach acid" (lemon juice) which breaks down the food. From the stomach, the food passes into the small and large intestines before being eliminated as waste out the bottom. This was the only time we were allowed to use a bathroom word!



Sophia uses play doh to show the organs of her body.



Harrison and Delia push the food through the digestive system of the plastic model.





Elias and Ryan use the right side of their brains to express their creativity.

**Fun in our "hospital" and our "grocery story"**



**FEBRUARY SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS**

This month, we concentrated on science experiments that focused on Healthy Mind and Body.

**Clean Teeth**

**I wonder.....** what happens to a hard boiled egg (representing teeth) when submerged in a cup of Coke (representing sugar) for three days.

**I think.....** the children brainstormed different hypotheses: that the egg would burst, that it would crack, or that it would turn color.

**The conclusion.....**that the egg turned brown after three days in the Coke. The kind of sugar found in Coke is very bad for your teeth and can cause decay.

**I learned.....**when the eggs were removed and scrubbed with a toothbrush and toothpaste, they became clean. This illustrates the importance of brushing teeth twice a day.

**Marshmallow Experiment**

**I wonder.....**what will happen when I heat a marshmallow in the microwave for 10 seconds? 30 seconds? 50 seconds?

**I think.....**the children used their 5 senses to observe a marshmallow.

Sight: white, round, small

Touch: squishy, powdery,soft

Smell: sweet

Hearing: makes a soft sound when dropped

Taste: sweet, yummy

The children thought that the marshmallow will melt, get big and hot.

**I learned.....**that at

10 seconds: the marshmallow got bigger

30 seconds: it got even bigger, turned brown and then got flat

60 seconds: it grew the biggest, deflated, brown in some spots then turned crunchy.

**Strong Bones**

**I learned.....**when the eggs were removed and scrubbed with a toothbrush and toothpaste, they became clean. This illustrates the importance of brushing teeth twice a day.

**I think.....**the bones will disintegrate or turn black.

**The conclusion.....**still to be determined.

In a week (the week we get back from spring break) the children will learn that vinegar has a chemical in it that causes all the calcium in the bones to break down. Once this happens the bones become pliable. The objective of the experiment is to show the importance of drinking and eating many servings of dairy in order to get the calcium that builds strong bones.

# 3's Healthy Mind and Body Newsletter



Carnegie Mellon University Children's School

March 8, 2012

## Staying Healthy at The Children's School...

During the month of February, all of the children in the school were immersed in the Healthy Mind and Body Theme. The Red and Blue Room friends looked at the different parts of the body and the five senses. They also learned a great deal through play by becoming doctors and nurses in the dramatic play doctor's office. Our learning led to a wonderful Family Festival highlighted by family yoga and healthy snacks!



As with all of our units, the Healthy Mind and Body Theme utilized information from books. We absorbed the facts from books like "My Wonderful

Body" by Donna Marie Pitino, "My Body in Balance" by Cathy Torrisi and "You Are What You Eat" by Melvin Berger. We also enjoyed books like "The Ear Book" by Al Perkins, "Stretch" by Doreen Cronin and Scott

Menchin and "Sleep is for Everyone" by Paul Showers. One of our focuses for this theme was learning about the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and



touch. We used our eyes, ears, noses, tongues and fingers to explore the world of our senses! Our dramatic play centers were transformed into doctor's offices and laboratories, and friends spent a great deal of time caring for their patients, both human and baby doll!

## Some "sense"able activities...

~Can you guess the smell?~



~Preparing healthy foods for a taste test~



~Sight and touch in the Discovery Area~



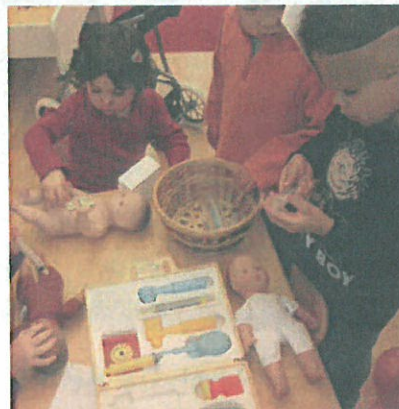
Sometimes when talking about the body, the concepts we introduced were a bit tricky to grasp, so making the information accessible through play and art was our ticket to success! Many conversations were held during a check-up in the dramatic play doctor's office or while painting a body at the easel. Through these informal interactions, ideas about germs and medicine were reinforced and things like the circulatory system were seen and investigated.



Floam feels funny on Nana's fingers!



Briggs reading to friends in the relaxation area.



Steven and Emma administering care at the "baby hospital".



Emmet putting the bones in the right place.



The doctors are in!



Shaylee and Lena trying to guess what they are smelling.



Michaela (left), Alexander (above) and Maggie (above) painting the circulatory system.



Maya relaxing with a good book.

## Stretching the curriculum a little further...

### YOGA!

For the Healthy Mind and Body Unit, we partnered with Donna Morosky, the Director of Fitness and Health at CMU, in order to provide yoga classes for all of the children at The Children's School. She also helped with the Family Festival, giving families an opportunity to exercise together. The three's were also privileged to have a few parents with yoga experience who came and taught us some new stretches. Thank you again to Rohan's mother, Tara, and Maggie's mother, Lisa, for adding to our wonderful yoga experiences!



### Family Festival

We hope everyone enjoyed the Healthy Mind and Body Family Festival. It was wonderful to see families doing yoga together, making tooth necklaces and preparing and eating healthy snacks!



### Birthdays and Special Visitors

We've had many birthdays and special visitors at school during the Healthy Mind and Body Unit. The morning Blue Room friends celebrated Elisabeth's birthday and the afternoon friends celebrated with Maya G., Sammy and Shaylee. Thanks to all of the families for joining us at school on those special days! We also want to say thank you to Brady's brother, Harrison, for some wonderful piano playing, Sammy's grandfather for reading and playing guitar, Felix's mother for continuing with our French classes, Collin's grandfather for reading a story and answering some of our questions about the body and Hugo's father for sharing X-rays with the afternoon friends.



# Green Room News

## Healthy Mind and Body

Children's School at Carnegie Mellon

February 6th - March 2nd 2012



During the Healthy Mind and Body thematic unit, the friends explored a variety of activities that helped to reinforce the importance of taking care of ourselves to promote healthy, happy and balanced living.

### Our Bodies

We began our unit by exploring how our bodies work. During circle time we read, "Me and My Amazing Body" by Joan Sweeny, "Your Heart" by Melvin and Gilda Berger and "My Wonderful Body" by Donna Marie Pitino. These books gave the friends a peek into what is happening under our skin. During activity time, the friends did body puzzles, traced and labeled their bodies, made their skeletons out of pasta and used turkey basters and red water to mimic the function of the beating heart. The friends also did an experiment called "digest-orama". In this experiment, the friends were able to see what happens after we swallow our food by using a clear model esophagus and stomach.

The friends also enjoyed playing body part bingo and investigating and sketching the model organs we had in the human body lab.



## Memory

As we talked about each organ in our body, we discussed the brain and its functions. One topic we wanted to focus on was the brain's ability to store memories. We played several memory games during this unit and reinforced the idea that giving your mind challenges helps you stay healthy. We also played many other thinking games, like sequencing, dominos and rhyming games.



## The Senses



During the Healthy Mind and Body unit, the friends explored each of their senses.

Smell- Each friend had an opportunity to use only their sense of smell to identify what was inside the smelling jars. Some of the most recognizable scents included: apples, oranges, shaved chocolate, coffee, cinnamon, peppermint and maple.

Taste- The friends participated in a taste test in which they tasted blueberries, raspberries, apples and grapes. They voted for the fruits they liked the best and we compared their opinions with their friends.



Touch- The friends played the touch and feel game. In this game, the friends had to guess what object they were holding using only their sense of touch.

Sight- The friends enjoyed exploring I-Spy books and puzzles using their sense of sight.

Hearing- The dramatic play center was turned into a musical exploration station filled with instruments that made different and unique sounds. The friends used their sense of hearing to compare the sounds that were being made.

## Healthy Eating and Exercise

The friends took interest in learning about the food pyramid. They all worked together to add foods to our school bulletin board food pyramid. We read, "Eat Right" by Katie Bagley and "Gregory, the Terrible Eater" to start the discussion about healthy balanced eating. The friends decorated locker tags with healthy foods and stuffed and painted bags to represent healthy fruits and vegetables that we should be eating each day.



A healthy diet should come with a healthy amount of exercise. The friends liked to discuss the ways they like to get exercise each day. Aside from the focus on outdoor play exercise, the friends enjoyed putting more of a focus on yoga. We even turned the dramatic play center into a yoga studio for a week. The friends took off their shoes and practiced their favorite yoga poses.





## Self Care



We asked the friends the question, “What can we do to stay healthy?” Washing our hands is always a high priority at the Children School so many friends were able to make that connection right away. One other suggestion from the friends was going to the Doctor. We discussed the importance of getting regular check ups. The dramatic play center was turned into a Doctor’s office so the friends could imagine that they are a doctor, nurse or patient.

## Safety



Each friend had an opportunity to help with the large traffic light in the Green Room. The friends helped to sponge paint and add glitter to the red light. They collaged the yellow light with yellow paper, feathers, pom poms, yarn, stickers and felt. The green light was decorated with green spray paint and the friends colored large letters spelling GO. The friends also made their own traffic lights and safety signs to add to our bulletin board. We read the story, “I Keep Myself Safe” by Cathy Torrisi. This book highlights the importance of wearing a helmet on a bike, wearing sunscreen outdoors, and the appropriate way to sit in the car seat.

## Emotions and Relaxation

The Green Room friends read many stories about feelings and emotions, some of our favorites were “Today I feel Silly,” by Jamie Lee Curtis, and “When Sophie Gets Angry,” by Molly Bang. When talking about emotions, we tell the friends that it is okay to feel however you feel. What is important is how you deal with your emotions and how you can make yourself feel better if you are feeling angry or sad.



Relaxation is important to the Green Room friends; that is why we continually include free choice activities for the friends to do. Playing with trains, cars, water in the water table and sand in the sand table are great spaces the friends choose to relax while enjoying a free play experience.

# Special Fridays, Visitors and Birthday Celebrations



## Visit From the Librarian

On the special Fridays that we are visited by the Librarian, we feel so lucky. During this unit, we were visited by the Librarian twice. She shared stories about healthy bodies and visiting the doctor. She always includes special songs that get the children moving and singing!



## Birthdays and Special guests

The afternoon friends were joined by Aaron and his parents to celebrate his half birthday. The friends helped Aaron's Dad make delicious pancakes. Aaron's Mom shared a special story at circle time.

While we were discussing the importance of exercise, Benjamin's Mom visited the afternoon class to read "Miss Fox's Class Shapes Up" by Eileen Spinelli A story that tells about the importance of eating right and staying active.

## Family Festival



Thank you to all the families who came to the Family Festival. It was a great ending to our Healthy Mind and Body Unit.

# March Extended AM Newsletter



Carnegie Mellon University Children's School

## Exploring Healthy Mind and Body

Over the past four weeks, the Extended Morning Program explored the mind and body. We exercised with balancing and stretching our bodies, learned the importance of caring for our eyes, discussed how we can prevent germs from spreading, and emphasized the importance of sleep and what happens while you're resting.

At the beginning of our unit, we read Those Mean Nasty Dirty Downright Disgusting but... Invisible

Germs by Judith Rice.

Five-year-old Rosa discovers the most disgusting germ on her hand while painting at school. It's the kind of germ that can give you an earache. Rosa

encounters other equally

disgusting germs at school but knows that, by washing her hands with lots of soap and water and by drying well, she can help get rid of the germs that make her sick. Our activities were enacting the story, showing how visible germs spread (AKA glitter) practicing hand washing, playing the game "Cooties" and washing lots of toys. We hope we carried fewer germs home that week. To help us remember, Mrs. Tomer helped the friends make "Achoo" pictures.

Stretch by Doreen Cronin

Ready ...Set STRETCH! Can you stretch to the ceiling? Can you stretch to the floor? You can stretch with a whisper; you can stretch with a roar.

There's nothing like a good stretch before you jump or wiggle or bounce or run, and the ever-energetic team of Cronin and Scott Menchin shows kids how a good

stretch can be good fun. In Extended AM, we stretched on mats, on balance beams, with hoops, and with noodles. We stretched rubber bands on Geo-boards, made dough and stretched it into pretzels. We stretched silly putty and enjoyed blowing bubbles on the table and exploring them in the air.

Arthur's Eyes by Marc Brown Arthur's Eyes is a tale about an aardvark named Arthur who gets his first pair of glasses. He's learning to be confident in wearing them, but gets lots of teasing from his classmates so he becomes embarrassed. He tries to hide his glasses, lose them, and almost breaks them. It takes the principal talking with Arthur to finally help him realize it's pretty cool to wear glasses in school. Arthur's friends agree,



especially Francine, who wears movie star glasses for the class photo. It all ends well! Some of our activities included making paper glasses, using magnifying glasses to examine tiny items in

a jar, practicing naming letters on an eye exam chart, and graphing everyone's eye color on a chart. In the kitchen, we cooked Arthur's favorite foods for breakfast: eggs, potatoes, turkey bacon, and cinnamon toast.

## Sleep is for Everyone



Paul Showers is the author and Wendy Watson illustrates the text. This “Let’s-Read-and-Find-Out Science” book begins with illustrations and text about animal’s and people’s sleep. Different people of different ages need different amounts of sleep. We have several families with newborns, and these friends recalled how much babies sleep at home. We learned how every part of our bodies need rest and that our brains needs to rest from thinking as well. The book ends with a lovely and calming description of one child’s routine and what it might feel like while falling asleep. The activities included sewing soft fleece pillows, creating dream catchers, doing a bedtime scavenger hunt, and playing the game “Don’t Wake Daddy”. In the kitchen the classes sampled foods to help you sleep. Warm honey milk, rice cakes, cheese, turkey and avocado are foods we tried because research suggests they work the best. We ended our month with the classic and Blue Ribbon award winning book by William Steig Doctor De Soto.





More Activities ...



# March Extended PM Newsletter



Carnegie Mellon University Children's School

## Exploring Healthy Mind and Body

Over the past four weeks, the Extended Afternoon Program explored the mind and body. We exercised with balancing and stretching our bodies, learned the importance of caring for our eyes, discussed how we can prevent germs from spreading, and emphasized the importance of sleep and what happens while you're resting.

The beginning of our unit, we read Those Mean Nasty Dirty Downright Disgusting but... Invisible Germs by



Judith Rice. Five-year-old Rosa discovers the most disgusting germ on her hand while painting at school. It's the kind of germ that can give you an earache. Rosa

encounters other equally disgusting germs at school but knows that, by washing her hands with lots of soap and water and by drying well, she can help get rid of the germs that make her sick. Our activities were enacting out the story, showing how visible germs spread (AKA glitter) practicing hand washing, playing the game "Cooties" and making homemade soap. We hope we carried fewer germs home as the friends enjoyed their soap when washing hands.

### Stretch by Doreen Cronin

Ready ...Set STRETCH! Can you stretch to the ceiling? Can you stretch to the floor? You can stretch with a whisper; you can stretch with a roar.

There's nothing like a good stretch before you jump or wiggle or bounce or run, and the ever-energetic team of Cronin and Scott Menchin shows kids how a good

stretch can be good fun. In Extended PM, we stretched on mats, used balance beams, played with hoops, and also with noodles. We stretched rubber bands on Geo-boards, made dough and stretched it into pretzels. We stretched silly putty, and enjoyed blowing bubbles on the table.

Arthur's Eyes by Marc Brown Arthur's Eyes is a tale about an aardvark named Arthur, who gets his first pair of glasses. He's learning to be confident in wearing them, but gets lots of teasing from his classmates so he becomes embarrassed. He tries to hide his glasses, lose them, and almost breaks them. It takes the principal talking with Arthur to finally help him realize it's pretty cool to wear glasses in school. Arthur's friends agree,



especially Francine who wears movie star glasses for the class photo. It all ends well! Some of our activities included making three -D glasses, using magnifying glasses to examine tiny items in

a jar, practicing naming letters on an eye exam chart, and graphing everyone's eye color on a chart. In the kitchen, we cooked Arthur's favorite foods for breakfast: eggs, potatoes, turkey bacon, and cinnamon toast.

## Sleep is for Everyone

Paul Showers is the author and Wendy Watson illustrates the text. This "Let's-Read-and-Find-Out" science book begins with illustrations and text about animals and people's sleep. Different people of different ages need different amounts of sleep. We have three families with younger siblings. Friends recalled how much more sleep they needed than their brothers and sisters. We learned how every part of our bodies need rest and that our brains needs to rest from thinking as well. The book ends with a lovely and calming description of one child's routine and what it might feel like while falling asleep. The activities included sewing soft fleece pillows, creating dream catchers, doing a bedtime scavenger hunt, and playing the game "Don't Wake Daddy". We also had the friends change into their pajamas and played several pillow games. In the kitchen, the friends sampled foods to help with sleep: warm honey milk, rice cakes, cheese, turkey and avocado. We end our month with the Blue Ribbon award winning book by William Steig entitled Doctor DeSoto.







## Family Festival Fitness Fun!

On Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, about 250 Children's School family members and friends participated in our **Healthy Mind and Body Family Festival**. Together we explored our senses, practiced choosing healthy foods in our pretend grocery store and on our own "My Plate" dishes in the Green Room Café, and then learned the proper ways to brush teeth and use floss to keep our teeth healthy. Though it was colder than the forecasters had predicted, many friends exercised their bodies on the playground obstacle course. We learned that fitness can be lots of fun!



## The Mind's Nutrition, Exercise & Rest

During our Whole School Unit, children and adults learned that we need to be just as intentional to nourish, exercise and rest our minds as we do with our bodies. During the Family Festival, we learned about the focusing and energizing power of yoga, challenged our minds with a variety of puzzles, made our own Zen gardens, and relaxed in the peaceful room with calming activities, stories, etc. Only some of us rested our minds by sleeping during the event, but we suspect that everyone was ready for bed by the time they got home from our healthy evening together!



Thanks to John from iSimon Photography for photographing the Family Festival. We hope you enjoyed the school photographs that he took recently as well.