

# May 2009

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
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| 31  |     |     |     |     |     |     |

5th Grade to Camp

Kindergarten Lunch

5th Grade Returns From Camp

Waiver Day—No School for Students

Kindergarten Round-Up 6:00 PM/Gym

4th Grade to Olympia

Memorial Day—No School

School BBQ\*

2nd Grade to Woodland Park Zoo

\*The BBQ will be outside, weather permitting. All visitors pay \$3.00 which will include milk or water. The menu will be: hamburger with condiments, baked beans, corn, macaroni salad, Caesar salad, watermelon and orange sherbet cups. Please join your student(s) for this fun event during their lunch time.

Terminal Park Elementary  
1101 D St SE  
Auburn, WA 98002

# THE EXPRESS



## DRESS CODE ANYONE?

I wrote an article last year about making uniforms mandatory for students at Terminal Park. This article resulted in a number of phone calls to the school and a lot of questions in the bus zone as parents picked up students. This article was written as a metaphor, emphasizing the need to cloak one's self with kindness. While I fully support and endorse the requirement of this type of school uniform, until this becomes the case, we do need to focus on the dress code that we do have established for the building.

With the weather getting warmer, it is a natural inclination to break out the summer wardrobe and pack away all of the sweaters, gloves, and hats. My wife and I have started the closet conversion ourselves. When doing so, we need to keep in mind that there are things that are okay to wear at home and on the beach that are not part of the dress code here at school.

At home, it is perfectly fine for me to wear my tank tops that swoop down to the waistline to show off my huge biceps and ripped abs, but that is not something that I would wear at school or would expect any of our students to wear either.

I am very concerned with even tanning and reducing the tan lines as much as possible, but the dress code at school prohibits the wearing of tank tops or dresses with shoulder straps that are less than two adult fingers wide (three student fingers). Again, even though I would like to show off my abs at school, bare midriff shirts are not appropriate for school.

And about shorts. Shorts are fine to wear to school. In fact, many of our students wear shorts year round. When the weather

warms, it is tempting to wear shorty-shorts, but again, this is not appropriate for school. The test for the length of shorts is to have the students hold their arms at their sides. If the shorts extend beyond the student's fingertips, they are good to go. If the shorts stop before the fingertips, the shorts should go and the student should find something else to wear.

Now for the most controversial topic: footwear. While some days, the weather may seem tropical, school is not the place for students to wear flip-flops. There are many reasons for this, safety being the primary. When students are engaged in physical activity on the playground or in gym, flip-flops become leave-behinds. Students are more subject to trips, cuts, and scrapes, not to mention the possibility of losing their flip-flops on the playground.

So, what do we do? The first thing is to check what your child is wearing each day and approve the outfit. If a student gets by your scrutiny, we do have some measures that we will take. If it is a shirt or strap issue, the student will be asked to wear a jacket over the top. If there is not a jacket available, we will provide a large t-shirt for the day. In the case of shorts that are too short, a warning will be given. A second offense will result in a call going home to request new clothes. The same would apply for the issue of shoes.

I hope this helps clarify any questions that come up regarding dress code. Enjoy the weather, but dress the students for school.

Mr. Carstens

## Primary Specialist ~ Gina Hamilton

### Curriculum News from Mrs. Hamilton's Class

As Primary Learning Specialist, one of the subjects I enjoy teaching is Health! As with reading and math, the content of my curriculum classes is based on the statewide standards (EALRs) (Essential Academic Learning Requirements) In health, the focus is on: nutrition; learning how to maintain a healthy lifestyle; analyzing the impact of real-life influences on health; and developing health and fitness plans.

As part of nutrition, we've studied the new and improved Food Pyramid which now includes an emphasis on exercise, as well as smart food choices for maintaining healthy body composition. Students learned about food groups and serving sizes and their impact on bodily function. We even created some healthy snack recipes which enabled the kids to try out their taste buds on some new food choices! To get some healthy eating tips and nutrition games, visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)!

To learn how to maintain healthy lifestyles, students recently studied the basic structure of body systems such as the circulatory, respiratory, and digestive systems. They know that heart rate and breathing is affected by different kinds of exercise and enjoyed finding out fun facts about the digestive system. Did you know that if stretched out, the entire digestive system would be more than 24 feet long? (And it works so much better if your food choices include fiber and lots of water!)

Earlier in the year, students learned about ways to control, reduce, and prevent diseases. We identified how germs are transmitted and how quickly they multiply. We practice effective hand washing with at least 20 seconds of soapy scrubbing before rinsing. We stressed that frequent use of tissues (instead of hands and fingers) will help reduce the risk of spreading cold and flu germs. New toothbrushes and flossers enabled students to attack germs that prevent tooth decay.

Some of the other primary health topics have been related to reducing health risks. This includes discussions about physical and personal safety, such as school bus, pedestrian, bicycle and seatbelt safety, dangerous strangers, and our current focus, drug prevention. Students are learning to identify drugs and how they affect your mind and body. They're learning that not all drugs are bad (vitamins, aspirin, etc.) but can be dangerous if taken incorrectly. And some drugs are candy look-alikes so kids shouldn't eat any candy that hasn't been checked out by an adult first!

Recently, we've been learning about nicotine and alcohol-related drugs and their dangerous effects on the human body, especially children. (I grew up with a parent that smokes so I have some personal experience with the subject matter!) Some current information from the American Lung Association website ([www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)) states that:

\*Smoking by parents is also associated with a wide range of adverse effects in their children, such as exacerbation of asthma, increased frequency of colds and ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome.

\*Secondhand smoke involuntarily inhaled by nonsmokers contains 69 carcinogens (as well as 4,800 other chemicals) which can cause cancer, heart disease, and death.

\*Nicotine is an addictive drug which makes smoking a difficult habit to break and often requires multiple attempts.

\*There are seven medications approved by the FDA to aid in quitting smoking, and are in the form of patches, gum, lozenges, nasal spray, and inhalers.

\*Cost-At \$5 per pack of cigarettes per day, smokers spend: \$35/week; \$150/month; \$1,825/year!

The final goal of the primary health program is to be able to effectively analyze health and safety information to develop a personal fitness plan. This is something kids practice every day through the health choices they make! Every day food choices and activity levels are a testament to what they are learning. When I see kids pick out "white milk" instead of chocolate milk or try a "no thank you bite" of a new food from the lunch line, I know they're practicing what they are learning! They love to tell me when they brush before school and that they go home and ride their bikes instead of watching TV!

So how can parents help their children be healthier? Talk about food groups and let your child take part in healthy meal planning and preparation. Reinforce safe consumption of vitamins and medicines. Watch for safety dangers around the home and community. Talk about stranger danger and have a secret password for only close friends and relatives to use when picking kids up from school or other places. Discuss the hazards of using drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes. Most importantly, encourage healthy habits just by being a positive role model of good health. Kids learn by observing those around them so remember, a picture is worth a thousand words!

## Counselor Corner ~ Heidi Erdmann & Julie Gragg

### SPRING TIME SAFETY

As we enjoy warmer spring weather, your children will be asking to play outside more. In May we will be going into some of the classrooms and talking with your children about how to stay safe, we also encourage you to have discussions with your children on safety. The following are important tips in keeping your children safe:

Make sure you know where your children are at all times. Know your children's friends and be clear with your children about places and homes they may visit. Make it a rule that your children check in with you when they arrive at or depart from a particular location and when there is a change in plans.

Never leave a child unattended in an automobile, whether it is running or not. Children should never be left unsupervised or allowed to spend time alone or with others in automobiles, as the potential dangers to their safety outweighs any perceived convenience or fun. Remind children to never hitchhike, approach a car or engage in conversation with anyone in a car that they do not know and trust, or go anywhere with anyone without getting your permission first.

Be involved in your children's activities. As an active participant you'll have a better opportunity to observe how the adults in charge interact with your children. If you are concerned about anyone's behavior, take it up with the sponsoring organization.

Listen to your children. Pay attention if they tell you that they don't want to be with someone or go somewhere. This may be an indication of more than a personality conflict or lack of interest in the activity or event.

Notice when someone shows one or all of your children a great deal of attention or begins giving them gifts. Take the time to talk with your children about the person and find out why the person is acting this way.

Teach your children that they have the right to say NO to any unwelcome, uncomfortable or confusing touch or actions of others. Teach them to tell you immediately if this happens. Reassure them that you're there to help and that it is okay to tell you anything.

Be sensitive to any changes in your children's behavior or attitude. Encourage open communication and learn how to be an active listener. Look and listen to small clues and cues that something may be troubling your child, because children are not always comfortable disclosing disturbing events or feelings. This may be that they are concerned about your reaction to their problem. If your children do disclose problems to you, strive to remain calm, noncritical and nonjudgmental. Listen compassionately to their concern and work with them to get the help they need to resolve the problem.

Be sure to screen babysitters and caregivers. Many states now have a public registry that allows parents to check out individuals for prior criminal records and sex offenses. Check out references from other families who have used the babysitter or caregiver. Once you have a chosen caregiver, drop in unexpectedly to see how your child is doing.

Practice basic safety skills with your children. Make an outing to the mall or the park a "teachable" experience in which your children can practice checking in with you, using pay telephones, going to the restroom with a friend, and locating adults that can help if they need assistance. Remember that allowing your child to wear clothing or carry items on which their name is displayed can bring about unwanted attention from inappropriate people who may be looking for a way to start a conversation with your children.

Remember that there is no substitute for your attention or supervision. Being available and taking time to really know and listen to your children helps build feelings of safety and security.

Provided courtesy of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Check out our re-designed school website at: [www.auburn.wednet.edu/termpark/](http://www.auburn.wednet.edu/termpark/)

## Reading Corner ~ John Harlor

### Reading Aloud to Build Comprehension

Children learn when they make connections between what they read and what they know. One method parents can use to help make these connections during shared reading time is called a *think aloud*. In other words, you talk through your thoughts as you read to them. Here are three ways to use *think alouds*, with examples from some of our favorite kids' books.

#### 1. Connect the book to your child's own life experience.

Example: *A River Dream* by Allen Say

"This book reminds me of the time my father took me fishing. Do you remember the time we went fishing?"

#### 2. Connect the book to other books your child has read.

Example: *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe

"This story reminds me of *Cinderella*. Both stories are about sisters. Do you know any other stories about sisters? Let's keep reading to find out other ways the stories are similar."

#### 3. Connect the book to big ideas/lessons.

Example: *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon

"This story helps me understand that we are all the same in many ways, but it's our differences that make us special."

In these examples, you are "thinking aloud" many of the connections that good readers make naturally as they read. Modeling these types of connections will help young readers know how to do it when they read alone.

Adapted from *Reading Aloud to Build Comprehension* by Judith Gold and Akimi Gibson (2001)

Please call the school office if your student is going to be absent: 253 931 4978