

Counselor Connection

By: Laura Jones

January/February 2008

Healthy Beginnings

As the New Year begins, many of us are thinking of ways of developing a healthier lifestyle. The Maryland State Department of Education, along with the First Lady of Maryland, Maryland PTA, and the Maryland Dietetic Association are encouraging families to Take 15 for the Health of It. It is an initiative aimed at helping families develop strategies for healthy living.

To find out more about this program, go to www.marylandpublicschools.org, click on Parents, and scroll down to Take 15 for the Health of It. Here you'll find information geared to parents and students of all ages. You can download fact sheets, calendars of daily healthy activities, and tips for parents on instilling healthy habits in their children.

Have a Happy and Healthy 2008!

Contact Information

Laura Jones
(240) 236-3508

E-Mail:
laura.v.jones@fcps.org

Note: Please make sure you include the ".v." in between the laura jones in order to send messages to me.

Visit us at:
<http://schools.fcps.org//kes>

Making and Keeping Friends

Friends and the ability to make friends is an important part of a child's development. Friendships are a natural, healthy part of life. Friends increase student's enjoyment of life and relieve feelings of loneliness. They even can help reduce stress and improve their health. Having good friends is especially helpful when students are going through a kind of hard time (i.e. experiencing anxiety, parents going through a separation or divorce, death of a pet or loved one.)

A good friend is someone who-

- you like, respect, and trust, and who likes, respects and trusts you
- accepts and likes you as you are
- listens & shares
- always plays fair
- apologizes for mistakes
- lets you express your feelings without judging, teasing or criticizing
- and cares!!



Be A Good Friend!!

Allow your child(ren) to choose their own friends, but remind them to choose their friends based on the qualities of a friend mentioned above. Help them expand their circle of friends by exposing them to many opportunities such as organized sports, youth groups, trips to the park or enrolling them in some sort of lesson or play group.

Kids CAN Make A Difference

In November, our students collected non-perishable food items that were donated to the St. Pete's Church food bank for those in need this winter season.

Our sock, underwear and pajama drive was a huge success! We collected a big box full of these items to donate to our local CASS coordinator who included them in with the holiday gifts that were purchased to those families in need from our community.

Also, our Peer Mentors made holiday ornaments and donated them to the elderly that reside in a nursing home.

Classroom Guidance

January began with lessons in first grade. Students described the wonderful, unique qualities that they have with their classmates. They made a very special flower that included all the things that they like. By the end of the lesson, first graders understood and appreciated the differences in each other.

Kindergarteners are working on respecting each others "personal space", which is defined as the amount of space that you need to feel comfortable. We used hula hoops and games to practice being respectful of one's personal space. We have also been working on using "I" messages to communicate are wants and feeling with one another. I feel _____ when _____. I want _____. Students recognize their feelings in a given situation and state their "wish" (or wants) for making this situation better.



Counselors Care

In February, classroom guidance lessons will be provided to fifth grade students who will learn and practice conflict resolution skills. Students will learn the steps for solving problems (STOP-stop, think, options, pick) and will develop strategies for resolving those conflicts peacefully.

Learning Lunches

Our Learning Lunch program, which is designed to share the career, hobby or talent of a community member with our fifth grade students, is going very well. The speakers have been very knowledgeable as well as entertaining, and the students really seem to be enjoying themselves.

A special thank you to Linda Knisewski who visited our school on January 16th to share her career as an artist with our students.

On February 27th, Olga Marchetti will discuss here career as an interior designer with our fifth graders.

"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are."

-Anais Nin

We still need a speakers for March, April and May, so if you are interested in sharing your career, talent or hobby, please call Laura Jones at (240) 236-3508 and I can schedule you as a speaker!

Parent Lending Library

Thanks to the generosity of the PTA, I was able to purchase several parenting books on a variety of topics that are housed in the Guidance Office. Some of the book titles are: Helping Your Angry Child, Helping Your Anxious Child, Girl Wars: 12 Strategies That Will End Female Bullying, Queen Bees & Wannabes, Good Kids, Difficult Behavior, The Good Kid Book, Discipline That Works, Positive Discipline A-Z, Good Friends Are Hard to Find, and Fab Friends and Best Buds. If you are interested in reading any of these books or any in the Guidance Library, please let me know. You can either come in and check books out or contact me and I will send them home with your child. After you are finished reading the book(s), please return them so that I can make them available for other parents. Also, if you know of a book that has been a good resource for you and your family, please let me know so that I can purchase it and add it to our KES Parents Lending Library.



National School Counseling Week February 4-8, 2008

This special week honoring school counselors provides recognition for school counselors who implement comprehensive school counseling programs, a vital part of the educational process for all students as they meet the challenge of the 21st century.

During National School Counseling Week, we will be hosting a number of great activities for our students. We would hope that you will encourage your child(ren) to participate in all the activities during this week that reflect our theme for this year, *School Counselor: Creating Pathways to Success*.



School Counselors:
Creating Pathways to Success

The following is a list of the activities scheduled for each day:

Mon., Feb. 4-Polished Stones: Students will receive a polished "stepping" stone that will serve as a reminder of how school counselors help "create pathways to success."

Tues., Feb. 5-Poster Display: Students are encouraged to make posters depicting "School Counselors: Creating Pathways to Success." All student who complete a poster will be entered into a random drawing for a special lunch with Mrs. Jones.

Wed., Feb. 6-"Creating Pathways to Success": Students are encouraged to write how a staff member has helped them to be successful on a paper footprint. (Ex. Mr. Parsons for...)

Thurs., Feb. 7-Compasses: Students will receive a small compasses that will help guide them on their "pathway to success."

Fri., Feb. 8-College/Career Wear: Students are invited to wear their parent's college sweatshirts, t-shirts, hats etc. or dress in the career attire "that they wish to become as adults." Our goal is to help students make the connection from school-to-careers.

We know that with your continual support, National School Counseling Week will be a huge success.

International Festival

On Thursday, March 27, 2007 from 6-8 p.m., Kemptown will host an International Festival.

During this evening event, we will be celebrating different cultural heritages. This is a great opportunity for families to present our students with dress, desserts, artifacts, books, videos, crafts, children's games, jewelry, etc. depicting a particular culture. Students will be given "passports" which will get stamped as they visit each cultural station. Having completed their "cultural tour", students can turn in their passports for a free gift.

There will also be several multicultural performances throughout the evening.

If you have a culture or heritage that you would like to showcase in our festival, please call Laura Jones at (240) 236-3508 by Friday, March 7, 2008.

"Caught Ya" Program at KES

Our staff has been busy given out "Caught Ya" certificates to students that are caught displaying the "Fish Philosophy" (Choose Your Attitude, Play, Be There, Make Their Day). The right side of the certificate comes home so parents can praise them for "Being a Good Fish", and the other side is sent to the office to be placed in the "Caught Ya" boxes. I will randomly select several names for each box (K-2 and 3-5) on Fridays, so that those students can be recognized on morning announcements. I will keep all certificates so that they can be entered in the end of the year final drawing.

We encourage you to continue modeling the "Fish Philosophy" at home, too.

Tour KES with Our Peer Mentors

Our 5th grade Peer Mentors have been trained to take prospective Kemptown families on a tour of Kemptown Elementary. The following is a list of dates and times for our school tours:

February 8	10 a.m.	February 29	10 a.m.
March 7	10 a.m.	March 28	10 a.m.
April 3	10 a.m.	April 17	10 a.m.
May 9	10 a.m.	May 23	10 a.m.

***Please have families call Laura Jones at (240) 236-3508 to make a reservation for a tour on one of the dates and times listed above. Thanks!!

Meet Meredith Carr, Counseling Intern

Ms Carr was born and raised in Carroll County, Maryland. She graduated from South Carroll High School in 2001. Following high school, she attended Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science with minors in Education and French. While at Susquehanna, she played on the Women's Tennis team and studied abroad in France. Shortly after graduating college, Ms. Carr began her career in education. She has been teaching Special Education at Urbana High School since 2005, and truly enjoys working with this population of students. Concluding a Masters of Science degree in School Counseling from McDaniel College, has brought her to Kemptown where she is completing her internship experience. She is thrilled to be working with such enthusiastic students in a community that she has grown to love.

Ms. Carr will be working with our students on Thursdays and Fridays from 1-3:30 pm throughout the remaining of the school year.

Please help me welcome Ms. Carr to Kemptown!!!!

Urbana Feeder Pattern Workshop

On Wednesday, March 12, 2008 at 6:45 pm at Centerville Elementary, we will be hosting a parent workshop on "Anger Management: Helping Children and Adolescents Who Get Too Angry Too Often."

This feeder workshop is presented by Dr. William R. Stixrud, a clinical neuropsychologist and director of the William Stixrud and Associates in Silver Spring, MD, will begin with a brief introduction to the physiology of anger. It then turns to an exploration of the relationship between stress, inflexibility, and anger and to the question of why some children and teens are more easily angered than others. This is followed by a brief discussion of the clinical assessment of anger and the childhood disorders that are associated with inflexibility and frequent anger. The presentation then introduces the idea that inflexibility and anger reflect deficits in skill acquisition (rather than motivation). Ways of helping angry youngsters through modeling and empathy are then explored. Finally, suggestions are offered for creating prevention-oriented home and classroom environments, for handling angry outbursts at home and in the classroom, and for teaching anger management strategies for children and adolescents.

RSVPs are preferred, but not required. Please contact Laura Jones at (240) 236-3508 to RSVP or if you have any questions about the workshop.