

SYCAMORE RIDGE

Round-Up

April 2009

Vol. 4, Issue 4

Principal's Message



Sycamore Ridge is blooming with a sense of community, enrichment, accomplishments, learning and well-being!

What a tremendous success our 4th annual Jog-A-Thon event was! I was so proud to watch our entire Stallion student body having fun and exercising while supporting our school programs for next year. Our students and teachers ran over 7,500 laps! Many, many thanks to the Jog-A-Thon committee spearheaded by Nelar Wine, Carol Greenwald, and Toni Fisher and a special thanks to the entire committee of volunteers, and all of our parents who helped to make the morning so successful, safe, and fun.

Our students are excited about the upcoming programs scheduled for the remainder of March and April: Our Willy Wonka musical performance, Family Science Night, and Earth Week activities organized by our Student Council to name a few. I am particularly looking forward to our Movie Night sponsored by the PTA Dads' Club.

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A Note from the PTA President



Let me start off by saying THANK YOU to everyone who helped to make this year's Jog-A-Thon our best ever! From the student's seemingly endless energy in running all of those laps to your generous pledges to the amazing volunteer support and our committee's execution of the event, they all combined to make the Jog-A-Thon a huge success. As a school, the students and

staff ran over 7,500 laps! That works out to be about 17 laps per student. Terrific effort by everyone! The Jog-A-Thon raised about \$14,000 in pledges, almost double what we have raised in prior years. Thank you to everyone who pledged to contribute to the Jog-A-Thon. Your support will go directly to support our ESC programs at Sycamore Ridge next year. Just a reminder, pledges are due back to the school by **April 1st**. I would also like to thank all who volunteered to help during the Jog-A-Thon and afterward to help clean up and tally laps. Your help made everything run smoothly and the students have so much fun with the parent volunteers! A special thank you is extended to Nelar Wine, Carol Greenwald and Toni Fisher. Without them and their dedication to this event and our school, the Jog-A-Thon would not have been possible. Thank you!

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A Note from Student Council

Recycling Drive &
Earth Week

Important Upcoming Dates
and much more!

Happy Spring Break!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL

3rd
Coffee w/ Principal/
Emergency PTA General
Association Meeting
8:15am (staff lounge)

School Tour for Parents of 2009-2010
New Incoming Students
10:30am (school office)

Spirit Day– Earth Day

4th-10th
SPRING BREAK
NO SCHOOL

14th
3rd Grade Field Trip to
San Dieguito Lagoon
8:10am-10:05am

16th
Dad's Movie Night– WALL-E
5:30-7:30pm (MUR)

17th
I Love a Clean San Diego
Assembly for students

20th
Earth Week Recycling Drive

24th
PTA General Association
Meeting/ Elections
8:10am (MUR)

"Sounds A Little Fishy To Me"
1st Grade Musical
8:30am (MUR)

MAY

1st
Spirit Day– Career Day

1st Grade Field Trip to
Legoland Aquarium
9:30am-1:30pm

4th-12th
STAR Testing (2nd-6th graders)

14th
School Tour for Parents of 2009-2010
Incoming New Students
10:30am (school office)

15th
6th Grade Panorama Picture Day

21st
Sycamore Ridge PTA Presents:
"The Lost Art of Manners: How to
Raise Kind and Compassionate Kids"
talk by Dr. Dana Fillmore
6-8pm (MUR)
*Free childcare available
(18 months old and older)

22nd
"E-I-E-I-OOPS"
Kindergarten Musical
8:30am (MUR)

25th
Memorial Day Observed
No School

28th
Open House

JUNE

1st
5th Grade Field Trip to Biztown
8:15am-2:00pm

2nd
Dad's Lunch
(meet in lunch shelter)
11:30am-12:15pm

5th
Spirit Day– Dad's Tie & Sock Day

Wednesday, 10th
Full Day of Instruction
12:40pm Kindergarten dismissal
2:30pm 1st-6th grade dismissal

Thursday, 11th
Last Day of School
12:30pm dismissal ALL GRADES



A NOTE FROM THE FRONT OFFICE



Please, Please, Please **BE ON TIME** to school. Children enter classrooms and start the day at 8:00 am. It is essential that children arrive on time in order to receive important directions for morning activities. This sets a good tone for the day.

Having children enter on time prevents interruptions, which are also disruptive to other students. Punctuality and regular attendance are good habits for children to develop. Thank you for your cooperation.



CONGRATULATIONS! Sycamore Stallion Superstars!

The following students were chosen by their teachers as Sycamore Stallion Superstars as persons of excellent character. The Superstars were recognized at the Villages Assembly on Wednesday, March 25, 2009.

Kindergarten

Mrs. Jones:

Mrs. Litt:

Mrs. Rinaldi-Williams:

Ms. Wojtkowski:

First Grade

Ms. Matthews:

Ms. Saunders:

Ms. Waxman:

Second Grade

Mrs. Schengel/Ms. Dunston

Mrs. Shea:

Second/Third Grade

Ms. Sullivan:

Brian H.

Kylin T.

Michael K.

Jasmine D.

Arely M.

Julia D.

Thomas A.

Brandon K.

Katie H.

Zane A.

Third Grade

Mrs. Hanna:

Ms. Hasler:

Mrs. Johnson:

Fourth Grade

Mrs. Chung/Mrs. Daniels

Ms. Howard:

Ms. Money:

Fifth Grade

Mrs. Mackie:

Ms. Stanton:

Sixth Grade

Mrs. Mokiao:

Mr. Dahl/ Mrs. Solowczuk:

Brent B.

Justine K.

Alyssa R.

Alyxandra C.

Michelle H.

Aaron T.

Tegan A.

Jason H.

Rustam K.

Vyanna M.

Congratulations to these students!

First Grade Article: Read Across America

"The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." Dr. Seuss

Oh the wisdom of Dr. Seuss! He once said that he loved nonsense because it "wakes up the brain cells." The first graders celebrated Dr. Seuss' wonderful brand of nonsense and fun during the week of his birthday in March. The entire student body was invited to wear pajamas to school and many of our first graders participated. All three first grade classes shared Dr. Seuss books, engaged in writing about Dr. Seuss, and had the opportunity to create art inspired by his imaginative illustrations.

Students enjoyed a variety of reading experiences during the day including whole class read alouds, buddy reading, and independent reading. The ongoing study of the English sound / spelling patterns through "The Secret Stories" could be observed as students located those tricky English spelling patterns imbedded in some of Dr. Seuss' invented words. The mastery students have gained in the first half of first grade was evident as they decoded words like "opener, footsy, and Hakken-Kraks". In addition to decoding, we practiced our comprehension skills as Dr. Seuss stories were discussed from the silliness of The Cat in the Hat, to the persistent request to try new things in Green Eggs and Ham, to the idea that all are equal in The Sneetches, to the plea to be kind to our environment in the all too realistic depiction of human's role in the degradation of our natural resources in The Lorax. Other authors' works were also celebrated as we all continued to grow our love of reading.



**SYCAMORE RIDGE PTA
Proposed Executive Board for 2000-2010 school year**

President	Shannon Cary
Executive Vice President	Christy Mohler
First VP, Chairman Of Programs	OPEN
Second VP, Chairman of Communications	Branden Belford
Third VP, Chairman of Health & Safety	OPEN
Fourth VP, Chairman of Ways and Means	Miranda Giurgiu
Secretary	Raquel Dixon
Treasurer	Maia Starling
Financial Secretary	Debbie Romine
Auditor	Marilee Brusaschetti
Historian	OPEN

All PTA members, please join us for a general association meeting to elect next year's PTA officers on April 24th at 8:05am in the MUR.

We are also looking for committee chairs for the following positions:

- Volunteer Coordination
- Stallion Stampede (we are looking for a Co-Chair)
- Reflections
- Red Ribbon Week
- Ridge Raising (Chair or Co-Chairs)
- School Scrapbook
- School Photographers
- Year in DVD

If you are interested in any of the open positions or helping plan any of the activities next year, please contact Carrie White at cnydahl@san.rr.com.

GET INVOLVED.



Please join us for
"Coffee with the Principal" and
an Emergency PTA General Association Meeting
Friday, April 3rd
8:15 am in the staff lounge

Ms. Disney will give an ESC fundraising update. The General Association will be asked to vote on a donation to support the ESC programs.

Sponsored by the Sycamore Ridge PTA



The Lost Art of Manners: How to Raise Kind and Compassionate Kids

The Sycamore Ridge PTA is proud to sponsor a talk on "The Lost Art of Manners: How to Raise Kind and Compassionate Kids" by local Psychologist, Dana Fillmore.

Dr. Fillmore has over ten years of experience working extensively with children, adolescents and couples. Her practice helps families deal with many challenging issues including Behavioral Problems, Family Conflict, School Problems, ADHD, Depression and Anxiety. Dr. Fillmore also works with individuals and couples exploring ways to enhance and improve relationship skills and, therefore, improve the entire family connection.

The evening will include a question and answer portion and all who attend the talk will receive a free ½ hour phone consultation. The talk will be held on Thursday, May 21, 2009 from 6-8pm in the MUR. Childcare for children 18 months and older will be provided at no cost. For more information, please contact Carrie White: cnydahl@san.rr.com or 619-971-1541.

BARNES NOBLE
www.bn.com



The Family Restaurant Night at Red Robin and the Book Fair at Barnes & Noble were a huge success! Red Robin was full of Sycamore Ridge families and brought in about \$400! The Book Fair brought in about \$300 in proceeds. Thank you to all who attended! It was so wonderful to see all the families!

A very special thank you to our teachers for volunteering to read at the Book Fair! Thank you to: Mrs. Shea, Ms. VanDewegh, Mrs. Wojtkowski, Ms. Howard, Ms. Daniels and Ms. Disney! The children loved this very special storytime!



Extended Studies News

Technology

Mrs. Jennifer Oliveira



In the Technology Lab...

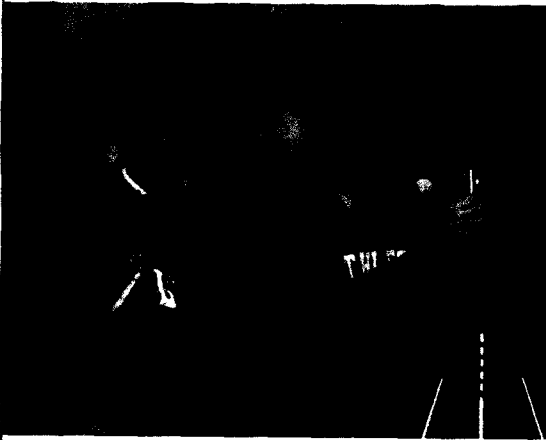
COLLABORATION is the name of the game in the tech lab these days! For many grade levels, I have been collaborating with our Music and Science teachers to create integrated activities for our students.

Kindergarten- Teachers and students are getting ready to create a video about Community Workers. What do you want to be when you grow up?

First Grade- Students are writing and drawing as they learn about animal classification and lifecycles.

Second Grade- Animal reports, here we come! Type, type, type!

Third Grade- Students are getting ready to create videos about the Moon and Earth. Using props they cut from paper and student written scripts, students will explain important parts of the relationship between the Moon and Earth.



Fourth Grade- Students are creating quizzes about the Rock Cycle in Power Point with Action Buttons!

Fifth Grade- Using the History Alive textbooks and other resources, students are creating a Radio News Show to give information about a colonial event. After the radio show is produced, students will burn a CD with a commercial they created about explorers.

Sixth Grade- Along with classroom teachers and Ms. Dumoff, our Science teacher, students are creating an educational music video, game show, or other video format, about Biomes. Filming started and soon students will be editing their collaborative efforts in iMovie. Ms. Dumoff will be having a viewing for all 6th grade students at the end of the project.

Physical Education

Coach John Sink



We are breaking into spring with new, fun, and exciting activities for the students at Sycamore Ridge. Students in all grades are continuing to enjoy organized recess games. Grades 4-6 have even been competing in a Hustle Ball Tournament. It is amazing to see so many students involved; over twenty teams signed up for the tournament! It's also a thrill to see the choreographed cheers from our many cheerleaders showing up to show their support for their favorite team. The soon to be winners of the tournament will have the opportunity to compete against some lucky teachers at Sycamore Ridge. Stay tuned for the

showdown.

Kindergarten through First grade are continuing to work on their locomotor movements and they are now being introduced to more complex activities like beanbag yoga. Grades 2-6 are completing a frisbee unit with the upper grades having the opportunity to participate in ultimate frisbee and frisbee golf. Fifth grade is also preparing for their fitness testing which consists of a test of cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, muscular strength and endurance. More and more students are continuing to receive the PE All-star award for their great behavior and performance in class. Students over the past few months have received this award for their leadership ability, sportsmanship and kind words.

I'd like to congratulate all the students for their participation in the Jog-A-Thon. They ran close to 7,500 laps. What a huge accomplishment!

For more information, including the upcoming Carlsbad Jr. running event, go to coachsink.com

Science

Miss Kelsey Dumoff



Why do bananas look yellow? The 3rd graders can tell you because they just finished up their unit on "light"! They had an opportunity to learn about the parts of our eye and how those parts work together to help us see objects. The students also had fun looking at objects through different color lenses and discussing which colors were being absorbed and reflected.

This month the 3rd graders are starting a unit on matter. Last week, they observed various types of matter and were asked to sort them into solids, liquids and gases. Next, they will be learning how all matter has mass. Using the balances, the students will compare the mass of various pieces of matter.

Other Science News:

The 5th graders are participating in Mad Science this month.

Our Learning Garden is blooming!

Congratulations to those students who participated in the District Invention Showcase on March 4th! What talented inventors Sycamore Ridge has!



3rd graders sort matter into solids, liquids and gases.



5th graders study volcanoes during a Mad Science presentation

Art

Miss Jenny Luce



Art is all around us! We should take the time this month to be thankful for our wonderful teachers and programs that we have at Del Mar. The students of Sycamore Ridge are the best and most creative! So look around you at the school and take notice of all the fabulous art and music being created, from Willie Wonka to sixth grade artist place settings. Art and music are a huge part of each student's life here at Sycamore Ridge.

Fifth graders just finished their sea creature clay bowls and sculptures. They are so colorful and whimsical. The fourth graders have been working hard on their fourth grade art standard of weaving, so if they mumble "over, under" in their sleep you know why! The third graders painted watercolor birch trees and now they are working on realistic animal face drawings. Printing has been a theme for our second graders. They are currently building and printing cities after they painted their own weather patterns for their backgrounds. First graders' Matisse like flowers paintings are up in the office for all to see. Kindergarteners are starting their barn animal unit so we have been hearing animal noises coming out of my classroom! Yes, if you are drawing a pig it is hard not to oink!!

Library News

Mrs. Kathy Pechtimaldjian



Catch the Reading Bug is in full swing and going strong. I am thrilled and amazed at the students' enthusiasm and participation level. We have many students on their second or third passports. It's great to see them searching for books in different genres to complete their passports. The kids love watching the classroom graphs that track the number of books read as they go up each week. We also have been playing during library time as well as doing take home activities. Many students have made some fantastic bugs that are displayed in the library. Please stop by sometime and check them out.

I want to thank everyone who has donated items for our prize box, especially Mrs. Ross (Chloe's mom, 3rd grade), for asking Target to donate eight \$10 gift card to our program – thank you Target as well. Also, thank you to the Romine family and the Starling family for donating gift cards.

Congratulations to all of our prize winners. Remember, the reading program ends April 3rd, so be sure to turn in your passport by then. Thank you parents for encouraging and supporting your children!

And now for some exciting news! I have the pleasure of telling you about a recent donation to our school. The Russo family (Bella, Ms. Waxman's 1st grade class) has given us a SIGNED copy of *One Fish, Two Fish* by Dr. Seuss. We are so excited and honored to receive this generous gift. Dr. Russo wanted the book to be shared with all the students of Sycamore Ridge so we are going to display the book in one of our glass cases year-round, and in March, when we celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday, each class will be treated to a special reading of this book. A special thank to the Russo family for this timeless treasure.

We recently received a new order of books that I have been eagerly going through and getting ready to share with the students. Please stop by any time to check out our new titles. I will be placing at least one more order of books before the year is out. This is possible because of your support of our library fundraisers -- the book fair and the Stallion Birthday Book Club, so thank you!

We will also have one more fundraiser in May -- the Used Book Sale. After realizing how popular this event is, I would like to start taking donations of gently used books now. Adult books are also welcome, but please no text books. One change I would like to make this year is to give the students who donate books a coupon to get a free book from the sale. So be sure to include your name and your children's names with your donated books. Anyone who is interested in volunteering to help with the Used Book Sale, please contact me as soon as possible.

Thank you everyone and have a joyful Spring Break!





Music

Miss Stephanie Lomax

The music room is sure buzzing with all kinds of fun stuff. We recently completed our HUGE musical "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" on March 27th. It was a great show and the kids did a fantastic job. See the article written by Sierra Campisano, the student director for the play.

The Kindergarten and First graders are working on their spring shows, "E-I-E-I- Oops" and "Sounds A Little Fishy To Me" respectively. These shows are done in conjunction with their California state standards for their grade level. The Kindergarten show will be presented on Friday, May 22nd at 8:30 in the morning for parents, and the First grade show will be presented for parents on Friday, April 24, also at 8:30 am! Please look for more information in your student's Wednesday folder.

The 2nd, 5th and 6th graders have been working on their level of comprehension with musical forms. The 2nd graders are working on ABA form and rhyming words. They are creating their own simple song to perform for the class. This teaches the student the basic structure of a song and how to put words with the correct beats and melody. I can't wait to hear their creations. The 4th and 5th graders are working on more structure and creative lyrics. We have been using the basic blues style of form, AAB, and the students are working in song writing teams to create their very own blues song. After they write the lyrics, we will record them over blues instruments they have selected by using the computer software "garage band". Each class will write, record, and produce their very own blues CD, with cover art. I'm sure you will want to highlight this music at your next dinner party!

The 3rd grade has been spending some time with their heads in space! We have been learning "The Planets" a symphony by Gustav Holst. They have been learning how a song can have a "character" even if there are no speaking parts or lyrics. They have also been comparing and contrasting each planet's character.

Finally, the 4th grade has been working hard on reading notes and time signatures. After spring break, we will start our very exciting RECORDER unit. Please check their Wednesday folders for more information regarding the recorder unit.

DEL MAR SCHOOLS EDUCATION FOUNDATION (DMSEF) UPDATE

As many of you may be aware, the Del Mar Union School District is facing a \$1.8 million operating deficit for the 2009-2010 school year. As a result, our beloved ESC programs are in danger of being reduced by half for next year. The DMSEF and concerned Sycamore Ridge parents have been actively spreading the word to the Sycamore Ridge community that we CAN make a difference and prevent this from happening. We can save our ESC programs for 2009-2010 through donations to the DMSEF. The fabulous news is that Sycamore Ridge has been listening!!!!

At the beginning of March, fliers were sent home & a phone-a-thon was held letting people know that we were \$70,000 short of our fundraising goal. In just 2 weeks, through our general appeal and tile wall campaign, we have raised \$19,500 toward this goal!!! As of March 20th we need to raise an additional \$50,500 in order to keep our ESC programming at the same level that it is this school year.

The DMSEF is extremely grateful to the Sycamore Ridge PTA and the Jog-A-Thon committee for agreeing to have this year's Jog-A-Thon proceeds go directly to this campaign to save our ESC programming. The \$14,000 pledged by our generous Sycamore Ridge families and friends will help reduce our fundraising goal even further to approximately \$36,500. We are off to a great start, but there is more work to be done. If you have not yet donated to the DMSEF, please consider doing so. Any amount will help make a difference. Have you checked to see if your employer matches donations? Our deadline is fast approaching. We have until April 15th to fundraise specifically for Sycamore Ridge School. When you are donating, please remember to designate Sycamore Ridge as the recipient of your donation. We are now only \$90 per student short of our goal!! We can do it!!

Thank you for your support.
Lisa Granet and Branden Belford
Your Sycamore Ridge DMSEF representatives

Please visit www.dmsef.org for more information or to make on-line donations.

Principal's Message
(Continued from page 1)

I am so pleased to celebrate the enriched learning opportunities and events offered at Sycamore Ridge. I'd like to thank our families once again for their fabulous support of our enrichment programs. Your donations to the Del Mar School Education Foundation are helping to bring back our wonderful ESC programs. The final deadline the Foundation and Board of Trustees has placed on directed giving for next year's programs is April 15, 2009. The recent Jog-A-Thon, tile campaign and spring appeal should help us reach our goal of 100% participation to secure funding for Music, Science, Technology, Art and PE. We have been so fortunate to have such outstanding teachers to provide extended learning experiences to our children that support California state grade level and interdisciplinary standards. Please enjoy reading in this issue about some of the many wonderful events happening at our school that foster the development of the whole child.

Students have enjoyed the varied offerings for alternative lunchtime activities through Sycamore Ridge Lunch Clubs! Current club offerings include Library Club, Stallion Theater, Zoo Crew, Garden Club, Arts and Crafts Club and, of course, Stallion Sprinters. I'd like to thank the ESC Specialists, support staff and parents involved in our Lunch Club programs for their gift of time and talent. A special thank you to Technology Goddess and ESC Coordinator Jen Oliveira for her work with our Student Council during the lunchtime recesses.

Star Testing is right around the corner! The Standardized Testing window for all second through sixth graders is May 4 through May 12. Confident, prepared, relaxed and well-rested students are key to a successful testing experience.

The information we receive from testing helps our school:

- Evaluate programs
- Report on a student's progress
- Diagnose a student's strengths and weaknesses
- Help identify a student's aptitudes
- Design instructional programs and practices to meet individual needs

Testing can help you as a parent:

- See how your child's achievement compares with other students locally and nationwide
- Learn more about your child's aptitudes in various areas

It is important to remember ~ Test results can tell us a lot, but no important decision should ever be based on the results of one single test. To accurately evaluate a student, your observations as a parent should be combined with those of teachers, other staff, daily work, and your child's opinions.

Please be sure to check our website regularly for important dates, activities and highlights. As we get closer to the end of this school year and look forward to the many end of the year activities, I am so proud of the work we have accomplished as a "Village". Thank you, parents, for your support and partnership in the education of your child.

I am looking forward to a tremendously positive last trimester of our fourth school year! As always, my door is open to your thoughts, suggestions and solutions.

Warmest Wishes for a Happy Spring!

Emily Disney



The Willy Wonka School Play

Willy Wonka is the first school play for Sycamore Ridge, and the cast is happy to be part of it. Ever since September, the upper-graders (fourth, fifth, and sixth graders) have been spending their recesses and working their minds away trying to make The Willy Wonka Jr. Play the best play possible!

In September, auditions took place. Almost every girl tried out for Veruca Salt! The actress who got the role (Sydney Sarokin) was very happy when she found out she got the role. Willy Wonka and Charlie Bucket were the most popular role for the boys trying out. Keaton Blazer and Sean Hampton were very happy to find out that they got the role.

The play took place on March 25, and 27. The cast and crew have put so much hard work in the play, and were so happy that it was a success.

Miss Lomax and I (the two directors) have put our minds and hearts into this play. Miss Lomax has been burning CDs, giving out scripts, making sure everybody knows what they should be doing, and making sure everything is SUPER organized.

I have been working hard and enjoying the play, and will be sad when it is over.

Special thanks to Miss Stephanie Lomax, Sean Hampton (Mister Willy Wonka), Keaton Blazer (Charlie Bucket) and the rest of the Golden Ticket Winners and accompanists.

I have enjoyed being the Student Director of this play, and I am SOOOO glad that the play was a success!

Written by Sierra Campisano, fifth grader, and Student Director





**ONE EARTH
RECYCLING**

&



Kids Korps USA
Developing leaders
through youth
volunteering

Recycle and Raise Money for Sycamore Ridge!

One Earth Recycling and Sycamore Ridge Kids Korps chapter are teaming up to raise awareness in our community to recycle and raise money for our school. In the April 1st Wednesday folder you will receive a bag to help you get started collecting recyclables. Options for turning your recyclables into cash for our school are listed below:

1-Fill the bag (and more if you can!) and bring it back to school the week of April 20th-April 24th. Volunteers will be in the front of school from 7:45am -8:00am collecting the recyclables.

2-Fill the bag (and more if you can!) with recyclable glass, plastics, and aluminum cans. Bring it to the ONE EARTH RECYCLING located in the Torrey Hills shopping center at 4627 Carmel Mountain Rd. The ONE EARTH RECYCLING Kiosk has a spacious, clean sorting area with employees on hand to assist you with the sorting process. Or you can sort them before you drop them off according to the categories below. Be sure to mention that the proceeds go to Sycamore Ridge School.

Acceptable Recyclables and Categories

Plastic bottles with recycle triangle 1



Plastic bottles with recycle triangle 2



Glass Bottles
Aluminum cans

Redemption value: Aluminum cans, \$1.60 lb; plastic #1, \$.96 lb; plastic #2, \$.54 lb; glass, \$.105 lb. One Earth Recycling will send a detailed transaction receipt along with a check to the school as soon as materials are received, processed and weighed.

*Co-Sponsored by the Sycamore Ridge PTA.

President's Message
(Continued from page 1)

The PTA is currently looking for people to help fill our Executive Board positions as well as various chair positions. Elections are in April and we need your help! Without you, the PTA won't be able to offer all of its wonderful programs. I know that it might seem overwhelming to step up and volunteer for a PTA board or chair position, but it is truly a worthwhile investment of your time. Your commitment can be as big or as small as your time allows. There is information to help guide you through the planning processes and people available to answer questions as well as help you out when needed. Also, many of the program chairs have already been secured so for the board positions, we are looking for people to work with the program chairs to help execute the particular program or event. New people bring fresh energy and ideas to our organization and help it to evolve and get better. And it is a great opportunity to put your skills and hobbies to use for a good cause – for your child and all children in the community. Our nominating committee is working hard at trying to find interested and willing people but they might not know you are out there! So, please, don't wait to be personally asked to step up. If you would like to become more involved in our wonderful school, please contact me – shancary@gmail.com or 858-481-5489 or Carrie Nydahl, our nominating committee chair at cnydahl@san.rr.com. The following positions are open:

- First VP Chairman of Programs (includes Stallion Stampede, 6th Grade Promotion, Boo Hoo Breakfast, Reflections, Everyone A Reader, Study Buddies and Assemblies)
- Third VP Chairman of Health and Safety (oversees Walk to School Day, Red Ribbon Week, Jog-A-Thon, Be True to Your School and Dad's club)
- Historian (has Yearbook, School Scrapbook, School Photographer, Year in DVD)

And the following committee chairs:

- Volunteer Coordination
- Stallion Stampede (we are looking for a Co-Chair)
- Reflections
- Red Ribbon Week
- Ridge Raising
- School Scrapbook
- School Photographers
- Year in DVD

I wanted to let you all know about some exciting news. The Del Mar Union School District is going to be launching its OWN monthly newspaper, beginning April 15th called "School News Roll Call". It will be an excellent way to improve communications throughout the school district and to provide positive coverage of the exciting and wonderful things that are happening at each school. The paper will be distributed monthly to over 7,500 families with children in the Carmel Valley and Del Mar communities, which together comprise the boundaries of the Del Mar Union School District. "School News Roll Call" will also be distributed monthly to every teacher and administrator in the district. In addition to being a great communication tool for the district, it is a fantastic venue in which to advertise your business. If you are interested in advertising, please contact Kerry Traylor, Del Mar Hills PTA President at: kerry@schoolnewsrollcall.com or by phone at 858-232-7420.

I also wanted to let you know that the 2nd interim District Financial Report is now available for your review on the district website at www.dmusd.org. On the left hand side, click on the Business Services link and it will take you to a link to the report. There is some good information about the School District's budget and what we are looking at for the next 3 years.

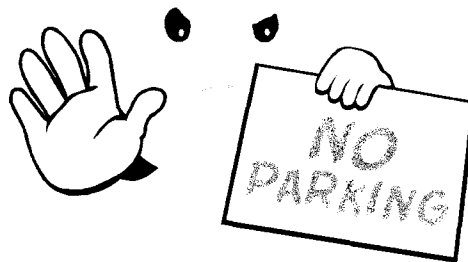
Coming up on Friday, April 3rd, we are planning another Coffee with the Principal at 8:15am and emergency PTA General Association meeting. Ms. Disney will update us on the state of the district and the PTA general association meeting will include voting on donating an additional sum of money to the Del Mar Schools Education Foundation to support our Extended Studies Curriculum next school year. Please join us!

Also this month, we are looking forward to the Dad's Club Movie Night on Thursday, April 16th at 5:30pm in the MUR. The Sycamore Ridge Student Council selected the movie "Wall-E" to be shown, a great lead-in to Earth Week that starts on Saturday, April 18th. Grab a blanket and your kids and come to this fun, no-cost event for our families.

Finally, there is a PTA General Association meeting on April 24 at 8:10am in the MUR. This will be the meeting where we elect next year's PTA Executive Board so please come and exercise your right to vote as a member of the PTA!

I wish everyone a safe, happy and restful spring break!

Shannon Cary
Sycamore Ridge PTA President



Have you ever parked in the two reserved spots in the parking lot marked
“Reserved for RidgeRaising High Bidder”?

Please don't!

Those two spaces were auctioned off at our RidgeRaising Dinner/Auction in November and the families who won the spaces donated hundreds of dollars to support the Sycamore Ridge PTA for the privilege of being able to park there. Please help us maintain the value of the spaces by keeping them open for the families who paid to be able to park there, especially during drop-off and pick-up times.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Sycamore Ridge Student Council

By Sarah Chan, 5th grade Student Council Historian

On Friday, March 6th, Sycamore Ridge Stallions celebrated Read Across America Day in honor of Dr. Seuss's birthday. Most students came to school with stuffed animals, pajamas, fuzzy slippers and soft blankies all trailing behind them. Read Across America Day gives Dads (and Moms) a chance to read with their child and do fun activities. Every grade did something special with parents. All the 5th graders had P.E. with Coach Sink and some brave parents played Frisbee with the class. Other classes, like the kindergartners, made their own green eggs and ham and made their very own Dr. Seuss hats! Later, they gathered in close for fun stories, read by parents. The school also collected gently used books for the St. Vincent de Paul Village so that everyone got a chance to read on this special day.

Sycamore Ridge is going green! In honor of April, Earth Month, student council members are working on building a tree that is made entirely out of recyclable materials! Every student in the school will receive a leaf to write their environmental goals for the year. Each grade level will receive their own branch to hang their leaves. Some leaves will be made out of things like cardboard, tinfoil, and recycled paper. Hopefully, the tree will stand tall and proud for as long as it can last!

Lastly, our 4th annual Jog-A-Thon was held on Tuesday, March 17th... St. Patrick's Day! Almost every student came to school wearing green hats, shirts, pants, and necklaces. The Jog-A-Thon included refreshments, fun, music, and water sprayers! This year the Jog-A-Thon was sponsoring our very own ESC programs to bring them back!

Study Buddy Spring Session 2009

Study Buddies is once again in session on Mondays, from 2:30 - 3:50 pm, in the Sycamore Ridge library. We will be meeting for the next seven Mondays through May 4, 2009. Our first meeting was Monday, March 16, where our "little buddies" met their "big buddies". Everyone was excited to be there, and our little buddies were assisted with their homework.

Study Buddies is a program for youth directed by the San Dieguito Alliance for Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol Free Youth. Our teens come to us from Torrey Pines and Canyon Crest Academy, and they have signed a pledge to be drug, tobacco, and alcohol free. Each teen is matched with one Sycamore Ridge student that is referred by their teacher from 2nd through 6th grades. These "big buddies" assist our "little buddies" with their homework, enjoy some free playtime and have a snack together. The big buddies earn community service hours for participating in the program. The program has become so popular that we currently have sixteen teens assisting us this session.

Mark your calendars for the following Dad's Club events in 2009



April 16th - Dad's Movie Night "WALL-E"
5:30-7:30pm (MUR)

June 2nd - Dad's Lunch 11:30-12:15
(meet your child in the lunch shelters)

If you have any questions, please contact
Mark Belford at bbelford@san.rr.com



Volunteer Corner

Sycamore Ridge loves Parent Volunteers! There are lots of ways to get involved, with opportunities that can work around just about any busy schedule! Here are some upcoming and continuing events that need volunteers.

GARDEN CLUB

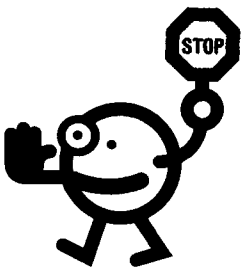
Our ESC science teacher, Ms. Dumoff, is looking for parent volunteers to help with the Sycamore Ridge Garden and the Garden Club. Experienced gardeners are needed to come in weekly to help prune and water the garden. The Garden Lunch Club will meet every Tuesday, and parent volunteers are also needed to help the kids in the garden during the club. Please contact Ms. Dumoff at kdumoff@dmusd.org if you can help.

TEACHER/STAFF APPRECIATION COMMITTEE

Want to show Sycamore Ridge's teachers and staff how much you appreciate all of their hard work for our kids? Staff Appreciation Week is coming up this May, and committee members are needed to help make this great week special. Please contact committee chair Carrie Nydahl at cnydahl@san.rr.com if you are interested in becoming involved.

RIDGERAISING 2009-10

Did you have a wonderful time at RidgeRaising? Are you interested in being part of continuing this important and special event? Please contact Cristina Campisano at gmancdub@san.rr.com for more information about becoming a Chair or part of next year's committee.



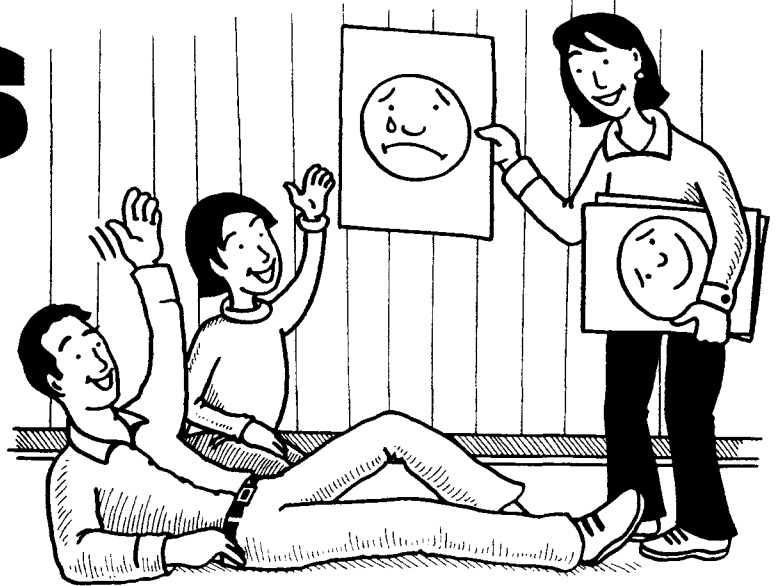
Do you park in the back of school? Do you walk to school and enter through the back gate? We need you! We are looking for a group of people to help regulate traffic and help keep our students and families safe in the back of the school during drop off and pick up times. We have a wonderfully organized valet program at the front of the school to help get students out of cars and to class safely. But if you enter through the back of the school there is nothing like that to help during the peak traffic times. A few weeks ago a small child was hit by a car traveling on the street behind the school. In an effort to keep everyone safe, we are looking for parents who can help keep things safe in the back of the school. If you have 15 minutes in the morning before pick up or 15 minutes after school to help out, please contact Shannon Cary at shancary@gmail.com or at 858-481-5489. Thank you for helping keep our students safe!

Emotional Smarts

Helping children manage feelings

Looking for ways to help your children fare better in school, get along with friends, and be less apt to strike out in anger? Experts agree that teaching kids to be emotionally “smart” can help them in school and with friendships and make them less prone to violence.

The good news? Parents can use simple strategies to teach youngsters three of the most important emotional skills: identifying feelings, handling emotions, and having empathy for others. Try these suggestions to boost your children’s emotional intelligence.



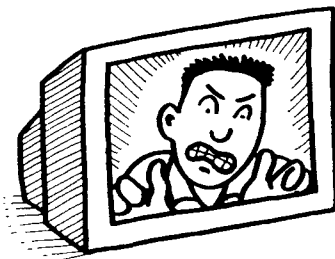
Name their feelings

Kids need names for feelings. Being able to label emotions such as anger or sadness helps them recognize their emotions when they happen. In turn, knowing what they’re feeling can help them find ways to cope.

To build your youngsters’ feeling vocabulary, describe emotions you see them experiencing. *Examples:* “You seemed aggravated when Josh refused to play video games.” “Are you jealous of Jessica’s new friend?” Talk about how people you see in the news could be feeling. (“That young man was sentenced to prison. How do you think he feels?”)

Another idea is to make flash cards with names of emotions on one side and pictures representing each feeling on the other. You could choose from happiness, sadness, anger, fear, love, confidence, loneliness, nervousness, embarrassment, and jealousy, to name a few.

Connect faces with feelings



To be emotionally smart, it’s important for children to learn how to “read” others’ feelings by noticing their body language and facial expressions. Why? Being able to identify another person’s feelings is an important part of

nurturing empathy—a concern for others that helps prevent violence. In fact, experts say that youngsters who bully others often misread people’s emotions—for example, thinking another child is giving a dirty look when the child is simply daydreaming.

To teach this skill, incorporate simple games into daily routines. At home, turn down the volume of the television and talk about the actors’ emotions. (“That person’s jaw is clenched. He looks angry.”) At the grocery store or mall, watch people and guess their feelings. (“She looks confused. Think she’s having trouble picking a sweater?”)

Tip: For a fun family activity, try a game of “feeling charades,” and let each family member act out an emotion for the others to guess.

Give them guidelines

Once your kids are able to recognize their feelings, provide ground rules for managing them. A good rule of thumb is, “When expressing anger, you cannot hurt yourself, others, or property.” Also, let your children know what they *can* do. For example, they might go for a jog, draw an angry picture, punch a pillow, yell in their rooms (if that’s okay with you), write in a diary, or talk to a trusted person.



continued



You can also show your children ways to relax when they're upset. Encourage them to breathe in deeply while counting to three and then exhale slowly. Or have them close their eyes and tense all their muscles, count to six, and then release. They could also imagine being in a peaceful place, such as the beach.

Finally, teach your youngsters steps for working through unhappy feelings. Help them identify the feeling (ask themselves, "What am I feeling?"); accept the feeling ("My feelings are okay; it's what I do with them that counts"); decide what to do to feel better ("I could call Timmy"); and act on the decision (call his friend). For example, a child who realizes he's feeling lonely could tell himself that everyone feels lonely sometimes, decide to call a friend, and make the call.

Act with empathy

Chances are you're already teaching your kids empathy, or concern for others' feelings, without even realizing it. Just meeting their needs helps them learn to care for others.

Whenever possible, find opportunities to help your youngsters think about how they would feel in someone else's shoes. *Example:* "How do you think Aubrie felt when she found out Stacy was talking about her?"

Tip: Recognizing feelings in themselves and others is a key part of learning empathy. See the ideas under "Name their feelings" and "Connect faces with feelings" on page 1.

Praise the positive



If your children do something cruel, explain why you disapprove. *Example:* "It was unkind to tease Susan about her lisp. That probably made

her sad. Let's think about how you might feel if someone made fun of how you talk."

Keep in mind that it's more effective to compliment behavior you *do* want than to punish behavior you *don't* want. When your youngsters handle their feelings well or show concern for others, be sure to let them know. *Examples:* "Thanks for helping your brother feel included!" "Grandma was so happy you called!"

Lead by example

When it comes to expressing feelings and showing empathy, your example makes the biggest impression.

You can show your kids how you'd like them to act when they feel lousy by letting them see you work out your



feelings in safe, healthy ways. For example, if you've had a hard day at the office, take a walk instead of yelling at the dog. Other strategies for relieving stress include breathing deeply, taking a warm bath, calling a friend, or writing in a journal. *Tip:* It's okay to tell your children how you're feeling, but only to a point. They shouldn't feel overwhelmed or that they need to comfort you.

If you have an outburst in front of your youngsters, address it with them. Let them know why you were upset. Then, explain that you handled your feelings the wrong way and that you'll try to do better next time. *Example:* "I'm frustrated because we just bought our car and it needs repairs. But I shouldn't have slammed the door. Next time, I'll try to cool down by counting to ten."

Finally, let your children see you demonstrating empathy. For instance, you might take a meal to an elderly neighbor or put money in a donation box. Tell your kids what you're doing and why. *Example:* "Mrs. Smith's husband died, and now she lives alone. She enjoys having visitors and getting a nice, warm meal."

Home & School

CONNECTION

Working Together for School Success

Sycamore Ridge Elementary School
Ms. Emily Disney, Principal

SHORT NOTES



Internet safety

Here are two important tips to keep your youngsters safe on the Internet. Tell them to open e-mails only from people they know. Also, they should never give out information about themselves on the Web. *Examples:* their school, age, or address; friends' or family members' names.

Homework help

Do your children expect your help with their homework? Let them know you're around if they need you—but their schoolwork is their job. The benefit? They'll learn how to find the answers themselves, as well as boost their skills.

Math measures up!

Encourage your youngster to practice measuring at home. Look for ways he can use a tape measure, a thermometer, or scales. *Example:* "Why don't you help me measure the window? Will the new curtains fit?"

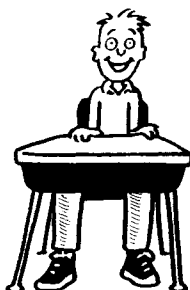
Worth quoting

"When you come to a roadblock, take a detour." *Mary Kay Ash*

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What do you have to pay when you go to school?

A: Attention!



Making school a priority

With spring right around the corner, it can be hard to keep children focused on learning. What can you do to make school a top priority for your kids? Keep these simple ideas in mind—they're useful at any time of the year.



Make attendance job #1. Let your youngsters know that unless they're sick, they must go to school. Try to schedule routine dentist and doctor appointments after school hours. If possible, take family vacations during school breaks. *Tip:* Give awards for perfect attendance each month. Try a "Job Well Done" certificate or a coupon good for a night of bowling or a movie.

Show you care.

Want your children to know that you're interested in their learning? Talk about their school activities and projects. Attend as many school events as you can. If homework and after-school activities conflict, speak up: "I know you have baseball practice this evening, but homework comes first. After you finish, I'll take you to practice."

Keep it upbeat.

Try to set a positive example for your children, even when

your own day has been difficult. Instead of saying, "I had a hard day at work. I'll never get my project done," try, "Work was hard today, but I made some progress on my project." If you show a positive attitude about your work, your youngsters may feel better about their own. ♥

Mealtime magic

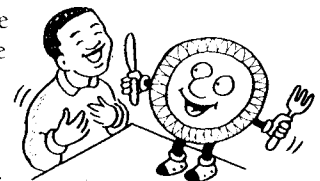
Mealtime is a great time for your family to talk and enjoy each other's company. Get the most out of mealtime with this M-E-A-L approach:

Make the atmosphere pleasant. Focus on the positive—try not to bring up criticisms or complaints.

Entertain each other. *Examples:* Tell jokes. Make up a story and ask each person to add a line.

Always give everyone a turn to talk. Try asking a different question each week. *Examples:* "What's your all-time favorite book?" "What's the funniest thing that happened today?"

Loosen up. Think of ways to make mealtime an adventure. *Examples:* Spread a blanket on the floor and have an indoor picnic. Have a backward dinner—start with dessert! ♥



Home & School CONNECTION®

Page 2

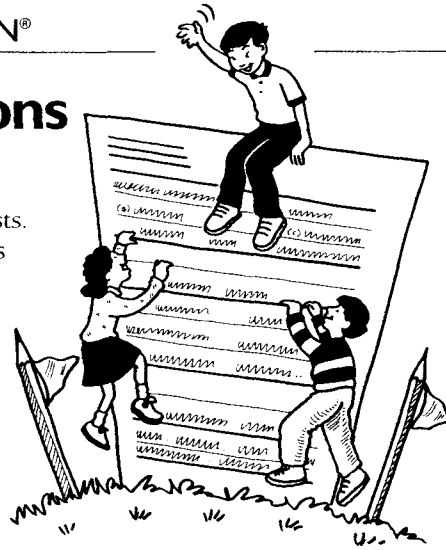
Tackling test questions

Hints for standardized tests

If it's spring, it's usually time for standardized tests. To help your youngster be prepared, share these tips about the types of questions that often appear.

Multiple choice: Read all the answers before marking your choice. Remember, your first instinct is usually best—so don't change your answer unless you're sure.

True/false: Look for words such as *never*, *always*, *all*, and *none*. They're usually in false answers. Words like *may* or *often* are generally found in true answers.



Essay: Read essay questions at least twice. Then, make a list of important thoughts, or key points, about each question before writing your essay. Read through the finished essay to be sure you've included all your key points. Check spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

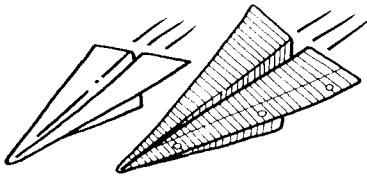
Tip: Your child may feel more comfortable if she's familiar with the test format. Ask your youngster's teacher for a sample test or look at the public library. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Go fly a plane

Your children can use this activity to find out which materials make a paper airplane fly the farthest.

Materials: loose-leaf notebook paper, magazine page, cardboard or file folder, poster board, tape measure



First, make four airplanes, one from each type of paper. (Tip: For instructions, look for books at the library or on Web sites, such as www.paperplane.org.) Next, mark a starting point on the ground. Standing at this point, toss each plane in the air. Then, measure the distance from the starting point to where they land.

The firmer the paper is, the longer the plane will stay in the air. But very heavy paper will cause the airplane to fall faster. Which airplane flies the farthest? ♥

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PARENT TO PARENT

Peaceful solutions

My kids used to fight over everything. They'd squabble about which television show to watch and who would take a shower first. I knew it was time to step in when I caught Beth and Matt swinging at each other.

I figured out a system to handle their arguments. To start, I asked each of my kids to write down their favorite television shows, how much time they wanted on the computer, etc. Then, I told them when I would want to use the TV or the computer. When there was a conflict, we flipped a coin to decide who had first choice. Finally, we agreed on a schedule and pinned it to the bulletin board in the kitchen.

The kids still bicker sometimes. But they know that when I say, "Take a look at the schedule," the arguing is over. ♥



Q & A

Handling peer pressure

Q: My son recently decided to stop being friends with a classmate because other kids said, "We don't like him." How can I teach my youngster to think for himself?

A: It's important to give your child the tools he needs to stand up for himself—especially now, before he faces peer pressure about things like drugs and alcohol.

Talk to your youngster about choosing friends who share his interests and values. Kids often give in to peer pressure because they want other kids to like them. If your son has good friends on his side, he won't be as likely to go along with the crowd.

Also, teach him to walk away from uncomfortable situations. For example, if the boys playing basketball are being mean to others, your child could go to another part of the playground to play. ♥



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Guiding Students for School Success

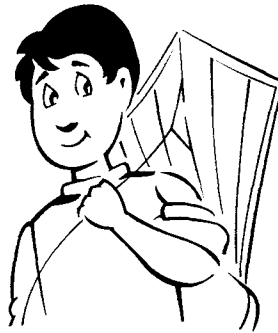
Channel your child's extra energy with regular, healthy exercise

The winter months have most likely contributed to some pent-up energy in your active child. March 9th is the start of Daylight Saving Time and March 20th is the first day of spring.

So it's a great month to start including some outdoor activities in your child's daily routine. And according to experts, increased physical activity in children results in better grades—and reduced disruptive behavior.

To keep your child active:

- **Give your child chores that get him moving.** He could rake, pick up tree limbs or sweep outside.
- **Do something physically active with your child every week.** Throw a ball back and forth. Go biking. Take a walk. Fly a kite. Play tag with your child.
- **Show your child that you enjoy exercise.** Let him see you walking, exercising or playing a sport.
- **Monitor your child's passive activities**—playing on the computer and watching television. Be sure to balance that time with physically active play.



Source: S. Blackthorn, *The Parent's Success Guide to Parenting*, ISBN: 0-7645-5927-3 (Wiley Publishing, Inc., 1-800-762-2974, www.wiley.com).

Who's the boss? You are!

Are you struggling to keep your cool with your child? Remind yourself that you are in control. Set a few straightforward rules about responsibilities at home and at school. Be sure your child knows what will happen when rules are broken.

Remember: When it comes to discipline, being firm, fair and consistent is the key.

Source: Elizabeth Bruce, "Anger Management for Moms," *Mothering.com*, www.mothering.com/articles/growing_child/discipline/anger_management.html.



What's the best thing about the TV remote? It lets you change the channel. So the next time your child watches a show that suddenly gets too violent, flip to something else or turn it off altogether. Explain why the program is not okay. Also, remind her that violence in real life has real-life consequences.



Source: "Violence in the Media," JAMA Patient Pages, www.hmc.psu.edu/childrens/healthinfo/articles/violencemedi.pdf.

Teach responsibility one day at a time

It would be nice if teaching responsibility happened quickly. But it's a work in progress. Age-appropriate tasks can help, as long as they're assigned correctly.

Give your child a few tasks (not too many) that she can handle. Make them part of the family routine. Don't expect perfection and keep your sense of humor when challenges arise.



Source: Mary VanClay, "The responsible child: How to teach responsibility," *parentcenter*, http://parentcenter.babycenter.com/0_the-responsible-child-how-to-teach-responsibility_65726.pc.

Good social skills are just four P's away

Use these four P's to nurture and encourage your child's social skills.

Here's how:

- **Practice.** Show your child what good social skills look like.
- **Praise.** When he behaves properly, let your child know how proud you are.
- **Point out.** If you see an example of someone using good social skills, tell your child.
- **Prompt.** If he's just learning a new skill—such as saying "Excuse me"—give him a nudge when it's time to use it.



Source: "Practicing Social Skills with Children," *Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics Online*, www.dhped.org/articles/detail.cfm?id=114.

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March 2008

Routines are vital to children's success

Families often find that routines are the key to finishing important tasks on time, such as getting ready for school. For example, parents have found it helpful to have their child:

- **Plan at night.** Choose the next day's outfit before bed—head to toe. Pack school supplies and even have breakfast, lunch and snacks ready to go. Keep spare change handy for days when your child needs to buy something at school.
- **Set an alarm.** Have your child go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day. Give her an alarm clock to build independence and move things along. If she reads at night, set a time limit that encourages reading and rest.



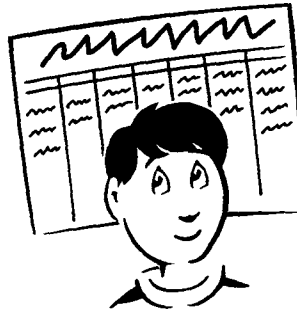
Source: "Easing Into the School Routine," Disneyfamily.com, <http://family.go.com/education/article-GS-18390-Easing-into-the-School-Routine-t>.

Questions & Answers

Q: My fifth grader is a good kid, but he complains about never having a chance to relax. How can I help him manage his time better so he won't feel overwhelmed by schoolwork?

A: It sounds like you already know the solution to your child's problem: time management. The better he is able to master the clock, the less likely he'll be to feel overwhelmed. To help him strengthen his time-management skills:

- **Have him define what he wants.** It's hard to reach a goal if you don't know what it is. So ask your child to state his goal clearly. "I want more free time to play and relax."
- **Develop a plan.** If your child's goal is more free time, he'll need to do more than just wish for it. Instead, he'll have to look at how he spends his after-school hours and see where he can carve out more down time.
- **Give him the right tools.** Make managing his time easier by teaching your child to use a calendar or planner. If he gets home at 3:00 and dinner is at 6:00, for example, he could write "Do homework from 3:30-4:00" and "Read from 4:00-4:30." This will help him see that he actually has plenty of free time—90 whole minutes between reading and dinner.
- **Congratulate him.** Praise your child when you see him making progress. Let him know how proud you are when he uses his calendar carefully instead of throwing a fit because he "doesn't have any free time!"



Source: "Time Management for Kids," ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication, <http://reading.indiana.edu/www/tamres/ptalk/pdt/026time.pdt>.

Lessons from home = safety at school

Things you do at home may help your child avoid violence at school.



You should:

- **Serve as a strong role model.** Show your child how to handle anger appropriately.
- **Be a good listener.** Let your child know she can always come to you with problems.
- **Talk about bullies** and how to avoid them.
- **Brainstorm ways** to resolve conflicts. Teach your child that fighting isn't the answer.

Source: "Are Children Safe at School?" RevolutionHealth, www.revolutionhealth.com/healthy-living/parenting/school-age-kids/school-learning/school-safety.

Doing chores should not be a chore

Don't let chore time become tantrum time! To keep your child from fussing the minute you hand him a broom:

- **Tell him exactly** what chores he's expected to do.
- **Rely on routines.** Don't surprise him with different tasks every week.
- **Evaluate his to-do list.** Be sure you're not asking too much.
- **Praise him** when he completes his work.

Source: "Chores and Allowance," American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org/publiced/BK5_Chores.htm.

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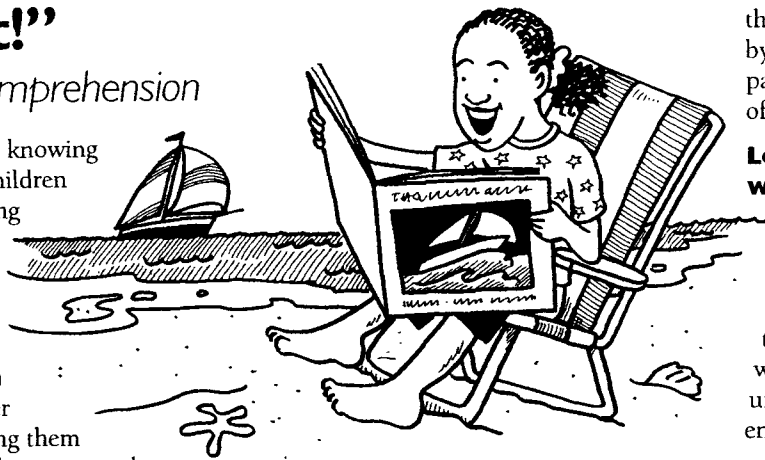
“Aha! I get it!”

Boosting reading comprehension

Reading involves more than knowing how to say or spell words—children have to understand the meaning of the text as well. If your child struggles with comprehension, share these strategies with her.

Say the words silently in your head. If your youngster tends to skip over words, saying them to herself will help her see and process each one so she won't miss any of the meaning.

Do one thing at a time. Encourage your child to ignore everything except what she's reading. Suggest that she look at



the sentences individually by using a blank piece of paper to cover up the rest of the page.

Look up unfamiliar words. Learning the meaning of new words will improve your youngster's understanding. Sometimes looking up a single word in the dictionary can unlock the meaning of an entire paragraph.

Relate reading to real life. Ask your child if what she has read reminds her of anything she has experienced or learned. Connecting reading content to her everyday life will make the information easier to understand—and remember. ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER

Measuring fun

Want to try a creative math exercise with your child that will sharpen his measuring skills? Start by sharing these fun facts:

- The length of a mile is based on how far a Roman soldier could travel in 1,000 steps.
- A foot is based on the length of the foot of King Henry I, who reigned over England from 1100 to 1135.
- The ancient Egyptians measured distances in cubits, which is the distance between a person's elbow and fingertips.

Next, ask your youngster to create his own unit for measuring. *Examples:* the width of his little finger, the length of his leg. Then, challenge him to use the unit to measure things, such as a friend's height or the width of his bed. ♥

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Q & A

Organization tips

Q: My child is so disorganized. Her room is drowning in clutter! She loses homework papers, and her library books are always overdue. Any suggestions?

A: First, go through everything in your child's room together. Throw out, donate, or put into storage anything she hasn't needed in the last year.

Then, help your youngster reorganize what's left. She might put all her library books on one shelf and her schoolbooks on another. Homework and other assignments could be stacked neatly in individual folders on her desk or in a plastic crate or cardboard box.

Finally, encourage your daughter to choose one day each week to clean out her backpack. And remind her that the best way to stay organized is to spend a few minutes every day putting things in their proper places. ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

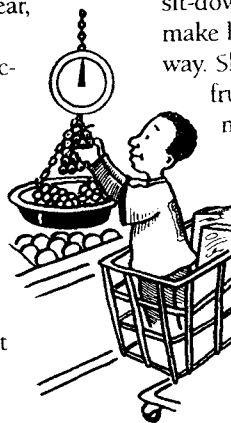
Family food makeover

Last year, my husband was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. His doctor told him that he would have to change his eating habits to stay healthy. For his sake—and because it would be good for all of us—we decided that the whole family would try to eat a healthier diet.

My husband's nutritionist was very helpful. She suggested that we have more

sit-down meals together. It's easier to make balanced meals for everyone that way. She also told us to eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, and foods made with whole grains.

One weekend we went to the library and checked out several cookbooks. We got some recipe ideas that were delicious *and* nutritious. We love our new eating style—and everyone has more energy too! ♥





WAY TO GO STALLIONS!!!

The 2009 Jog-A-Thon was a huge success! Thank you to all who participated. Our students & staff ran over 7,500 laps and we received \$14,000 in pledges!

Pledges were due April 1st, but if you have not turned in your money, it's not too late. Please return any outstanding pledges right away so we can meet the April 15th deadline to contribute the funds to save our ESC programs.

A special thank you to all of the wonderful parent volunteers who made the Jog-A-Thon happen:

Carol & David Greenwald, Toni & Leonard Fisher, Shannon Cary, Scott Tanaka & Nelar Wine, Marie Le-Rose, John Taylor, Donna O'Rourke, Lisa Becker, Maia Starling, Shelley Aberle, Darcy Buchanan, Leesa McNealy, Laurie Schmid, Debbie Romine, Orna Wittenberg, Miranda Giurgiu, Raquel Dixon, Sawsan Atiya, Terri Thompson, Korey Sarokin, Victoria Shoushtari, Christy Mohler, Nissrine Habhab, Janet Ross, Sinyien Du, Sohair Doudar, Anita Jiang, Deanna Angel, Nicole Baril, Cyndi Davis, Tulika Agarwal, Carrie Nydahl, Lilian Bruce, Tim Blazer, Branden Belford, Eileen Johnson, Carrie Goldman, Debbie Rosenfield, Carlota Altamirano, and Midge Kallen.

Thank you also to Atlas Lithograph Co., Inc. for printing and donating the collection envelopes!



The Sycamore Ridge Round-Up is provided by the

4th Graders Go West!

SYCAMORE RIDGE PTA

Sycamore Ridge School
5333 Old Carmel Valley Road
San Diego, CA 92130

Phone: 858-755-1060
Fax: 858-755-1258
www.dmusd.org

Principal: Emily Disney
PTA President: Shannon Cary
Photographer: Scott Tanaka, Lisa Blazer, & Julie Anderson
Newsletter Editor: Maia Starling

THE SYCAMORE RIDGE PTA, DEL MAR UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT IS A MEMBER OF THE NORTH COUNTY COASTAL COUNCIL AND NINTH DISTRICT OF THE CALIFORNIA CONGRESS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS (CCPTS).



Thank you Stallion families! From December—February, we collected 1,000 Boxtops! That's another \$100 that goes directly to our school. Keep up the good work! **Many Boxtops are expiring 6/1/09, so please check yours and turn them in before the expiration date.**

LOST & FOUND

Missing your lunch box? A favorite sweater or jacket? Check out our overflowing "Lost and Found".

Stallion Q & A: Answers for parents about the Stallion way of life.

Do you have a question about how things work at Sycamore Ridge? Confused about fundraisers, programs, academics? In an effort to better serve parents (new and old), the PTA offers a question & answer column. Simply email your question to Maia Starling at: maia_starling@yahoo.com and she will respond to you in a timely manner. Questions may then be published in the next newsletter (names omitted) to help better inform other parents.