

PUP PRESS

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Principal
Katie May

Helping Children Understand Autism

This week's article is from the National Association of Elementary School Principals and was written by Melanie I. Bloom, a teacher in St. Charles County, MO, and mother of twin girls with autism. It is so relevant to our school community that I thought I would share it!

One in every 68 children is diagnosed with autism. When non-autistic children ask questions about this condition, their parents can respond in ways that help with understanding autism, as well as accepting individuals with different abilities. Here are some suggestions:

Be honest. If you don't know a lot about autism, tell your child that you don't know but are willing to find out. Take advantage of your child's curiosity and seek out resources such as children's books and websites.

Know that every child is different. Autism is a spectrum disorder, so no two children with autism are alike. A child with autism might have areas of exceptional talent, as well as areas of deficit. Help your child understand that autism presents itself in variable ways.

Be positive. Be careful not to describe individuals with autism as lacking in some important way. Focus on the positive and describe what your child can do to help. For example, say, "Tony is an excellent artist. You can talk about his drawings with him by asking him specific questions." When relaying an area of challenge for the child with autism, help your child relate to the experience. You might say, for example: "Remember how it was hard to hear me at the airport over the background noise? Tony is hearing all of the background noises in the classroom and has difficulty paying attention to just your voice. Why don't you sit down and face him when you talk to him?"

Talk to the child's parent. Ask the parent for suggestions about how to help your child to interact in a way that will engage the other child. You can also learn about the child's interests and then share suggestions with your child about conversation starters. Parents of children with autism seek good peer role models for their children in order to improve language and social skills. This is an opportunity for your child to be a good influence.

Encourage interaction. If a child with autism acts out or must leave a play date early, reassure your child that this does not mean that he or she did anything wrong. Schedule a number of play dates so that your child can see the positive effects of his or her interactions over time.

EVENT CALENDAR

Fri., May 6: Yearbook orders due. Form at office or go to <http://bit.ly/OrderTM16yearbook>.

Through Fri., May 6: Staff Appreciation Week. Sign up to volunteer at <http://bit.ly/TM-Appreciate>.

Through May 31: Bike to School Month. Track riding minutes! Calendar at <http://bit.ly/TMBikeCal16>.

Sat., May 14: Mariners game, 6:10 p.m., Safeco Field. (Ticket deadline was April 26.)

Thurs., May 19: Tour & info session for prospective families. 8:45-10 a.m. No RSVP.

Sun., May 22: Storm game, 4 p.m., KeyArena. Tickets at <http://bit.ly/1Vhculg> through May 21.

Tues., May 24: PTA Meeting on "Birds + Bees." 6 p.m. potluck; 6:30 meeting. See below.

Tues., May 31: Instrumental Concert, 7 p.m.

Fri., June 2: All-School Reading Party, 5:30-7 p.m. Free pizza! More details to come.

TUTU'S PANTRY

May 9-13: Grade 5's turn to donate food.

See www.tmlink.org for calendar updates.

PTA Meeting: 'Birds+Bees' Ideas for Elementary Parents



Save 6-8:30 p.m. on May 24 for the final PTA meeting of the year, with guest Amy Lang speaking on "The Birds + Bees For Elementary Parents: Simple Tips To

Help You Start + Continue 'The Talk'." You'll learn why, when and how to have easy, effective and age-appropriate conversations with your kids about the birds and the bees, including tips and tricks to keep the dialogue going. Potluck and social time starts at 6 p.m.; meeting at 6:30 (including a vote on the 2016-17 PTA budget). RSVP for school-aged child care (including dinner): glassberg@seattleymca.org.



Thank You! 'GiveBIG' Surge Puts Annual Fund Past \$160,000 Goal

You did it! It took an extra day of "GiveBIG" to overcome technical glitches, but donations in the final hours of May 4 pushed the PTA's Annual Giving Fund over its budgeted goal of \$160,000. Donors gave \$8,110 through GiveBIG, and more

than \$3,000 was contributed via tmlink.org and matching gifts. Thank you! The PTA money supports staffing and activities not covered by District dollars, such as our school Counselor's salary, theater and other arts programming, and classroom grants.

'Blueprint' Is Last Phase of RULER Social Curriculum

Teachers are rolling out the final anchor tool of the RULER social/emotional curriculum in their classrooms, reports School Counselor Meghan Kaloper. "The Blueprint" helps people solve interpersonal problems by coaching them through perspective-taking. This tool is

ideally used after the "Meta Moment," when a student is calm and ready to think things through. The Blueprint is great for kids and adults alike! To learn more about using it at home (sibling conflicts?!), visit www.greatschools.org/gk.yale-tools-for-families/. Questions to mrkaloper@seattleschools.org.

Mood Meter on Playground

Thank you to 5th-grade parent Ben Kim for helping make Ms. Kaloper's "Mood Meter" dream come true! Mr. Kim spent many hours painting this RULER tool Meter on our playground as well as touching up our "Wheel of Choice." Students now have two great tools at their feet to work through conflict on the playground.

The Mood Meter can help kids identify their feeling, reflect on what caused it, and assess whether they want to keep or change their current feeling. From there, kids can strategize what would help them shift to a different feeling quadrant if that is their goal.

The Wheel of Choice is just a stone's



throw away. This tool helps with conflicts between students and offers up a menu of choices they can use to problem solve. Some examples of options include: go to another game, use an "I" message, walk away, apologize, and count to 10 to cool off. Our Conflict Mediators and Recess Mentors are on standby to help make these tools work!



A Wheelie Big Day

Dozens of riders made Bike to School Day yesterday (May 4) a success! Students at Thurgood Marshall will be competing in May to bike the most minutes of any Seattle elementary school, in a contest coordinated by Cascade Bicycle Club. Don't forget to write down minutes in the calendar distributed last week and available at <http://bit.ly/TMBikeCal16>.

Meanwhile, TM teachers have formed a "Bike Everywhere Challenge" team named Bullpups Pedal. Members are Ms. Serpe, Ms. Kierstead, Ms. Sheridan, Mr. Ian, Ms. Egelhoff, Mr. Shin, Ms. Kingsbury and Ms. Zirngible. They hope everyone will cheer them on as we try to log as many trips as we can for the whole month of May! Ride on!



Kindergartner Luke McNally-Crain was among the dozens of students yesterday who parked their bikes after riding to TM.

Bullpup Briefs

Film Explores Screen-Time Issues Affecting Teenagers

The Washington Middle School PTA is inviting parents and students (5th grade or older) to a showing of "Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age." The documentary explores how much screen time is too much and takes a hard, yet entertaining look at how screen time affects the self-image and self-control of teenagers.

The 70-minute film will be shown at 7:15 p.m. after the WMS PTSA meeting on May 25. WMS is at 2101 S. Jackson St.

English Curriculum Choices Up for Review, Feedback

You are invited to review teaching materials under consideration for elementary reading and writing in Seattle Public Schools. Ten vendors have submitted materials for the first round of the English Language Arts K-5 Materials Adoption. Look online or in person – and give feedback! Options:

- **View materials in person** in the 2nd-floor Professional Library at the John Stanford Center, to May 20.
- **Attend the Open House**, 5-7 p.m. Monday (May 9) at the same location as above. Materials will be on display. Schools staff will be available to support participants. Translated feedback forms and interpreters in our top five languages (Chinese, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese) will be available.
- **Access materials online.** Go to <http://bit.ly/NewK5ELA> for full info on the process and materials.

Summer Learning Programs

Families seeking summer learning opportunities can visit a District website with info on programs in the schools as well as summer meals and community-based program directories. See <http://bit.ly/SPSSummerlearning>.

PTA Needs You in 2016-17!

The PTA is still looking to fill a few key positions for next year! For those opportunities and more, see the Volunteering page at www.tmlink.org.