



Principal's Corner

Happy Spring! The first day of Spring is Sunday, March 20th. Did you know the four seasons are determined by shifting sunlight (not heat!), which is determined by how our planet orbits the Sun and the tilt of its axis? It is a time of growth and rejuvenation, which can easily be transferred onto your children's education. Continue in your commitment to educate your children and help them to grow into successful learners.

March is the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Did you know his mother used to soothe him to sleep by chanting rhymes to him? He credits her with both his ability and desire to create the rhymes for which he became so well known. In honor of Dr. Seuss, please join us for Pajama Day and a Dr. Seuss Read-In on Wednesday, March 2nd.

March is a busy month...it is also Women's History Month. This year's theme is *Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government*. Please visit www.nwhp.org for more information.

Physical Fitness testing is on Tuesday, March 22nd or Wednesday, March 23rd for all 5th, 7th and 9th graders. Your Supervising Teacher will provide you with the information you need for your student.

We also have a field trip scheduled for this month to the Shadowland Foundation. If you haven't heard of this organization, please look them up. The Shadowland Foundation is dedicated to educating children of all ages about the true nature of wolves. We are visiting the Shadowland Foundation on Thursday, March 3rd.

Please remember, Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 13th. Clocks will "spring" forward one hour.

Have a wonderful month!

Erin Wade

March, 2016

Volume 8, Issue 7

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Mark your calendar...

- Mar 2: Dr. Seuss Read Across America
- Mar 3: Field Trip to Shadowland Foundation
- Mar 4: End LP 9
- Mar 7-11: Blue Week
- Mar 13: Daylight Savings Time begins
- Mar 17: St. Patrick's Day
- Mar 18: Blue Angels at DSCHS
- Mar 20: First day of Spring
- Mar 22,23: Physical Fitness Testing
- Mar 29,30: Testing Strategies Workshops
- April 4-8: Spring Break
- April 11-29: SBAs
- April 18-20: WASC Visit
- May 16-20: Science CSTs
- May 20: Science Fair Projects Due
- May 30: Memorial Day Holiday

Character Counts—March



The Pillar of Character for March is

RESPECT

Treat others with respect; follow the *Golden Rule* • Be tolerant and accepting of differences • Use good manners, not bad language • Be considerate of the feelings of others •

Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone • Deal peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements

Go to:

<http://charactercounts.org/>

Once there, click on *Resources* and *Lesson Plan Bank* for age appropriate activities for the trait of

RESPECT

This is Your Child's Brain on Reading

By Carina Storrs, Special to CNN

Story highlights:

- A study suggests that brain networks involved in reading and listening to stories develop early
- Kids read to them less, with less exposure to books have less activity in these networks



(CNN) When parents read to their children the difference shows in children's behavior and academic performance. And according to a new study, the difference also shows in their brain activity.

Researchers looked at children ages 3 to 5 who underwent brain scans called functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) while listening to a pre-recorded story. The parents answered questions about how much they read to, and communicated with, their children.

The researchers saw that, when the young children were being told a story, a number of regions in the left part of the brain became active. These are the areas involved in understanding the meaning of words and concepts and also in memory. These same brain regions have been found to be active when older children listen to stories or read.

When parents read to their children the difference shows in children's behavior and academic performance. The difference also shows in their brain activity.

This study shows that the development of this area starts at a very young age, said Tzipi Horowitz-Kraus, program director of the Reading and Literacy Discovery Center at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Horowitz-Kraus is one of the authors of the study, which was led by Dr. John S. Hutton, pediatrician at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. It was published on Monday in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Even more interesting, according to Horowitz-Kraus, is how the brain activity in this region was higher among the children whose parents reported creating a more literacy-friendly home. "The more you read to your child the more you help the neurons in this region to grow and connect in a way that will benefit the child in the future in reading," she said.

Continued on page 3...



Read More

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents start reading out loud to their children from the time they are born.

The researchers looked at a number of measures to gauge whether homes were literacy-friendly, including how often children were read to and whether they had access to books and the variety of books. The research team is now looking at which of these aspects contributed the most to stimulating children's brain activity, Horowitz-Kraus said.

Before this study, a large body of research has shown that children who are exposed to books at a young age go on to do better on a wide variety of measures, said Dr. Barry Zuckerman, professor of pediatrics at Boston University School of Medicine. They have better vocabulary, higher literacy, pay attention and concentrate better, and are better prepared to go into kindergarten, he said.

Some of the studies demonstrating these benefits looked at children who were part of the Reach Out and Read program, which Zuckerman founded. Through this program, doctors and nurses distribute books to poor children between 6 months and 5 years and give literacy advice to their parents.

Despite the studies that have shown the benefits of these types of programs, "it may get more attention on the policy side to show changes in the brain (such as in Horowitz-Kraus's study) than measures of behavior — it shouldn't, but it may," Zuckerman said. Reach Out and Read lost its federal funding about five or six years ago, although it still has state and private funding, he added.

In addition to garnering support for new programs and policies, the current research, if it can be repeated, may also have the potential to lead to a diagnostic test. A doctor might order an fMRI for a young child if he has problems with literacy, to understand the source of the problem, Horowitz-Kraus said. These brain scans could help distinguish between differences in the left-sided brain network identified in the current study, which would suggest that the child needs more exposure to books, or in other regions that could be associated with other reading difficulties, such as dyslexia.

Although it remains to be seen how children who have lower levels of brain activity will fare in the future, "I would speculate that it is an effect that lasts," Horowitz-Kraus said. "The brain develops rapidly from zero to six years of age, and the more exposure, the more you enrich and nurture these brain networks that are related to social and academic ability, the more the kid will gain the future."

There are benefits of parents reading to their children beyond the child's performance, too. "It's one of the most pleasurable activities that you do with your child -- there's physical closeness but it's probably the most unhurried time that children have with their parent and it is focused on them," Zuckerman said.

Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/05/health/parents-reading-to-kids-study/>

Statements and opinions expressed in articles, reviews and other materials herein are those of the authors and not necessarily the opinions of AV Learning Academy.



Counseling Corner

By Janelle Goodman



Respect

Let's talk about respect, the future, the online world, and teaching your child to be a good citizen in a digital age. A good digital citizen treats others with respect. Follow the Golden Rule - treat others the way you want to be treated.



When it comes to the digital world, there is no walking away. The reality for today's youth is that their online reputation will someday determine their college admission and very possibly their future employer. Every keystroke, post, and comment counts. Your child's online social skills are as critical as their offline people skills.

Where do you begin?

In tech terms -- by *chatting*. The tech talk is not a conversation you have once or twice, it's an ongoing discussion since the web is changing (as are your children) on a daily basis.

Talking to your child about their cyber-life has to be done on a *regular* basis. It should be as common as, "How was your day at school?"

Short chats are better than no chats.

Whether you are riding in the car or sharing a meal, be sure you take ten minutes or more to talk about their digital lives.

The Internet is evolving every day, not only for our children but for adults too, so this can be a two-way conversation. Encourage them to show you new apps or websites they've discovered, and you can show them what you have learned as well. Are you frustrated with your computer, tablet, or mobile device? Who better to teach you easier ways to work with new technology than your teenager?

Keep in mind, cyberspace is the 21st Century playground for our youth and teens. Not everyone they meet on this playground has good intentions. Just as you would discuss their offline friends and social activities, chat with them about the friends they mingle with online and the websites they visit. Building that relationship of communication and trust at home will empower them in the cyber-world. Again, it's why your offline parenting skills are critical to helping your child make better digital choices. When it comes to chatting with your child or teen about digital behavior, remember **CHAT**.

C - Communication is key. Offline parenting will help online safety. Never stop talking about your child's daily cyber life. It is just as important as how their day was at school.

H - Help is always a call/text away. Be sure your child knows you are available to them. Note that the number one reason children don't report cyberbullying to their parents is fear of losing their lifeline to their friends -- the Internet. They should never have to fear your judgment, especially if they fall victim to online harassment. Make sure they know their safety is always your priority and that you are on their side.

Counseling Corner continued...

A - Action plans. Talk to your child about action plans for cyberbullying. You are your child's advocate and you will be there to help them implement steps to prevent online cruelty. Starting with the child knowing to tell a parent or adult, and continuing with learning how to block and report.

T - Treat others as you want to be treated. It is the most important rule in real life and on the Internet. Always treat people with **respect**. Make it a top priority.

With short chats, you can learn how to better protect your children from cyberbullying in a way that works for them and for you. Through daily check-ins, you can empower them to make better digital decisions when you aren't around. Teach them the phrase "when in doubt, click out," so they know what to do when they feel uncomfortable in a chatroom, on a website, or using an app.

It is imperative to understand that in today's society the online world is as important to our children's lives as their daily offline world. We must also treat it that way. Talking to them on a daily basis about their virtual lives, even if it is only for a few minutes, is just as important as getting their homework done on time. You don't have to be a tech-geek or social media super-star, just be a caring parent.



Thank you Dr. Boyd, DDS and AV Wellness Group for your generous donation. Our students greatly appreciated the dental items that will help them take care of their teeth!



February Red Fridays to show our character trait of **CARE!** Thank you!



Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)



AVLA is in the process of a full self study for WASC accreditation. Earning this accreditation is very important for AVLA as a school and for your students, as well. AVLA teachers and staff have spent the last 18 months writing a very detailed report about every aspect of our school and programs, including the goals we have set for our students, our areas of strength and weakness, what we want to do in the future, and the necessary steps to take to get there.

The accreditation process

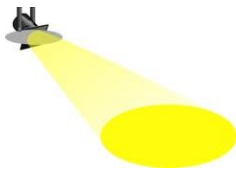
- Assures a school community that the school's purposes are appropriate and being accomplished through a viable education program – a trustworthy institution for student learning
- Validates the integrity of the school's program and transcripts
- Facilitates transfer of credits to other English-speaking schools – critical for college/university acceptance worldwide
- Fosters the ongoing improvement of the school's programs and operations to support student learning
- Provides valuable insight from fellow educators visiting the school
- Benefits schools that choose joint accreditation or other collaborative processes, e.g., ACS WASC/CDE.

ACS WASC Philosophy

The philosophy of the Accrediting Commission for Schools centers upon three beliefs: (1) a school's goal is successful student learning; (2) each school has a clear purpose and schoolwide student goals; and (3) a school engages in external and internal evaluations as part of continued school improvement to support student learning.

Accreditation is integral to a school's perpetual cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, and reassessment based upon student achievement. It fosters excellence in elementary, secondary, adult, and postsecondary education by encouraging school improvement through a process of continuing evaluation and to recognize, by accreditation, schools that meet an acceptable level of quality in accordance with established criteria. In addition to its official title, WASC also means *We Are Student-Centered*.

The official visit by WASC takes place April 17–20. The committee will be at our school site interviewing teachers, parents and students to gain a better of understanding of what we do here and how we make a difference in the lives of the families we serve.



Spotlight on...Mr. Jefferey Sanders, School Psychologist



Please join me in welcoming Mr. Jefferey Sanders to the AVLA team! Jeff Sanders is a new school psychologist for the Learn4Life organization. He will be servicing Antelope Valley Learning Academy and Assurance Learning Academy in Lancaster, California. Graduating from California State University, San Bernardino, Mr. Sanders received his Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, his Master's Degree in General Experimental Psychology, and his PPS Credential in School Psychology. Prior to beginning his first year as a school psychologist, Mr. Sanders was a substitute teacher for nearly seven years with the Hesperia Unified School District. In his free time, Jeff enjoys tennis, scary movies, and designing websites. Mr. Sanders looks forward to getting to know everyone at

AVLA. His goal is to use his skills learned to aid in academic and intervention support for teachers, as well as academic and emotional support for the students. Welcome Mr. Sanders!

Smarter Balanced Pre-Test Workshops



WARNING: Testing Dates are Closer Than
They May Appear!



Come Take the Fear out of Testing at our Student Testing Strategies Workshop!

Attention Students! Does the word *testing* make you:

- Nervous?
- Overwhelmed?
- Bored?

Who: 3rd–8th graders

Where: AVLA

When: Wednesday 3/29 @ 2pm (3rd–5th grades)

Thursday 3/30 @ 2pm (6th–8th graders)

Come to our student workshop and learn strategies, experience a practice test, and ask your questions so will feel more confident on test day!

Please RSVP to Lindsay Gocke (lgocke@avlearning.org) with the name and grade level of your student who would like to attend!

Academy Action



To assist you with your long-range planning, please note there will be some temporary changes in the Learning Center class schedules during administration of the Smarter Balanced Assessments in April. The SBAs in ELA and Math are required for ALL students in grades 3-8 and 11. We will be conducting the SBAs beginning April 11th through the 22nd for grades 3—8 and the week of April 25th for 11th graders. **ALL LC classes will be canceled during the two-week period between April 11 and April 22nd** (with the exception of the PE classes held off site).

Testing of all 5th, 8th and 10th graders for the Science CSTs will take place the week of May 16th and will take place during the LC classes for 5th and 8th graders. We will NOT be canceling classes during this week, however the 4th graders will NOT attend their LC classes on Monday, May 16th only so the 5th graders can be administered their tests.

Testing schedules have been designed and your teachers will be working with you to schedule your student for all their required tests.

All LC classes will end for the year on Friday, June 3rd. **The last week for all LC classes is the week of May 31st through June 3rd.**

The last day of school for the 2014-15 school year is on Friday, June 10th.

We are currently making plans for the 8th Grade Promotion ceremony and the date, time and location will be announced as soon as plans are confirmed.

Thank you!

St. Patrick's Day—Thursday, March 17th

Did you know...???

St. Patrick was born in 385 AD somewhere along the west coast of Britain, possibly in the Welsh town of Banwen. At age 16, he was captured and sold into slavery to a sheep farmer. He escaped when he was 22 and spent the next 12 years in a monastery. In his 30s he returned to Ireland as a Christian missionary. It is believed he died on March 17th in 461 AD.

St. Patrick's Day is observed on March 17 because that is the feast day of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. It is also a worldwide celebration of Irish culture and history. St. Patrick's Day is a national holiday

in Ireland, and a provincial holiday in the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador.



In Ireland on St. Patrick's Day, people traditionally wear a small bunch of shamrocks on their jackets or caps. Children wear orange, white and green

badges, and women and girls wear green ribbons in their hair.

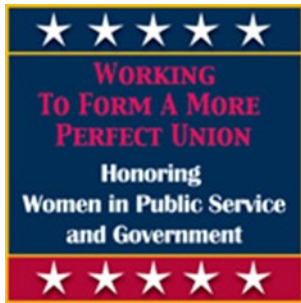
Many cities have a St. Patrick's Day parade. Dublin, the capital of Ireland, has a huge St. Patrick's Day festival from March 15-19 that features a

parade, family carnivals, a treasure hunt, dance, theater, and more. In North America, parades are often held on the Sunday before March 17. Some paint the yellow street lines green for the day! In Chicago, the Chicago River is dyed green with a special dye that only lasts a few hours. There has been a St. Patrick's Day parade in Boston, Massachusetts since 1737.

Fun Facts About March

- There are NO national holidays in March!
- The Cotton Gin was patented by Eli Whitney in March, 1794
- Ohio became the 17th state in 1803
- The telephone was patented by Alexander Graham Bell in March, 1876
- Dr. Suess was born in March, 1904
- Daylight Savings Time in the U.S. went into effect in 1918
- March is named after Mars, the Roman god of war as it was the month in which the military campaigning season got under way after winter.
- An old proverb says that "March comes in a like a lion and goes out like a lamb", which means that winter is ending and spring is beginning.

March is National Women's History Month



2016 Theme:

Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government

Why a National Women's History Month?

Since 1910, March 8 has been observed as International Women's Day by people around the world. That is why March was chosen to be National Women's History Month in the United States, declared as such by a biennial Joint Resolution of the U.S. Congress since 1987.

This year's theme, "Honoring Women in Public Service and Government", honors women who have shaped America's history and its future through their public service and government leadership. Although often overlooked and undervalued, collectively they have dramatically influenced our public policy and the building of viable institutions and organizations. From championing basic human rights to ensuring access and equal opportunity for all Americans, they have led the way in establishing a stronger and more democratic country.

Sixteen women have been chosen as 2016 Honorees who have contributed in very special ways to the work of "writing women back into history."

Each of these public leaders succeeded against great odds. The diversity of their experiences demonstrates both the challenges and the opportunities women in public service have faced. Their ability to use the art of collaboration to create inclusive solutions and non-partisan policies, as well as their skill and determination, serve to inspire future generations. The tenacity of each Honoree underlines the fact that women from all cultural backgrounds in all levels of public service and government are essential in the continuing work of forming a more perfect union.

To read about each of these women, please go to:
<http://www.nwhp.org/womens-history-month/2016-theme/>

Courtesy of the National Women's History Project

For more information about this organization, please contact the National Women's History Project, 7738 Bell Road, Windsor, CA 95492. (707) 838 - 6000.

www.nwhp.org

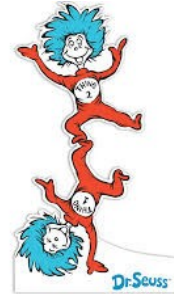


UPCOMING EVENTS

Dr. Seuss - Read Across America

Join us for a fun celebration of Dr. Seuss's birthday on Wednesday, March 2nd from 12:30–2:00 PM.

Wear your PJs and fuzzy slippers cuz we are reading Dr. Seuss stories, making crafts, watching a Dr. Seuss movie, and having a birthday celebration in honor of Dr. Seuss!



Thursday, March 3rd
10:00 AM–12:00 PM

- Bring a sack lunch and we will picnic together.
- Bring your camera!
- Wear your AVLA T-shirt

Shadowland Foundation



Come play with wolves!

The Blue Angels are coming!

All AVLA high school students are invited to attend a Meet n Greet with the world renown Blue Angels!

When: Friday, March 18th
from 8:30–9:30 am

Where: Desert Sands Charter High School
44130 20th Street West, Lancaster

*All students who attend will receive a FREE ticket to the Air Show



Physical Fitness Testing

For all 5th, 7th & 9th grade AVLA students



Tuesday,
March 22nd
OR
Wednesday,
March 23rd
@10:00 AM

Learn4Life Sports Facility

**42450 12th St. W.
Lancaster, CA
93534**

From 10th St. W., head West on Avenue L-8. Turn right onto 12th St. W. Turn right into the first driveway. (Look for building with address 42436—the Sports Facility is directly to the left of that building—there is not an address on the Sports Facility building).

**Physical Fitness Testing is a CA mandated test for all 5th, 7th & 9th grade students.*

If you are a 5th, 7th or 9th grade student, you must take the PFT!

Join us at the Learn4Life Sports Facility on **one** of the above dates (not both)

Remember to wear comfortable clothing and tennis shoes as we will do the following activities:

- Mile run or walk
- Abdominal curl-ups
- Push-ups
- Trunk lift , shoulder stretch, back-saver sit 'n reach

*students will also be weighed and measured (BMI)

- *Parents/Guardians must attend this event with their student and remain present until finished



Volunteers needed!