

**APS Elementary Wellness Fall Newsletter**

Welcome to our Fall newsletter! We would like to share with you some highlights of the Wellness program at the elementary level.

Roaring Brook and Pine Grove have three Wellness teachers who are dedicated to helping children become better coordinated, and more confident in their own physical abilities. In addition, we help children understand their feelings about themselves, others, and their environment.

Each grade level has one 50 minute class of Wellness per week. The physical education portion is a movement education program and is supplemented by activities involving developmental sports skills. A problem solving approach to teaching is used for class work. This approach allows all children to participate successfully at their own ability level and helps develop a feeling of confidence on the part of the child in performing physical tasks. This in turn helps to develop a positive self-image.

The health education portion is also a critical component that is integrated into the wellness block. Health education is intended to prepare students to value the quality of individual, family, and community health. The program fosters student's self-awareness and develops skills for effective decision-making.

**HIGHLIGHTS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

In grades preK-1 the students continue to work on the important elements of moving in good space and what it means to use proper body-control. A variety of warm-ups to music begins each lesson and students are able to practice gross-motor movements. The theme for the month has been eye-hand coordination. Individual, partner, and group practice has been explored. Finklehopper the fitness frog has been introduced to our K-1 students. Finklehopper will be visiting your home some time during the school year. Finklehopper will arrive in a bag with instructions.

In grades 2-4 a unit in Football is almost complete. Students practiced throwing to stationary and moving targets and talked about the difference between the two types. Students used pattern cards and worked on using a center, quarterback , and receiver to complete their plays. The students also spent time running and dodging while carrying the ball properly trying to escape defenders.

\*During the football unit Grade 4 students also participated in the State of Connecticut Physical Fitness Test. All fourth grade students were assessed in the 1 mile run, curl-ups, push-ups, as well as the sit and reach. Prior to conferences, parents will receive a copy of their childs’ fitness results.

**HIGHLIGHTS IN HEALTH EDUCATION**

Since the onset of the school year, Wellness/Health Education classes have been engaging students to self-reflect and celebrate the creative differences among classroom members. The related projects and activities have prompted students to produce drawings and writings about strengths, interests, likes and dislikes. Because health/wellness is dependent upon making daily decisions, self-reflection assists individuals in determining needs that prioritize the continuum of decisions made. For the month of November, instructional opportunities will center on making decisions that keep one safe (K-Gr.1 Stranger Safety, Gr. 2 Home Alone Safety, Gr. 3 & Gr. 4 the decision-making process). To benefit the lessons, families are requested to identify/review their Trusted Adults and assure that children know their address and phone number(s).  The following National health-related observances served to ‘thread’ classroom lessons with the community at large.

**National Family Dinner Day** was Monday, September 26, 2016. Research indicates families that eat meals together are healthier than families that do not eat together.

During **National Fire Prevention Week** students received a visit from members of the Avon Volunteer Fire Department on October7th. In November, fourth grade students will be afforded the opportunity to participate in the **State Fire Prevention Poster Contest.**

**October 23-31st** was **National Red Ribbon Week.** Red Ribbon Week is an observance that encourages community members to give and receive support to make healthy decisions, to refrain from violence, and not to abuse substances. The town of Avon and Avon Public Schools support Red Ribbon Week. This year, at the elementary level, the daily activities associated with Red Ribbon Week threaded with school wide efforts to build character and citizenship.

**November 17th**-was ACS-**Great American Smoke Out day.** Students learned about the Respiratory System and the benefits of deciding to breathe clean, smoke-free air. Families are encouraged to assist with this lesson by deciding to have their homes and vehicles be smoke-free.

In closing, we invite you to observe updates and topic related information located on our collective websites.

Sincerely,

**Elementary Wellness Team**

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