



∞ The CDS Weekly ∞

Catching Up on the Coming Weeks

(415) 861-5432
November 6, 2003

Words From Rick

Don't Throw Me in that Briar Patch

A parent told me last week about her five-year-old who is afraid he is mean. "Why am I so mean?" he says.

"Why do you say that?" she says.

"Because sometimes I do bad things."

"You do bad things? Well, have you been sent to Mr. Rick yet?"

"Oh, No. I am not that bad!"

(How do you think that makes me feel?)

Unfortunately, the "bad boy" concept is very well entrenched—about as entrenched as the concept of school principal is the terror that awaits all bad boys if they persist in their badness. Fear of the wrath of the man behind the door may persist even after I tell you what I do.

My job is to increase the authority of each member of the school community and to make sure that overlapping authorities overlap harmoniously. Once a member of the school community is clear about what their job is in the organization, my role is more one of coach than of cop. When this comes to students in my office, my questions are:

"What are you trying to do?"

"Did you make a mistake?"

"Why was it a mistake?"

"What will you do differently?"

That's about it. If a teacher wants me to talk to one of their students, it is because a student is unclear about one or more of these concepts, and they need my help to clarify things. (Sometimes, they just need to know we mean it.)

I am not being euphemistic. For best results with kids, we need to change the paradigm in their minds about good and bad. At my last school there was a first grade boy who used my door for revolving. I hate going round and round getting nowhere. In one conversation with the Mom, she got mad and said, "He is not a troublemaker!!!"

"I know," I said. "Do you think he is trying to stay out of trouble?"

"Of course!!!" she said, and kept talking.

I interrupted: "That's the problem. If he is trying to stay out of trouble, he is not doing his job. You are not sending him here to stay out of trouble. You are sending him here to learn."

If a child has in his mind the question of whether or not they are bad, that question becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy because too much of their psychic energy is devoted to an irrelevant question. The result is Dr. Jeckel/Mr. Hyde behavior. Even if they are getting straight A's, they are under-performing.

∞ This Week's Hot Dates ∞



Thursday, November 6th

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Admission Open House

Friday, November 7th

10:45 a.m.

All-school assembly, Teddy Bear presentation

Parents welcome!

&

5:00 p.m.

CDS Sibling Applications due

Monday, November 10th

Sign-up begins for Winter Break Camp

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Tuesday, November 11th

Wednesday, November 12th

Barbara Rockman speech screening

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6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Middle School Author's Night

Maxfield's Cafe (17th & Dolores)

Thank You!

- ▶ To the Gaede, Kirkham/Cooper, Nayak/Nigam and Burton/Eltinge families for donating the funds for the new sofas in the Faculty Lounge, and to Tacy Gaede for spearheading the project and to Mary Fernald for her design consultation. The lounge looks WONDERFUL and is a whole lot more comfortable!
- ▶ To Stephanie Holdenreid, Marianne Evans and Kristen Wurz for helping lead admission tours during the past week.
- ▶ To Patricia Cox, Casey Koulman, Andrew (3/4) and Skyler (K) for donating scooters, helmets, a tricycle and an easel.
- ▶ To Wini von Ehrenburg for donating great bikes to the yard!
- ▶ To Cathy Estensen for the nine children's dictionaries for the first grade.
- ▶ To Debra Levin for the first graders' subscription to *Zoobooks*.
- ▶ To Carolina and Paul Ouk for the first graders' subscription to *National Geographic for Kids*.
- ▶ To Sam Hunt for setting up and organizing the new paper and supply shelves in the third floor copy area.

Human beings are capable of being mean, to be sure. The reason we don't want them to be mean is that it is undisciplined behavior; i.e. it is behavior which will not serve them well; it will not help them do their job. To be effective in the world they will get better results if they are kind, charitable and collaborative. We want them to demonstrate these virtues, not so much because it makes the world a better place as because they will be happier this way. Trying not to be mean will perpetuate meanness. A kid won't stay out of trouble thinking about trouble. Trying not to get caught being mean for fear of being sent to the principal will cause the principal's door to revolve.

A good principal is not "The Authority" in the school, but an authority on how to maximize human potential, which is a matter of maximizing each human's authority. I want a student to leave my office as impressed with his own authority as with mine, and I want him to have gained a little wisdom about how to exercise that authority effectively in the world.

To collaborate effectively with the educators in the school, a parent or nanny does not want to be asking things like: "Were you good today?" or "Did you have a good day?" An educator and author, Mike Riera, says be careful that you are not "interviewing for pain." You will get what you are afraid of.

I hope that at CDS being sent to the principal's office is neither a good nor a bad experience, but a constructive one, one in which people leave with a better idea of their role in the school and how they can pursue it more effectively.

Character development is not about becoming a good person, but about being your unique self more effectively. All the teachers at CDS are doing this all the time. I just hang around and try to be helpful when I can.

Children in Action

On Thursday, November 13th, from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m., the CDS Middle School will be having an Author's Night at Maxfield's Cafe across the street at 17th and Dolores. We invite all CDS parents to join us. We will be reading essays, poems, short stories, and random writings. Please come!

—CDS Middle School

Sign-up for Speech Screening for Preschool through 2nd grade

Barbara Rockman, licensed Speech Pathologist, is offering her services to CDS families again for preschool through 2nd grade. Attached to last week's *Weekly* (for preschoolers through 2nd grade) was a permission slip to sign up your child for speech screening. Extra permission slips are located at the front desk. **Please note that the deadline for turning in permission slips is this Friday, November 7th. The cost is \$30/ child (per screening). Please make your check payable to Barbara Rockman and turn it into the envelope at the front desk.** The dates for the actual screenings are as follows:

Monday, November 10th:

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 11th:

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 12th:

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Remember to Sign-up for November Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are being held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, November 20th and 21st. (Reminder that there is no school on these days). Sign up sheets to schedule a conference with your child's teacher are posted on the bulletin board just inside the front door of school. **You must come into the school to sign up for a conference.** Conferences will be 30 minutes in length and sign-up will be on a first come-first served basis.

Early Drop-off Is Now Available On a Drop-In Basis

Have an early meeting or conference call? Maybe you would like to squeeze an early workout in? If so, you can now drop your child off early any school day of the week on a drop-in basis. No notification is necessary.

Early care is available Monday through Friday in the Teddy Bear room from 7:30-8:00 a.m. The cost for drop-in is \$10.00. If you prefer, you may sign up for the whole month at \$60.00, or if you know what your schedule looks like already, you can sign up for the whole school year at \$500.00. See you in the morning!!!

Extended Program News

Lights, Camera, Action!

CDS has agreed to allow a camera crew from the California Raisin Company to come to our after school program on Thursday, November 12th to make a publicity video. The camera crew will be on site for about an hour, and will first spend a bit of time teaching interested students raisin songs and dances and then do filming for about 30 minutes. Permission forms will be sent home with those students who regularly stay in the extended program on Thursday afternoons. Only the first twenty students to have permission forms in to Jenna's box will be able to participate.

Winter Break Camp:

Sign up packets for the upcoming Winter Break Camp are going home this week in students' backpacks. The camp runs December 29th-January 2nd and is open to preschool, elementary and middle school students. The theme for this year's winter camp is: The World's Celebrations. There will be lots of extra cooking, art, theater, science activities, plus time to play and relax with good friends and fun teachers.

The Afternoons are Now Dark

If your child stays past 5:00 p.m. and has a flashlight, please have her/him bring it in! Preschool and elementary teachers have some fun after-dark activity ideas that flashlights will be useful for.

—Jenna Stephens, Extended Program Coordinator, x15

Hola Padres!!

Como estan?

In 1st grade during the month of November, we are going to learn about food (vegetables, fruits, fish, meat, bread, etc.), how to ask about some thing you want or you like during dinner time, how to cook Spanish recipes and how to buy food at the store. For example, how much will it cost (we'll review currency: un dollar, dos dolares, tres dolares y dos centavos, etc.). Finally, we will be celebrating Thanksgiving dinner in different cultures.

La frase de la semana es:

Me gusta/n..... I like.....

No me gusta/n..... I don't like.....

Ejemplo: Singular: Me gusta el chocolate (I like chocolate),

Plural: Me gustan los platanos (I like bananas)

Singular: No me gusta la soda (I don't like soda),

Plural: No me gustan los ratones (I don't like mice)

Hasta la vista!

—The Spanish Department

Annual Fund Update

Pledges and donations to this year's annual fund continue to come in to school. THANK YOU to all who have committed to supporting CDS through the annual fund. To date, we have received \$140,000 in pledges or gifts, and 49% of our parents have participated! As you know, our goal is to have 100% of our parents participating. This high level of parent participation is important because it makes our case stronger when we approach foundations and individuals outside of our immediate community for donations. If you have not yet made your commitment, someone from the Development Committee will be calling you soon.

—Beth Ditlefsen, Development Director

Grandparents' & Special Friends' Day

Invitations have been mailed for Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day, Nov. 26th, 2003, 8:30 a.m.– 12:00 p.m., to all of those for whom we have addresses on file. If you did not return the lavender form in the summer mailing and have a special friend or relative you'd like to invite, you may pick up an invitation from the front desk. Let's make this a very special day for friends and relatives to visit with the children and their teachers in the classrooms and see CDS in action! If you have questions about the day, please email or call Beth Ditlefsen, x23, bethd@cds-sf.org.

—Beth Ditlefsen, Development Director

Parent Education Committee Update

The CDS Parent Education Committee, along with Rick and Aimee, had its first meeting in early October. Our purpose is to plan and organize educational programs (e.g. workshops, lectures, reading/discussion groups, etc.) that are mutually beneficial to both parents and teachers at CDS. This year our primary focus is on developing and organizing our first event (currently scheduled for the evening of January 21st, 2004). The format will likely have an opening presentation followed by related smaller discussions or demonstrations. The broad working topic is, "What does CDS faculty know that parents can use at home?" We would like to hear from the community about their questions/interests within the topic of partnership and continuity between home and school. Are you interested in limit-setting techniques teachers use or how project work, the responsive classroom or curriculum subjects can be continued at home? Talk to us, write to us and give us your input. Any ideas or suggestions will really help us design this year's event with the faculty as well as develop future programs.

Co-chairs: Candy Mabry (candym@cds-sf.org or 861-5432, x25)

Kate Flynn Becker (kateflynn@earthlink.net or 586-2091)

4th Annual CDS Holiday Book Fair

Is it possible to have a great time, support our school library *and* cross items off of your holiday shopping list? On December 10th it is. Come to the CDS Book Fair to purchase books, enjoy terrific conversation, sip wine and munch hors d'oeuvres. Twenty percent of *all* sales – books purchased for the CDS library AND gift books for your family and friends – will go toward the library's book fund.

When you buy one or more titles for the library from a table of pre-selected, teacher-approved books, these books will help to support classroom work and build the library collection, which is available to every child at CDS.

Choosing gift books for your family and friends will be easier and more fun this year, thanks to the "CDS Recommends" books we're highlighting at the book fair. There's sure to be something for everyone on your list in our wide-ranging selection of titles personally recommended by our parents, faculty, staff and students. "CDS Recommends" titles – everything from cookbooks to poetry, novels to art books – will be displayed on special tables, with placards giving short descriptions and the recommenders' names.

More details about the book fair - including special guest authors, childcare, parking, and additional ways to support the library – will be coming in the following weeks. So mark your calendar for the CDS Holiday Book Fair now:

4th Annual CDS Holiday Book Fair
Wednesday, December 10th, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books
601 Van Ness Avenue, Opera Plaza

If you would like to volunteer to help with the book fair, please contact Sally Nielsen at sn@hausrath.com or (415) 861-4575.

CDS Parent-Teacher-Trustee-Administrator
Association: PTTA Update
Friday Morning Coffee

Suffering from separation anxiety...from fellow adults? Try to schedule a few free minutes into your Friday morning to join other parents for hot coffee and grown up conversation outside in the yard after drop off, 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

PTTA Questions or Ideas?

Contact Marion Quinones at 701-1957 or
MQuinones@fbm.com.

Do You Prefer *The Weekly* by Email?

If you would like to help us reduce our paper usage and receive the *Weekly* via email, please drop us a quick email at cdsweekly@cds-sf.org and give us your email address. Also, let us know the name and class of the child your hard copy usually goes home with so we can remove him or her from the classroom distribution list. Thanks!

Upcoming on the CDS Calendar



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No School on these days

Reminder to sign up for your conference at the front hallway bulletin board!

Wednesday, November 26th

8:30 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.

Grandparents' and Special Friends' Day

Noon Dismissal

Thursday, November 27th

Friday, November 28th

Thanksgiving Break

No School

How to Submit to *The CDS Weekly*.
Submissions are to be received **no later than Wednesday at 8:00 a.m.** Please email them to cdsweekly@cds-sf.org.