



April 7, 2005

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Growing Nice Kids

"Friday when I was leaving school, I saw Samuel and Christian walking into the parking lot. They saw Aidan, a Tadpole, and his dad walking the other direction. Sam and Christian both yelled enthusiastic goodbyes to Aidan and his dad. I could tell Aidan's dad was impressed with how nice the 7th graders were. So was I. . . . It was a nice way to end the week," reported CDS art teacher Elizabeth McClellan.

We have nice kids. Teachers say so when they say what they like about teaching at Children's Day School. Visitors to the school remark on it. I agree. Our students are friendly and outgoing. "Hi, Mr. Rick." It keeps us all going, even when we are down about something.

Objectively speaking, of course, they are just regular kids. There is nothing more special about this group of kids than another group of 210 elementary school kids. I know it's wrong of me to say that, but it's true. All kids are fabulous. Whether or not they always behave in fabulous ways is a different matter. AND, their behavior is something over which we have some control. We adults do make a difference. Sometimes we make a difference individually by saying the right thing at the right time, or teaching a great lesson, or doing something fun together. Sometimes we get lucky. Mostly, the individual difference we make, we make by being who we are.

Why then do we feel so frustrated sometimes? Why are the things we often do to change a child's behavior ineffective? If we have control, why do we feel out of control? The reason is that the control we have is more collective than individual. Most of the credit (or blame) for how our children behave goes to the context in which they live: the quality of their social and physical environment—their culture. Lee Ross, professor at Stanford University and co-author of *The Person and the Situation: Perspectives of Social Psychology*, is one of many who shows that context is a better predictor of behavior than character. Whether someone says "Hi," or lies or resolves conflicts with his or her fists is more a result of the situation they are in than whether or not they "know better."

For example, Save the Children Federation was founded by Americans who wanted to help children who were suffering in the U.S. and in other countries around the world. Individuals would adopt a child and send them clothes, toys, books and letters. Save the Children discovered that they could not really help a child without helping the entire community in which the child was growing up. The organization began focusing on community development.

Hot Dates

Friday, April 8
10:15-10:30 a.m.

Friday assembly
Sixth grade class presenting

Monday, April 11

Spring enrichment classes begin



Thank You!

- To the kindergarten parents for providing an amazing faculty and staff appreciation breakfast and especially to Constance Laflamme for planning and serving.
- To Aidan in the Tadpole class and Isabel in the 4/5th grade class for bringing in plants for the pollinator gardens.

I came to Children's Day School precisely because it is a great environment in which to raise kids. There are so many dimensions to this great environment, and we are well aware of them. One dimension is that "Children's" has an apostrophe in it. We believe in children. It is a foundational belief. We believe not so much because our faith is scientifically justifiable. (There is plenty of evidence that children are as likely to be mean as kind, as likely to be irresponsible as responsible, as likely to be disrespectful as respectful.) It's just that we know that children—all people really—tend to live up (or down) to our expectations of them.

Samuel, Christian and Aidan are indeed nice kids—objectively speaking. These seventh graders said "Hi" to the preschooler because it was the natural thing for them to do. The seventh graders are buddies with the Tadpoles, after all. All of our students are great kids—objectively speaking—no question. AND, if we want to keep it that way, it is wise for us to follow the example of these two middle school boys.

Greeting someone is building community. Seeing an act of kindness and reporting it is building community. Partnering up with someone to do something is building community. Asking someone for help or money is building community. Taking a leadership role in organizing a community event is building community, as is just showing up. If we want to be effective in raising our children, we will devote a large chunk of our psychic energy to building community. Thank you, Samuel and Christian for leading us—even if you weren't even trying.

The Dirt

Join Eatwell Farm

If you want to eat affordable organic produce, help protect the environment and support a local organic farm, join Eatwell Farm. It's an economical and environmentally sustainable way of growing, delivering and eating food. All

you need to do is call and make a payment over the phone (800-648-9894) and Eatwell Farm will deliver produce to CDS for pick-up on Wednesdays. You can pick up a brochure at the front desk from Rose or call Misty at x2I if you have any questions.

From the Office

Starfish Changes

During spring vacation Ms. Elena took a fall and fractured her arm. The fracture was serious enough to require surgery and she has been told to refrain from working for the next two months. Thankfully, Elena should have a full recovery and in the interim James Bannister will be with the Starfish class until she returns. Thank you for your understanding and if you get the chance, stop by and say hello to James.

Events

Going Once, Going Twice

If you missed the auction or didn't get your fill of auction shopping, there are a few items still for sale as well as a couple of spaces available at events hosted by CDS families. All are first come, first serve – either send an e-mail to auction@cds-sf.org or check with Marion or Lauren on the third floor to claim one or more of these goodies.

- *Wine Tasting and Dinner at the home of Tracy Kirkham and Joe Cooper* – Join other CDS families for a light dinner catered by 7th grade mom Susie Carlson of On Occasion Catering and a tasting of select sauvignon blanc and pinot noir wines. Date to be determined, cost \$70/person.
- *Mother's Day Champagne and Schubert in the War Memorial Green Room* – Treat mom and the whole family to an afternoon of chamber music performed by CDS moms Gayle Tsern Strang and Kara Schleunes in the Green Room on Sunday, May 8. Reception will follow; \$40 for a family of four.
- *Mt. Kilimanjaro Slides and Buffet Dinner* – Host Patricia Buse-Ruppert will share her slides of Mt. Kili and a safari in Kenya and Tanzania in her living room on the evening of Saturday, May 7. \$50/person.
- *One Semester at the SF Conservatory of Music* – Purchase this gift certificate (\$350 value) to the SF Conservatory of Music for only \$175. The

certificate applies to the 16-week fall 2005 semester for a child ages 4 to 8 to participate in Dalcroze-Eurythmics, a study of music through active listening.

- *Cantrell Portrait Design Package* – One studio session in Pleasant Hill and an 8x10 print for \$180. Nine other packages like this were purchased at the auction; only one is still available.
- *Gift Certificate to “My Gym”* – My Gym opens this month on Minnesota Street in Potrero Hill. This \$145 gift certificate is good for an 8-week session of fitness for kids ages 3 months to 9 years. CDS price is only \$60.
- *One Month Membership at Curves Stonestown* – This women-only gym membership is valued at \$208 and can be purchased for only \$50.
- *SF MOMA Guest Passes* – Four adult passes to SF MOMA for only \$20.
- *Hapkido Karate* – Get one month of twice-weekly karate classes plus a uniform and a private lesson for only \$40.
- *Three Sessions of Private, In-Home Obedience Training for Your Dog* – Super Dogs will make three house calls to work with dog and owner on obedience and behavior modification. Cost is \$100.

Thank you for shopping!

Auction Portraits

If you had your photo taken by John Kraus at the auction, please come upstairs to pick up your print. They are beautiful and a display of all portraits can be previewed in the first floor hallway. Please see either Marion or Lauren on the third floor to claim your photo.

Scenes from Macbeth

The seventh grade production of *Scenes from Macbeth* will take place on Thursday and Friday, April 21 and 22, at 8 p.m. on the 3rd floor stage. Please come support the seventh grade class. This will be a donation-only event.

Also, if you have lighting experience and would be willing to help out, please contact Emilie at emilier@cds-sf.org.

Auction Vases

If you took home a centerpiece from the Spring Celebration & Auction, please return the vases to the designated box next to Rose's desk.

Extended Program News

Summer Camp

Everyone should have received a summer camp registration packet. If not, there are more available at the front desk. Enrollment has started and is open to non-CDS families. If you are interested in having your child participate, please register soon. Camp spaces are limited and are filling up.

Spring Enrichment Classes

Classes begin the week of April 11. Complete (and exciting) registration packets have been sent home. If you did not receive one, please pick one up at the front desk. Please note: Maximum Movie Making and Cartooning have been cancelled.

Boys and Girls Club

Beginning April 11, after school groups will have a new schedule for visiting the Boys and Girls Club.

- 4/5th grade: Mondays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- 3rd grade: Tuesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- 2nd grade: Wednesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- 1st grade: Thursdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

New Afternoon Highlights

Starting Wednesday, April 6, Mario DiGrande (parent of 2nd grader, Tyler) will be leading a free fundamentals of sports program in the yard from 4-5 p.m. It is open to students signed up for the after school program in grades 2-7.

Starting Friday, April 15, Mollie Ring (1st grade after school teacher) will be leading groups of students in a spring mural project. It is free and open to students signed up for the after school program in grades K-7.

Hola Familias de CDS

Hola a todas las familias de CDS!

I hope everyone enjoyed spring vacation. I would like to share a resource with you so that you can practice Spanish with your children at home.

Espanol para Chicos y Grandes is an interactive Spanish course for children and parents. It's great fun to use and comes with a workbook and CD. Rita Wirkala is the author and it can be ordered and previewed at www.allbilingual.com. This is currently being used in the 2nd grade class but can be used with children of all ages. If you would like a copy of some of the activities for your family, let Geddes know (geddesf@cds-sf.org).

The kindergarten class is studying insects and words such as *bormiga* (ant.)

1st grade students are reviewing sentences such as, *Puedo ir all bano?* (May I go to the bathroom?)

The 2nd graders just completed an activity creating their neighborhoods in Spanish.

The 3rd grade students just completed skits, which were filmed and are available for viewing. They are now moving into sequenced storytelling.

4th/5th graders will be finishing their skits and will then work on present tense verbs and storytelling.

Geddes' 6th and 7th grade classes have just completed their biographies and will now be working on storytelling and creating a bilingual publicity poster for *Macbeth*.

Gladys' 6th and 7th grade classes are studying words related to shopping and present tense verbs.

La frase de la semana. The phrase of the week.

Como estas hoy? How are you today?

— Spanish Department

Upcoming Dates

Thursday, April 21 & Friday, April 22

8 p.m.

Scenes from Macbeth

Seventh grade class

Third floor stage

Friday, April 22

10:15 a.m.

Earth Day celebration

CDS yard

Children's Day School

333 Dolores Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

415-861-5432 (ph)

415-861-5419 (fax)

www.cds-sf.org

Editor: Mary DeNardo, cdsweekly@cds-sf.org

Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the *Weekly* via email





