

# Peace of Mind Newsletter

Issue 11

April 15, 2016



Linda Ryden  
Jillian Diesner

## This Week in Peace Class....



*A Special Visitor – see pg. 2*

### Contents

This Week In Peace	1
Good Read of the Week	1
Grades 1-5 News	1
PK-K News	2
Ask Your Child	2

### Good Read of the Week:

Learn more about how [turning off](#) our gadgets can make us happier.

## First through Fifth Grade Peace Updates

**In first through fifth grade we are continuing to learn about** Conflict Resolution through stories, role-playing, and doing skits. We are learning about the concept of conflict – that conflicts are just problems. They can turn into fights but they don't have to. We are applying what we learned about our brains and how they work when we are angry to help us with our conflict resolution skills.

**In fourth and fifth grade** we are continuing to focus on gratitude and overcome our brain's negativity Bias with our Tell Me Something Good Assignments. I've asked the kids to look for something good in nature, to find some good news, to notice people doing kind things for others, or just to notice something good in their own lives. They love doing it and it has led to some wonderful discussions. Plus we get to sing which is always fun!

*-Linda*

**At Lafayette, we  
Speak, Act, and Move  
Mindfully**

We're on the Web at:

[www.teachpeaceofmind.com](http://www.teachpeaceofmind.com)



Like Peace of Mind  
on Facebook

**Ask Your Child**  
***What does it  
mean to calm  
down? How do you  
do it?***

***Did you lose your  
jewel in the  
concentration  
game?***



Lafayette ES  
5701 Broad Branch Rd,  
Northwest  
Washington, DC 20015

Phone:  
(202) 282-0116

E-mail:  
[Linda.Ryden@dc.gov](mailto:Linda.Ryden@dc.gov)  
[Jillian.Diesner@dc.gov](mailto:Jillian.Diesner@dc.gov)

Henry Cohen, Ms. Ryden's son and District Rubik's Cube Champ, visited Peace Club on several different days, to the delight of many Rubik's cube enthusiasts! He amazed kids with his ability to solve their complex cubes in under a minute. Some lucky students even got their cubes autographed. Thanks, Henry!



## Pre-K and K Peace Class Updates

We completed our Cookie Monster self-control series, although due to a district-wide problem with accessing You Tube videos not all classes were able to watch the Sesame Street series that accompany the topics. If you'd like to access them at home here are the links again: [Star S'mores](#), [The Biscotti Kid](#), and [The Spy Who Loved Cookies](#). There are many more parodies in this series online, but these three go along with the topics we covered in class.

An activity we did in all classes that really captured the kids' attention (literally) was play the *Jewels of Concentration* game. This game was introduced to staff years ago by one of our Kennedy Center actors-in-residence, and it still proves to be a hit with even the littlest kids today. The game is very simple. The children stand in a large circle, freeze their bodies, and hold their hands cupped in front of them. I walk around the circle and place a plastic jewel in their hands, with instructions to concentrate on the jewel but not touch it or play with it. Once everyone can do that, we move on to harder "levels" where I attempt to get them to laugh or "lose their concentration," then they lose their jewels. It's always amazing to see how much self-control these little bodies can get during this game. They can ignore both me and their classmates making silly faces right in front of them, staring through me as though they don't see me. The point of the game, of course, is to teach children to train their focus and not get distracted by others around them. They were amazing!

Next we have begun talking about how to manage strong feelings such as anger. We used the 1-5 scale to rate the size of our anger. 1= calm and cool and 5= exploding in a temper tantrum. We read a story about cooling down, and defined this as moving our anger from a higher number to a lower number on the feelings thermometer. We brainstormed and practiced simple strategies for self-calming in all classes, and will continue this topic as we learn about the Size of the Problem next week and start moving into simple conflict resolution strategies.

- Jillian