



PS 321

Number 2 2016

Green and Healthy



Celebrating Green&Healthy Month

January is our favorite month! At PS 321, we have dedicated an entire month to embracing Green&Healthy values. Let yourself be inspired by G&H passion in the classroom and around the school. Use the spirit of the new year to eat well, be active and embrace the 3Rs – Reduce Reuse and Recycle – at school and at home. This year we would like to introduce the idea of a 4th R: Refuse. Because the biggest lever in reducing waste is not producing waste. Plastic bags, single serve portions, clamshell and cardboard packaging... refuse, if you can.

Look out for recycling initiatives throughout the month and the popular G&H rewards stickers, and don't forget: G&H Family Night is coming up on January 28th.

Stay Green&Healthy!

The PS321
Green&Healthy
Mission: Instill
Everlasting Green
& Healthy Values
in our kids.

Expert Chat

G&H chats with Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner NYC Department of Sanitation, and PS 321 alumni. The NYC Department of Sanitation handles more than 10,500 tons of garbage every day and more than 1,760 tons of recyclables.

G&H: You manage the world's biggest sanitation department. What do you see as NYC's biggest waste-related achievement in recent times? How does it make an impact?

KG: By far the biggest achievement in recent memory was the clean-up after Super Storm Sandy. The Department of Sanitation collected over 400,000 tons from the impacted areas while at the same time continuing our regular

service across the city. Every day moving both the garbage and recyclables off the curb to their final destination is a feat of logistics, but during this particular period our ability to move material helped return communities to normal.

G&H: In Park Slope, we are part of the city's composting pilot program, and PS 321 students separate their organic waste every day in the cafeteria. Is composting here to stay and why is it important?

KG: Composting is here to stay. It is the cornerstone of sending zero waste to landfills. In NYC, over a third of our waste is organic and it can be used to produce methane for heating homes or as a soil amendment. We are changing from thinking of waste as something to put out of mind and as far from our communities as possible, to thinking of it as a resource.

G&H: What are the most common recycling mistakes in households?

KG: The most common mistakes are to include plastic bags, expanded polystyrene, flexible baby formula packages and mixed materials with recycling. An example of a mixed material is a plastic hanger with a metal hook on it. We are trying to sort materials to their purest form so a manufacturer can reuse them. The machines can't separate those materials.

G&H: During G&H month we learn a lot about the 3Rs: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. In your opinion, which of the three is the biggest lever in helping our environment?

KG: Reduction is absolutely the biggest lever. If we don't need it, we shouldn't buy it. Reuse and recycling still do have an environmental footprint.

G&H: If you had a recycling genie what would you wish for, and do you think it will ever become a reality? How?

KG: I would wish for achieving a closed loop econo

my, where everything that we use was designed to be reused. The less mixing of different materials in things like packaging, the easier it is to reuse and to recycle.

G&H: Thank you, Commissioner Garcia.

Did you know?

DSNY's Golden Apple Awards reward NYC public schools grades K-12 with cash prizes up to \$10,000 for implementing innovative and exemplary programs in recycling, waste prevention, and cleanup and beautification. Schools can compete in any or all of three contests by completing separate and distinct projects for each contest. The next Golden Apple Awards contest entry deadline is May 2, 2016. Any takers?

Reducing Waste Starts Here at School

At PS 321 we do our best to use materials with the environment in mind. One very tangible introduction to the concept of waste and recycling happens in the lunchroom. Kids pass solid plastics recycling, composting, and trash bins on their way out. Our goal is to keep landfill waste to a minimum. Bringing a no-waste lunch not only helps achieve this goal, but it shows kids how this behavior benefits them directly!

- Maximum time to eat during an already short lunch break (15-20 minutes).
- Minimizing lunch room stress, especially for younger kids, by not having to deal with trash and recycling.

For 3rd grader Montgomery Douglass, 3M7, a no-waste lunch is an obvious extension to what he learns at school and home: "I am contributing to less landfill." His brother Marshall, 2M10, shares a more practical view: "I get to avoid the trash line and I am always at the front of the line for the next period."

Steps to a no-waste lunch

Use reusable containers, sandwich wraps, and water bottles. Stay away from single serve portions for yogurt, applesauce, raw vegetables or crackers and use reusable containers instead. Avoid ziplocks. Include reusable utensils.

Talk about what leftovers can be brought home. For no-trash-lunch ideas check out the Trash-O-Meter display in the lobby during G&H month.

TIP: If your kid comes home often with a half-eaten lunch, reiterate that the lunch period is for eating and there will be time to socialize during recess. Make sure your child can open lunch containers independently. And before you put those cookies or treats in your child's lunch, remember those are often eaten first, leaving less (or no) time for the good stuff. We always welcome lunchroom volunteers! Email lunchroom coordinator Catherine Douglass at catherineaseward@gmail.com

I think I can, I think I can, I think I can... run the NYC Marathon

By parent Elyse Meyerson

I started running recreationally about 4 years ago. I always watched the NYC Marathon with awe thinking I could never do that! My husband, Bruce said, 'why can't you?!' and he planted a seed. I began training more seriously and my first training breakthrough was when training for the Brooklyn Half. 13.1 miles seemed so daunting, but I gave it a try. It was an amazing feeling to finish! Knowing I could finish!

I trained using an online plan by Hal Higdon, a veteran marathoner, and speaking to people who had run marathons. I was careful about my training, not to overdo it, but still got injured after an 18 mile training run. It was discouraging, because it made running much harder. But I never gave up, because I didn't want to give up! I was scared that I could never get through the rest of the training, but knew that I had to.

The night before November 1st, and my first ever marathon I barely slept. The start was really strange. Everyone was standing around on the Verrazano Bridge waiting for the starting shot. We were all very nervous and very quiet, smiling at each other and wishing each other luck. It was really surreal. When we started, I looked at my watch going over the bridge and thought ok, only 25 more miles to go! Wait, what?!

I think the bridges were the hardest because there weren't any people to cheer us on. At one point, in mile 15, I felt like giving up, really. Then I got angry

and thought, 'forget giving up, no room for that, I've worked too hard.....'

By the end of the race, everything hurt: legs, feet and a few new pains, I'd never felt before. But seeing the finish in lights through the trees of Central Park was incredible!

Most amazing were people cheering every step of the way! Every time you come off a bridge into a new borough, there was a whole new crowd of people. I could not have run that race without the amazing cheers of friends and spectators.

I am hoping that through the experience of training and running the marathon, I was able to show myself and my kids that you can achieve anything with practice and commitment. There is no easy path to take.....just keep running and believing that you can do this!

Professional Development

Every Monday, teachers have professional development after students leave for the day. On January 11, the afternoon will be dedicated to Green&Healthy activities.

Teachers can choose from 10 different G&H-minded workshops: Parents and teachers offer anything from yoga and cooking, to gardening and hip-hop with the goal for participating teachers to embrace what they learn and take it to the classroom.

"My workshop will focus on various Yoga exercises that teachers can lead for students in the classroom," explains Lucy Nguyen, K and 1st Grade Movement Teacher. "We will learn physical exercises, breathing practices, and relaxation techniques with the limitations of the classroom space in mind." Parent and Garden Co-Chair Amy Crews will demonstrate how teachers can creatively and easily use the school garden with their classes and incorporate the school garden into the curriculum. "We will also share in-class activities for the colder months," Amy explains. With the help of the movie "The Story Of Stuff" Beth Handman, PS 321 Asst. Principal will take a fact-filled look at the underside of production and consumption patterns and provide teachers with practical guidelines towards working on efforts to promote positive changes. "Hip Hop is a great way to exercise and stay healthy," explains 3rd grade teacher Anneliese

Torgenson. "Let loose and have fun while working up a sweat!" she adds. A highlight will surely be the volleyball game lead by PS 321 Phys. Ed. Teachers Gloria Carroll & Victor Popovsky.

Mark your calendars now for Green&Healthy Night on January 28th!

Recycle, compost, taste some new healthy foods, meet a local food vendor or two, create toys and jewelry out of recycled material and move your body. Email co-chairs Emily Wenner and Orit Carroll to volunteer or for more info: Emily.Wenner@gmail.com

PS 321 Teachers Embrace Green&Healthy: Lucy Nguyen, K and 1st Grade Movement Teacher:

"This summer, we were lucky enough to spend four weeks at my mom's house in Maine. My three year old son, Otto, was able to plant seeds with his grandmother and harvest his homegrown lettuce for salad before we left. We also ate fresh raspberries, blueberries, summer squash, tomatoes, and cucumber from her garden."

Karyn Wulwick 3-306: "I recently spent time in Montreal and definitely saw lots of healthy activity in the form of biking. The city has many bike paths that people use all times of the day. So did I! I rented a bike pass for a couple of days and explored the different neighborhoods of the city by bike. It was so much fun."

Clare Maloney K-214: "I am excited to start the body unit in January. It is new in Kindergarten this year and combines the G&H initiative with a closer scientific study of our body and how it works."

Maria Chale K and 1st Grades Science Teacher:

"This summer I visited my mother in Tanzania and I was treated to a feast of organic foods. My mother plants her own vegetables and is very big on organic gardening. I had spinach, lettuce and traditional Ngoni Greens. And pineapple, papaya, bananas, oranges, passion fruit and mangos straight from her garden. I was in sheer heaven! Mama also raises her own free range chickens and the eggs produced by her chickens are delicious and nutritious."

Laurie Basloe 5-337: "As a class, we will be doing a yoga pose everyday in January!"

Every Kid in a Park!

Calling all Fourth Graders! The National Park Foundation has announced a new initiative to get all 4th graders and their families into our national parks, national forests and national wildlife refuges free of charge from now until August 2016! Families of 4th graders should go to www.everykidinapark.org to download your free pass.

I got a crush on you...or not?

Chocolate chip cookies, ice cream, sodas! Our taste buds – and brains – just love that sweet sensation. When you eat sugar, it enters your blood rapidly because there are absolutely no nutrients to slow it down. Sugar raises glucose levels in your blood, causing you to feel hyper and unable to focus. To process the sugar, a hormone called insulin is being released. Insulin helps the glucose leave your blood and enter your cells, providing a rush of energy for them. Eating a lot of sugar forces the insulin to work overtime, and your blood sugar to drop too low. This time, the brains reacts differently: you might feel tired, grumpy, agitated or anxious. And more often than not, craving more sugar.

Jon-Paul Rorech, parent of a 4th and 2nd grader, put the science to the test and went sugar-free for 4 months: "I found that sugar had direct correlation to emotional swings and energy levels. They remained much steadier. I found that my sleep improved as well." The experiment left him with a changed perspective: "I spend more time reading labels and actually understanding how much sugar is in many products. For instance, do you know that a 12oz Gatorade has 32 grams of sugar in it? The same as three bowls of captain crunch cereal or 8 individual packets of sugar!"

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 3 teaspoons (12 grams) of added sugar per day for kids, yet according to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, the average consumption is 23 teaspoons for boys and 18 for girls. Over-consumption of sugar also has long-term effects. Besides contributing to diseases like diabetes, heart disease and stroke, it may sup-

press the immune system by lowering the ability of our white blood cells to fight bacteria, which can lead to more colds, flus and other sicknesses. If you eat more sugar than your body can use in a day, it stores the sugar it doesn't need in the liver or converts it to fat. And did you know glycation is a process in which the sugar in your blood attaches to proteins that then damage collagen and elastin, which in turn leads to – gasp – wrinkles and sagging of the skin!



Harvest Day Favorites

Butternut Squash and Kale Frittata By Chef Olivia Williamson

Approximately 1 lb of butternut squash, cut into 1 inch cubes

1 bunch of kale, chopped roughly

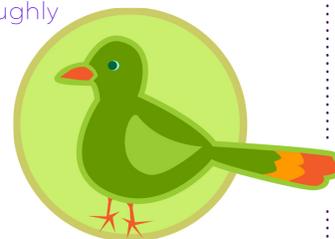
6 eggs

1/2 cup milk

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Olive oil

Salt and pepper



Place butternut squash on a sheet pan and coat lightly with olive oil, salt and pepper. Roast in a 400-degree oven until soft and slightly brown (about 20 minutes.) Meanwhile, sauté kale over

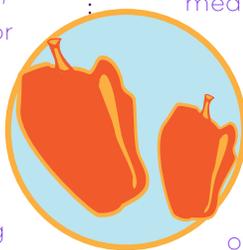
medium heat in a pan with olive oil, salt and pepper until soft. Place the kale and

butternut squash in a baking dish that's

been coated with a bit of olive oil. Beat the eggs and milk together and pour

over the vegetables. Sprinkle parmesan

over the top and bake in 400-degree oven until slightly browned on top (15-25 minutes depending on depth of pan.)



For questions, comments and suggestions email us at: [Green & Healthy: greenandhealthy@ps321.org](mailto:greenandhealthy@ps321.org)

Lunchroom and Salad Bar

Volunteer Coordinator:

Catherine Douglass: catherineaseward@gmail.com.

Garden Committee: ps321garden@ps321.org