

WILLIAM CRAMP

FIT FLYER

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Doctors' advice

Be sure you get a lot of ZZZZzzzz's

Getting a good night's sleep is important because while you're sleeping your body resets and does its growing, said Dr. Priya Vyas, a doctor at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children.

"Your body is working to heal and grow and make you a bigger, better person," she recently told the *Fit Flyer* staff. "If you don't get enough sleep, you can feel cranky, find it harder to focus, and when going to school you will find paying attention difficult."

Dr. Vyas is a pediatric resident. That means she is training to be a medical specialist who treats children.

The pandemic has affected kids' sleep habits because their normal routines have changed, according to Dr. Jordy Salcedo, another St. Christopher's pediatric resident.

"Most kids actually need more sleep than they're getting," said Dr. Vyas.

Health experts say children in elementary school should sleep between 9 and 12 hours every night.

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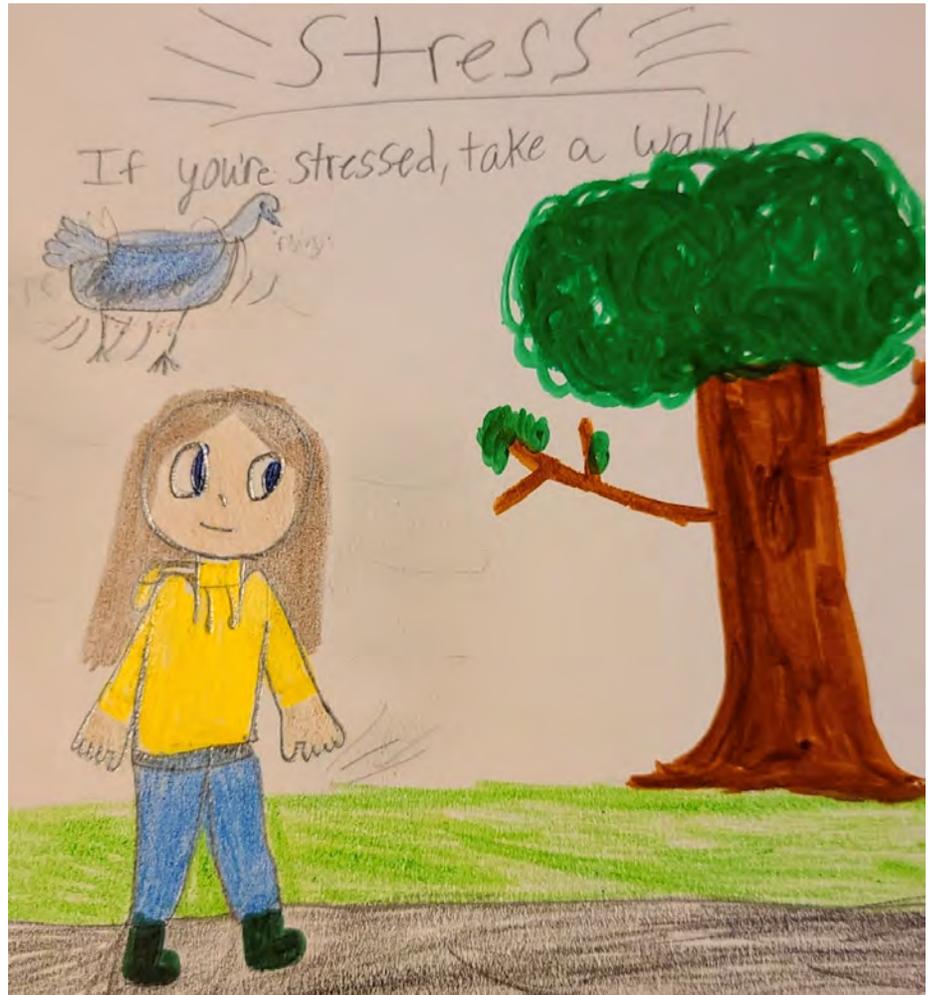


Illustration by Makayla Vargas

Author de-stresses outdoors

Reading, music, and dancing can help people feel happy or calm when they are stressed.

Ms. Lesa Cline-Ransome, a children's book author, recently told the Cramp *Fit Flyer* staff that taking a walk helps when she is stressed.

"I love being outdoors and I prefer to be outside when it's

really cold," said Ms. Cline-Ransome, who has written at least 20 picture books and four novels. "This morning it was 30 degrees and that felt great."

According to kidshealth.org, "stress is what you feel when you are worried or uncomfortable

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Writing can help you de-stress

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about something. This worry in your mind can make your body feel bad. You may feel angry, frustrated, scared, or afraid — which can give you a stomachache or a headache.”

Being creative for at least two hours each week can improve your mood and make you feel less stressed, according to a study by the University of Western Australia.

“Writing energizes me,” Ms. Cline-Ransome said. “When I’m just starting a project, I’m doing research and diving into information. When I’m learning about my characters and different subjects, that energizes me. I can’t wait to get up in the morning and start working.”

She said she finds writing stressful when she is trying to figure out how to start a story, or if she has

a deadline and has other things to do such as paying bills or washing dishes.

“Once I get into the story and I start writing, it makes me feel very relaxed if I know I’m going in the right direction,” she said.

Ms. Cline-Ransome said that kids should “get outside, get some fresh air” when they feel stressed.

“Be alone and outside in nature to appreciate the world around you,” she said.

Keeping a journal is also a good way for you to write down your thoughts when you are feeling stressed.

“Spending time with family is a great way to feel supported and nourished,” she said, “and know you’re surrounded by people who love you and care about you.”

—By Fit Flyer staff

Lessons learned during the pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic taught a children’s book author that she needed to spend more time with her family.

Before the pandemic, Lesa Cline-Ransome said she traveled a lot. Now, she does virtual visits from her home in upstate New York, which allow her to be in different places every day.



One of those recent visits was with the staff of the *Fit Flyer*.

“It made me realize I travel too much, need to be home more, need to spend more time with family,” she said.

After the pandemic started, she said three of her four children came home to stay with her and her husband. They would eat dinner at 5:30 p.m. and would sit together for hours, laughing and talking. The pandemic made them feel closer, Ms. Cline-Ransome said.

She said she also learned that she was able to write better and focus better from home.

“Sitting at my desk is different than if I’m writing in an airport waiting for them to call my flight or in a hotel knowing I have to speak in 30 minutes,” she said.

Ms. Cline-Ransome said it’s important to stay connected to your community. She is part of a few groups, including a writers’ group. They stayed connected through email and Zoom chats, she said.

“Sometimes when you’re writing you feel very much alone,” she said. “It’s important to support each other, especially when you’re feeling very much alone.”

During the pandemic, she said, she has made it a point to check up on neighbors to see whether they need something.

She also has changed one habit during the pandemic. She buys books to support her local bookstore instead of borrowing books from the library.

“I made sure each week I bought a book from my local bookstore because I wanted to make sure that the bookstore survived,” she said. “I donated money to other local businesses so they could pay the people who worked for them.” —By Fit Flyer staff

The Fit Flyer wants to hear from you!

We’d love to consider your articles or illustrations to publish in the *Fit Flyer* and the 2021 book created by children in the *Healthy NewsWorks* network of schools. William Cramp belongs to the network!

Here are two ideas to write about!

1. Tell about something you have learned or been able to do that you might not have discovered without the pandemic.

2. What do you find you are missing most during the pandemic? Have you found something to do that helps you? If so, what is that?

How to get a good night's rest

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"You want to make sure you're not tired the next day," Dr. Salcedo said. "If you don't get enough sleep, you'll be tired and groggy and not able to concentrate as well at school."

Here are some tips from Dr. Salcedo and Dr. Vyas about getting a good night's sleep.

- Stop having caffeine in the afternoon
- Have a "good sleep routine" - which means keeping to a schedule or process every night
- Turn off phones, video games, TVs, anything with a screen, one or two hours before going to bed
- Read a book
- Turn off all the lights
- Don't eat snacks and sugar before bed
- Be comfortable
- The bed should only be for sleeping

Here are some answers to other questions that the *Fit Flyer* staff asked Dr. Salcedo and Dr. Vyas:

Q: Is it bad to talk in your sleep?

A: Talking in your sleep is not good or bad. It's just something that happens to some people.

Q: Is it good to have your mouth open when you're sleeping?

A: This is different for different people. Most times you breathe through your nose when you're sleeping. Sometimes if you're congested, you might breathe through your mouth. That can dry out your mouth.

Q: If you have a stuffy nose how can you sleep at night without it bothering you?



Illustration by Makayla Vargas

A: You might want to talk to your doctor about it. If it's allergies, there are medicines you can take. Sometimes if you have a cold, there are things you can do to rinse out your nose before you go to bed that will make you more comfortable.

—By Fit Flyer staff

What life is like for fifth graders

"When the pandemic started, I thought we were going out of school for a few weeks, until it became almost a whole year. All of us are stuck in quarantine doing online school and it's getting worse. [Looking at a screen all the time] is giving us a headache and you can't meet anybody in person but your family. But we are starting to get a vaccine to protect against coronavirus. Now it's almost the end of the year and corona! I hope next year is better, so we can forget about this year." —Makayla Vargas

Before the pandemic I was able to go outside to play with my friends and go on vacation without a mask. That was a year ago, now we can't play outside

or go on vacation, or we risk being exposed to COVID. We can get sick. —Isaiah Matos

William Cramp Fit Flyer

A publication of William Cramp Elementary School in School District of Philadelphia. Student staff members are fifth graders and include Dena Carroll, Jenna Dominguez, Dalvin Jimenez, Isaiah Matos, Diomar Quinones, Isaiah Rodriguez, Ivory Rowell, Oryanna Sotomayor, Ethan Torres, and Makayla Vargas.

The *Fit Flyer's'* faculty advisor is Mr. Fitzsimmons. Mrs. Logan is the school principal.

A *Healthy NewsWorks®* project www.HealthyNewsWorks.org

Healthy NewsWorks is an independent nonprofit organization that seeks to empower elementary and middle school students to become researchers, writers, critical thinkers, and confident communicators who advance health understanding and literacy through their factual publications and digital media.

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What's it like to be an author?

Editor's note: Lesa Cline-Ransome is a successful children's book author. She was recently interviewed by the Fit Flyer about a number of topics including stress, COVID-19, and what it's like to be a writer. Here are answers to questions about her life as an author. The answers have been edited for length and clarity.

Q: Please tell us about a typical day in your life as a writer. Do you take breaks when you are writing? Where do you work?

A: I don't spend my whole day writing. I have a hard time just sitting here writing. I need a lot of breaks. A lot of my books require a lot of research. I probably spend more time researching than writing. I'll write for maybe an hour, then I get up and make some tea. Write for another hour, have a snack. Write for another hour and get up.

Q. How much do you write in a day?

A. A really good day will be five hours of writing. When I'm writing a novel, instead of thinking of it as hours of work, I try to aim for 1,000 words a day.

Q: When did you become interested in writing books?

A: I was about your age when I became interested in writing books. I used to go to the library a lot with my mom, and my mom gave me a diary when I was 10 years old.

I used to write stories in my journal. I loved reading stories but I really loved writing stories. I'm always the person telling stories in my family. Using words and stories to bring people together and make people laugh.

Q. What motivates you?

A. I love telling parts of African American history. I've been wanting to write books from a very early age. I'm motivated by the idea that you're creating stories that people can connect to or see themselves in or someone else's life in.

Q: What advice do you have for kids who don't like to write?

A. There are so many other ways you can express yourself—dance, art, music. But it doesn't have to always be the arts. As long as you find something that you love—math, science, anything that makes you feel happy and gives you a certain sense of peace or joy. Writing is just one way people find a way to express themselves.



Author Lesa Cline-Ransome has written two dozen books

Q: What is hard for you about writing books?

A: The hardest thing is when I'm doing the research, researching a difficult topic. It's sometimes hard to read about difficult topics over and over again.

Right now I'm writing a book about Congressman John Lewis, who was active in the civil rights movement, a non-violent protestor, and he had to endure so much hatred and injustice, a lot of physical harm, all in the name of just wanting to be treated as an equal as a citizen. It hurts me. It's sometimes hard for me to be reading day after day after day.

African Americans who had to endure a lot of racism and injustice in their lives. Sometimes I need a little break from it. Sometimes when you're reading it, thinking "what kind of world do we live in?" But even in the most difficult stories there are these moments of beauty, people coming together and that makes me feel energized, that makes me move onto the next story. They speak to hope.

Q. What is easy for you about writing books?

A. What's easy? When I finally know the story I want to tell and I can sit down and have the time and space and sit down in the house when it's quiet and I can just write it. I'm typing and happy, it makes me feel complete utter joy. Those are my best days.