

# ELEANOR EMLEN

# HEALTHY ROAR

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## Emlen welcomes new school nurse

Mia Renwick, C.S.N., Emlen's new school nurse, says group activities help students to build relationships and get exercise.

They can help physical and mental health, according to experts at the Mayo Clinic, a hospital and research organization. Group activities can help you get exercise and can also reduce stress and help you feel less lonely.

Nurse Mia shared her own experiences with group activities in a recent interview with Emlen *Healthy Roar* reporters and talked about some of the things she is excited to start as she begins the new school year. Nurse Mia's answers have been lightly edited.

**Question: Tell us about your role at the school.**

**Nurse Mia:** My job is to make sure kids are healthy and safe from injuries. I provide first aid and make sure that kids have their proper vaccinations to come to school. I also do health screenings and educate families about how to stay healthy.

**Question: What kinds of group activities are good for a student's physical health?**

**Nurse Mia:** Students can participate in school-based activities in PE class and during after-school sports. They can also participate in group activities like swimming or doing karate. My own child does karate and it helps him get fit, make friends, and practice focus.

*(Please see **Routines** Page 2)*

## Survey says: Reporters like group activities

A *Healthy Roar* survey of 15 Emlen fourth-grade reporters showed that most students participated in group activities that are sports. Football, basketball, track, soccer, and dodgeball were mentioned by reporters.

Of the 15 students, 10 participate in a sport. Three students do online gaming in a group, and one



Illustration by *Healthy Roar* reporter

takes a drawing class in a group. Two students, although they don't participate in a sports team outside of school, enjoy the group activities they do in PE class. Fourteen students said they would recommend their activity; one student answered "maybe."

*(Please see **You can** Page 2)*

# Routines can make mornings easier

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**Question: What kinds of group activities are good for a student's mental health?**

**Nurse Mia:** Karate, like I said, is good for physical AND mental health. It's a positive and encouraging place and helps kids work on focus. When I was a kid, I participated in a pen-pal program where a group of students from Philadelphia would get together and write letters to other students around the country. We were able to make friends locally and connect with students in other areas we wouldn't normally meet.

**Question: What are your favorite group activities to do with students and why?**

**Nurse Mia:** I was so excited to learn about Girls on the Run from Dr. English, former Emlen school nurse. During Girls on the Run, which will start in the spring, students have opportunities to participate

in relationship building activities and exercise. I haven't started this program yet, but I'm learning about it and am really excited to get started.

**Question: What advice would you give to kids who are nervous about doing a group activity?**

**Nurse Mia:** If you're interested in starting a new group activity, just take the first step. Sign up and show up. Find someone you can introduce yourself to and make just one friend. That can help you feel more comfortable in a new activity. Group activities are a good way to build relationships and get exercise.

**Question: Is there anything you'd like to add?**

**Nurse Mia:** Make sure you're doing all the things to stay healthy.

1. Get enough sleep.
2. Pay attention to your screen time.
3. Read more.
4. Drink water and eat well.

# You can make friends on a team

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Reporters shared that group activities are more fun than doing things alone, so students have more fun and want to participate in them.

According to students, group activities and team sports give them the opportunity to work with a team to accomplish a goal.

Cliffari Joseph gets excited to participate on a team because the people he's playing with make him feel safe. "My team makes me happy and inspires me

to do my best for my team," said another reporter. A third said, "I feel calm and safe when I do gymnastics with a group."

Students shared that working on a team makes their team start to feel like a family because they're working together. One reporter said she enjoys the time she spends with friends. Another said even when his team loses, it's still fun because he still gets to play with friends. —By *Healthy Roar* reporters

# What reporters learned about gratitude

Gratitude is a feeling and an action. Gratitude can reduce stress, make us happier, lessen anxiety and reduce depression, help us sleep, and help keep our hearts healthy, according to experts at the Mayo Clinic, a large healthcare organization.

People can feel gratitude for things in their lives like friends and family, toys, experiences, a house, and food. To practice gratitude, experts recommend spending time with people, or writing thank you notes if you can't express gratitude in person.

"I am grateful for being able to be here and for my family and friends, said Cliffari Joseph, a *Healthy Roar* reporter. "My favorite time of the year is

Christmas because that's when my family and friends get together."

*If you'd like to write a thank you note to a staff member at Emlen, send it to Mr. Conallen and you may see it in a future issue of the Healthy Roar.*

*Eleanor Emlen Healthy Roar*

The *Healthy Roar* is a publication of the School District of Philadelphia. Fourth-grade staff members Messiah Davis, Lilian Folson, Cliffari Joseph Jr., Sloan Karter, and Ameir Thompson.

The *Healthy Roar*'s faculty advisor is Mr. Conallen and the school principal is Mrs. Thomas.

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