

# PHILADELPHIA HEBREW PUBLIC CHARTER

# HEALTHY INVESTIGATOR

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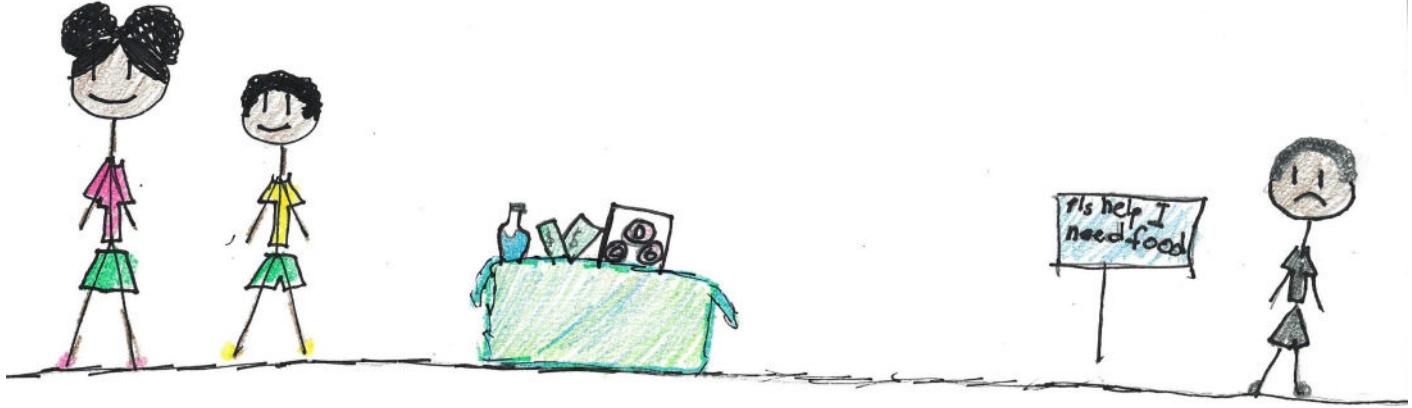


Illustration by Samayah Clayton

## Volunteering has many benefits

Several Philadelphia Hebrew Public staff members believe volunteering can be fun and meaningful, according to recent interviews with *Healthy Investigator* reporters.

"It feels good to help people," said Ms. Denisha Wilson, academic dean for grades 3 to 5.

Volunteering can help you make friends, get healthy, and have more activities than just staying home, said Dr. Eric Kim, a University of British Columbia professor, on the American Heart Association website. Dr. Kim also said that being a volunteer

with others can give people a "sense of purpose," which can lead to living healthier lives with better mental health.

Being a volunteer can also help reduce stress and anxiety and help fight depression, according to an article on the Mayo Clinic Health System website.

Ms. Wilson, who likes to be called Ms. W., said she has friends with children who needed help with schoolwork, so she offered to tutor them. She said she

*(Please see Volunteering on Page 2)*

## Therapist answers question about anxiety

It's important to talk about anxiety, said Tazariah Johnson, therapist for children and teens in the Philadelphia area, in an interview with *Healthy Investigator* reporters.

Anxiety is "a feeling of being worried, nervous, or afraid that something will happen," according to [kids.wordsmyth.net](http://kids.wordsmyth.net), a children's online dictionary.

Feelings of anxiety are normal, Ms. Johnson said. The feelings are like an alert system and help you react or prepare for something. For instance, you might be anxious about being in a school play or an upcoming soccer game.

Ms. Johnson offered this example of how someone might experience anxiety: "Imagine you're in a neighborhood that's unfamiliar and you are riding a bike or scooter. You hear a dog barking, but you don't see it. You may feel fearful, you start sweating. You may hyperventilate."

Anxiety can affect how children behave, how they think, what they remember or what they forget, said Ms. Johnson. It can also give children stomachaches or headaches, make them dizzy or feel tired or short of breath, she said.

*(Please see What to do on Page 3)*

# Volunteering is good for you too

*(Continued from Page 1)*

likes to help kids learn new things so they can grow. As a child, she said she helped out by carrying groceries and sweeping floors. You should “always find a way to be kind and help others,” said Ms. W.

Mr. Justin Moody, director of global studies, said, “There are many opportunities to volunteer, you just need to find the thing you like.” He said he volunteers to raise money for his son’s soccer team and his daughter’s theatre group.

Volunteering is important to Mr. Moody because he enjoys seeing his kids doing things that they like. When he was a child, he was a student mentor to help other kids. That taught him that volunteering was easy to do, according to Mr. Moody.

Miss Skylar Hetrick, student support counselor, said volunteering for the Red Cross during Hurricane Florence in North Carolina was very meaningful for her. She said she gets to meet new people when she volunteers.

“Trying different things gives an opportunity to try and learn about more of the world and about other people,” said Miss Skylar. She said she enjoys doing different things and volunteering with kids because she likes kids.

She also said she likes giving back to the community. She said she started volunteering for a program called AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps). This program is a community service



Illustration by Zion Campbell

program with volunteers helping many different areas of the United States in recovering from or preventing disasters, according to their website. You can also develop leadership skills from volunteering, according to Miss Skylar. She said volunteering gave her a connection to be hired for a job.

Mr. Brandon Fleishman, special education teacher, said he likes to tutor kids so he can help them learn. He said he also volunteers to walk his neighbor’s dog and babysit his niece and nephew.

—By *Healthy Investigator* reporters

## Anyone can be a volunteer

*Editor’s note: Healthy Investigator reporters have researched the health benefits of volunteering and found that it helps both the volunteer as well as the people receiving the help, experts say.*

*Kaylen Wright, a Healthy Investigator reporter, shared his experience being a helper.*

I volunteered by donating old clothes I could not fit into any longer to the Salvation Army in July. I did this with my mom, dad, and sister. I donated because old clothes that don’t fit can fit someone else. When I did this, I felt tired because there were a lot of bins of clothes. I think others should do this too, because your trash can be somebody else’s treasure.

—By Kaylen Wright

*Philadelphia Hebrew Public Charter School*

A publication of Philadelphia Hebrew Public Charter School in Philadelphia. Participating students are in fourth grade. The reporters in the Rehovot class include Arun Holmes, Ashton Jamison, Allee Keen, Samuel Marks, Soma Rocanella, and Kaylen Wright. Other fourth graders also contributed to this issue of the newspaper.

The *Healthy Investigator*’s faculty advisor is Mr. Cove Paretzky. The head of school is Ms. Elyssa Yuen.

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Healthy NewsWorks is a nonprofit program that partners with elementary and middle schools in the Philadelphia area to empower students to become researchers, writers, critical thinkers, and confident communicators.

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# What to do when you feel anxious

*(Continued from Page 1)*

Usually, anxious feelings pass. If the feelings continue and get in the way of doing normal things, children should talk to a trusted adult, Ms. Johnson said.

Read more of the *Healthy Investigator's* interview with Ms. Johnson below. Her answers have been lightly edited.

**Q: Please describe your job.**

**Ms. Johnson:** I am a mental health professional and work at the Resilience Community Counseling Group. I went to school for 10 years to get my degree. I get to work with children and young adults who may be struggling with anxiety and depression and trauma. I talk with them about their struggles and help them. I challenge my clients to think about the world from a different perspective.

**Q: How can a little anxiety be a good thing?**

**Ms. Johnson:** Anxiety is needed to help us learn to manage our emotions. They can be good emotions or bad emotions. It teaches us what we may be feeling.

**Q: Why should we learn to manage anxiety?**

**Ms. Johnson:** It helps children have a good grounding for mental and physical health. So they can concentrate better, have fewer headaches and stomachaches, and build stronger relationships.

**Q: How do you make anxiety go away?**

**Ms. Johnson:** You manage anxiety by learning strategies to live with it and talking about it. You can talk to a friend or you can talk to a teacher.

**Q: Why do you not do things because of anxiety?**

**Ms. Johnson:** I think it's because it's in your mind, it makes your body feel weak. Until you learn to manage the symptoms of anxiety, it can keep you from doing things. People with anxiety may be looked at as lazy, but it's something you have to work through.

**Q: What are some effective strategies you have seen for helping kids deal with anxiety?**

**Ms. Johnson:** We use a grounding technique called the 5-4-3-2-1 technique. We are going to practice it today. Here is what you do:

- Name 5 things you see.
- Name 4 things you can feel.
- Name 3 things you can hear.
- Name 2 things you can smell.
- Name 1 thing you can taste.

When you feel activated or antsy, it helps you feel present in the moment.

Another thing you can do is short but brief physical exercise:

- Stand up.
- Start with some stretches. One arm and then the other arm.
- Wiggle it out!

## Rehovot reviews roller skating field trip

Fourth and fifth graders recently visited a roller-skating rink and said it was a great way to enjoy time with friends.

At Rolling Thunder, they skated, went fast, and danced. When you get to the rink, you can trade in your shoes to borrow roller skates in your shoe size. You lace up your skates, and you can skate in the rink while the DJ plays music. If you don't know how to skate, you can use a trainer or a walker to help with balance. The roller-skating rink also had an arcade, food, and two rides that you needed to buy tickets to use.

Twenty-one out of 22 students in Rehovot said they enjoyed the field trip.



Having positive connections with others can help lower stress and give you a stronger feeling of belonging, according to the Mayo Clinic, a hospital and research center.

"It was really fun to see my friends and skate with them. We skated together and held hands while we skated," said Soma.

The students recommend Rolling Thunder for students in second grade and above. They could learn how to skate at a younger age, and older students would enjoy this because it would be something fun to do with their friends. Roller skating also would get them on the move and off of their phones.

—Story by *Healthy Investigator* staff and illustration by Kaylen Wright

## Book review

# Kids can be helpers

Just Help! How to Build a Better World

Written by Sonia Sotomayor

Illustrated by Angela Dominguez

This is a book about helping. Sonia Sotomayor, who is a U.S. Supreme Court Justice (a judge of the highest court in the United States), wrote about how her mother inspired her to be a helper.

In the story, she writes about kids in her community who help people or animals who are in need. One helped by starting a recycling program in her school to keep plastic bags out of the oceans. She wanted to help save the sea turtles who were being harmed by the plastic bags. Another kid donated items to send to soldiers in the Army who were far away. When Sonia got onto the bus and there was no place to sit, two girls on the bus helped her by scooting over so she could sit down.

Out of 19 students in the Akko class, 13 students said they enjoyed the book.

"I liked when the girls moved over for Sonia to sit down on the bus, because it was very nice and showed they were kind," said Juliana.

"They spread kindness inside and outside of school," said Kamille.

"I liked that everybody did something kind and even though they didn't have to, they still did it anyway. It was like kindness going around and around in a circle," another Akko student said.



Illustration by Hannah McCooke

We recommend this book for all kids because they can learn about being helpful to many others, and that kids can be more helpful in the future. It could also be good for anyone interested in learning about Sonia Sotomayor.

—By Akko fourth graders

## Book review: Showing gratitude is kind

*The Thank You Letter*

Written and illustrated by Jane Cabrera

This book is about writing thank you letters. Grace is a girl who had a birthday list and a birthday party. After her party, she wrote thank you letters to her parents, her brother, her cousins, and everyone who brought her a present. Then she wrote thank you notes to everyone in town, including a teacher and a woman from a shop in town. She even wrote thank you notes to the sky and her pets. She was showing gratitude. These notes made people feel happy.

Of 24 Rehovot reporters, 16 students said they liked the book.

"It showed that if you do something kind, you'll get something back in return," said one reporter.

"I liked it because it can tell younger kids how to treat people in different ways. And if you treat people the way you want to be treated, then others will treat you well in return," said Soma.

Comments from other reporters include:

- "The book was too long and a little bit boring."
- "Instead of wasting her birthday presents, she used them to write thank you letters to the whole city."

We recommend this book for ages 5 and up because they can learn to be kind and treat people in a nice way. They might want to write thank you letters of their own.

—Review by *Healthy Investigators* staff