

JULIA DE BURGOS

HEALTHY SUPER TIGER

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Join a group to connect to others

Take the opportunity to create social connections by joining clubs and meeting people with interests similar to yours, says Mr. Fahd Hammad, school counselor at Julia de Burgos. Experts say the effort to have strong social bonds is important for both your physical and mental health.

Seventh-grade *Healthy Super Tiger* reporters interviewed Mr. Hammad about his work with students as part of their research into creating healthy connections.

Mr. Hammad said a healthy social connection is having a sense of belonging and feeling safe in the building. It also means to have a functional relationship where you feel valued in your community. "It's a framework where we feel safe treating people the way we want to be treated," he said.

Mr. Hammad said his job is to help kids in our school. He feels that as a school counselor he can make a bigger impact on the community than what he was doing in his previous job. At his previous job, he was a one-on-one behavioral support teacher, but he felt like he could make a bigger impact as a guidance counselor.

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Illustration by a third-grade student in Ms. Alicea's class

PE teacher promotes healthy lifestyle

Loving sports and wanting students to maintain a healthy lifestyle are reasons why Ms. Bertolino became a health and physical education teacher. "I grew up enjoying sports, games, and fitness. I wanted to stay connected with that type of lifestyle," she said.

Healthy SuperTiger reporters interviewed Ms. Bertolino about the benefits of group activities.

Group activities can include sports or material art classes that are good for your physical health, according to ScienceDaily, a website featuring health and science news. These options "offer an opportunity to socialize with other kids and get to know people in a fun environment," says the Mayo Clinic, a hospital

and research institution Research has also shown that group activities can be fun and good for your health, says ScienceDaily.

Below is the Q&A with Ms. Bertolino. Her answers have been lightly edited.

Q: Tell us about your role at the school.

Ms. Bertolino: I am a health and physical education teacher at Julia de Burgos. I teach physical skills, promote physical fitness and health to the students. I

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Join a group activity

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also plan and lead activities. I work to build teamwork and sportsmanship with each other.

Q: What group activities are good for physical health?

Ms. Bertolino: Group activities that improve student health usually focus on movement, teamwork, and fun participation. These activities build physical fitness, social skills, and confidence.

Q: What group activities help mental health?

Ms. Bertolino: Activities that support mental health help reduce stress, improve mood, and build positive social connections. For example, walking or jogging, yoga, team sports, and dance.

Q: What are your favorite activities with students?

Ms. Bertolino: My favorite activities tend to be ones that keep students moving, are easy to organize, and are fun for large groups. Some of the activities would be games like capture the flag, relay races, kickball, and tag variations.

Q: Please share your advice for kids who are nervous about doing a group activity?

Ms. Bertolino: A nervous student in a group activity mainly needs reassurance, simple structure, and small, achievable steps. I would start with a simple



Illustration by a fifth-grade student in Mrs. Gill's class

role by giving the student small responsibilities like helping with the equipment. Small responsibilities help build confidence fast. I would also tell them that I focus on effort, not perfection.

Q: Is there anything you would like to add?

Ms. Bertolino: I became a physical education teacher because I grew up enjoying sports, games, and fitness. I wanted to stay connected with that type of lifestyle. I also had a desire to help students stay healthy.

Find positive people to connect with

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Having strong social bonds and connections to others “creates feelings of belonging and being loved, cared for, and valued,” says the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The body benefits in many ways from healthy social connections, according to the CDC article “Social Connectedness.” It says that healthy connections can help the body reduce the risk of heart disease, reduce depression and anxiety, and increase physical activity. Hanging out with friends can help you better manage stress and improve your sleep, says the CDC.

Growing a connection helps people in different ways. It can help people take a break from screens to connect with family and friends. When you connect with others, you can offer help to others when needed, and it allows you to show gratitude toward others.

Mr. Hammad said unhealthy connections are when people are mean or exclude others. For example, you can seem to be close to someone one day and the next day ignore them.

Times may seem to be tough now, Mr. Hammad added, but the world is yours. “When you see an opportunity, take it,” he said. “You can do whatever you set your mind to. The right people will be there in your corner and they will be there to help you.”

—By *Healthy Super Tiger* seventh-grade reporters

Julia de Burgos Healthy Super Tiger

The *Julia de Burgos Healthy Super Tiger* is a publication of Julia de Burgos Elementary School in The School District of Philadelphia.

Ms. Bloch is the newspaper's faculty advisor and the school principal is Ms. Reyes.

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Cub Corner

Be sure to drink enough water

Warmer weather is around the corner, and it's important to keep hydrated to keep our bodies healthy, according to health experts.

First-grade cub reporters viewed the video, "Staying Hydrated for Kids," on YouTube. The video was produced by Twinkl USA that has an educational library.

Below are a few facts about why it is important to drink water:

- ♥ It puts water back in our bodies after we're sweating.
- ♥ It helps make our organs work.

If you don't drink enough water, your body signals you that it needs more water:

- ♥ You may get a cramp after exercising
- ♥ Joints and muscles may hurt.
- ♥ Your mouth may feel dry.
- ♥ You may get a headache.

Here are a few tips about how to stay hydrated during the summer:

- ♥ Wear a hat) or find shade.
- ♥ Bring a water bottle.
- ♥ Drink water more often.

—By Ms. Prychodko's first-grade Cub reporters

Book shows how a problem is solved

The Last Stand
By Antwan Eady

This book is about Black farmers. It is the story of a kid and his grandfather who grow crops and then sell them at the farmer's market every Saturday.

The problem in the story is that they are the last stand at the market. The grandfather gets sick and can no longer help to harvest the pumpkins, plums, peppers, and eggs. The boy collects them himself and sells them. The community helps to support the family in their own way.



Illustration by first-grade Cub reporter

"This story connects us to the real world, when we think about things like gas prices going up, and how it is harder to sell things these days. This book is important to read to kids," said one reporter.

"I liked it because it's an interesting story. It shows what people do for other people and help out in the community," said another reporter.

We recommend this book for students in grades K to 5 because it shows different perspectives of problems in the real world.

—By Healthy Super Tiger seventh-grade reporters

Book shows how to make a friend

You Can Sit with Me

By Rachel Tawil Kenyon

Illustrated by Tatiana Kamshilina

Ms. Prychodko's first-grade Cub reporters read this book. It's about a boy who felt left out and a girl would let him sit with her.

The boy didn't have anyone to play with at recess and the girl wanted to play with the boy. Another time, the boy wanted to sit at a spot at lunch, but a boy took his seat. The girl said to the boy, you can sit with me here.

Thirteen out of 18 reporters in the class enjoyed the story. One reporter said she liked the story when the boy's seat was taken but the girl said to him, you can sit with me. Another reporter said she liked it when the girl was kind to the boy.

At the end of every line, it said, "you can sit with me." The reporters said they would have preferred if the story would have changed the "sit action" to the

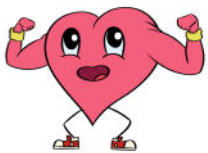


Illustrations by a first-grade Cub reporter action in the pictures such as walking together and playing together.

Reporters recommend this book for kids in Kindergarten to second grade.

How reporters felt about exercising

First-grade Cub reporters in Ms. Prychodko's class tried two exercises that health experts say can help your heart get stronger.



The reporters noticed their heartbeat when they were resting and then after 30 seconds of movement.

The reporters shared how they felt during each activity.

Hopping

- ♥ My heart was beating faster.

- ♥ It made my heart beat faster and my breathing was also deeper.
- ♥ I liked hopping because it got my body moving.

Running in place

- ♥ My heart was beating fast and then it started to beat faster.
- ♥ I felt like I was really running and it made me happy.
- ♥ I enjoyed moving around a lot. Before I was feeling sleepy but then it (the activity) gave me energy.