

## Learning to deal with anxiety

Attendance can suffer when students are struggling with anxiety.

Because students are feeling anxious, they may start to experience physical symptoms and miss school, said Mrs. Seltzer, Emlen school counselor.

“Anxiety is being scared or nervous about something that is going to happen, something that may happen, or something that doesn’t end up happening,” said Mrs. Seltzer in an interview with *Healthy Roar* reporters.

As the school counselor, Mrs. Seltzer spends time talking with students about their feelings.

Students can have problems in or out of school and she can teach students different skills depending on what they need.

Mrs. Seltzer also meets with teachers and parents and works closely with Ms. Thomas, school principal, to help students and families.

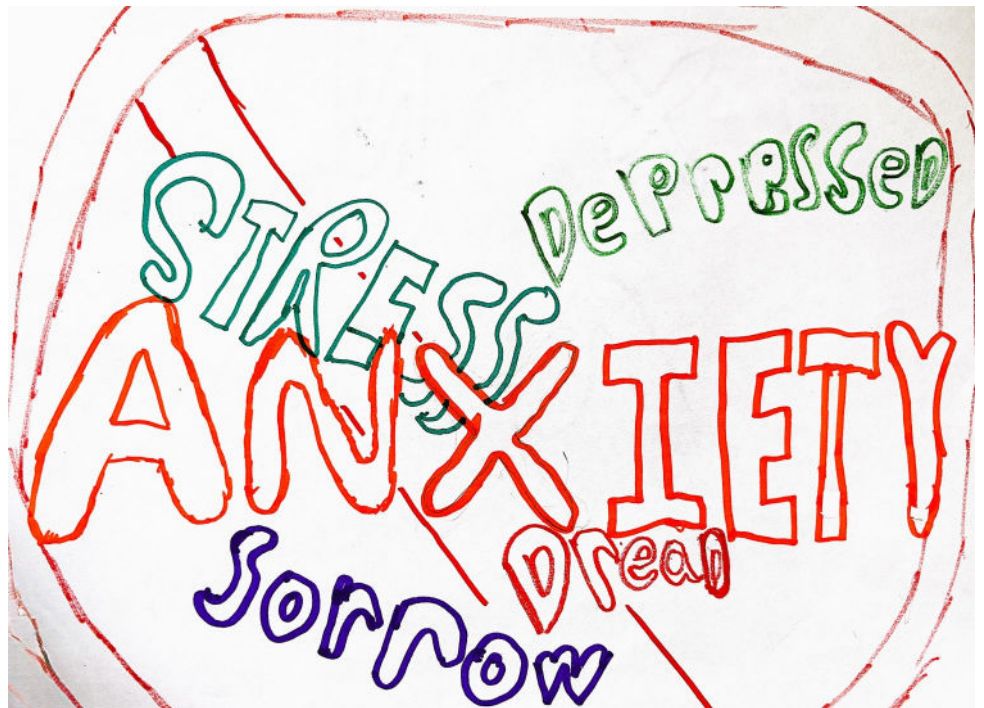


Illustration by *Healthy Roar* reporter

“Anxiety can be paralyzing,” which means that you may feel stuck in the worry, Mrs. Seltzer said.

(Please see *Ways* Page 2)

## Meals can bring people together

Sharing a meal with people can encourage healthy eating habits and build social connections.

Experts at Duke Health and Well-Being say that sharing food is a way to connect and build bonds. Fourth-grade *Healthy Roar* reporters in Mr. Conallen’s class recently researched the importance of making and eating food together and found that there are health and social benefits.

When you sit to have a meal with your family and nobody is looking at a screen, you can connect with each other, and it can reduce stress.

Scientist Dr. Robin Dunbar, professor of evolutionary anthropology at the University of Oxford, says on the Oxford website that while you’re sitting and eating, you can look at each other and listen and build trust.

After researching how eating can build connections, the reporters reflected and wrote about a meal that was important to them. You can read their reflections on Page 2.

What’s your favorite memory about a meal? Share a reflection or artwork with us, and it might appear on [www.HealthyNewsWorks.org](http://www.HealthyNewsWorks.org).

# Ways to reduce anxious feelings

(Continued from Page 1)

“You might be worried about a test you have to take, and you think you might fail,” Mrs. Seltzer said. “So you’re upset and nervous and it could ruin your day because it puts you in a bad mood. Maybe you don’t want to talk to anyone.”

The good news is that there are strategies to help students manage anxiety. Mrs. Seltzer recommends:

1. Practice mindfulness. This means that instead of focusing on what hasn’t happened yet, think about the present moment. Focus on what is right in front of you.

2. Talk through it. Look at the situation and talk about what the possible outcomes could be. Is this going to be as bad as you fear? Talking through the situation can help you see that the outcomes might not be as bad as you think and you’ll be able to deal with them.

## Mrs. Seltzer has a busy job

Mrs. Seltzer has many responsibilities. Her other duties include overseeing Xello, an online college and career readiness program. The program evaluates a student’s skills and interests. It helps students to start thinking about what kind of career they might like to pursue.

She also runs a Lunch Bunch program. Fourth-grade students are allowed to visit the counselor’s office during lunch where they chat, play games, and help Mrs. Seltzer with a variety of tasks. For instance, they run errands around the building.



—By *Healthy Roar* reporters

# Reporters reflect on a favorite meal

I look forward to cooking Thanksgiving dinner with my mom. My favorite Thanksgiving foods are turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, rice, meatloaf, and pie.

—Karter Sloan

My favorite meal is from McDonald’s. I got a cheeseburger with a large Sprite and a large French fry and 10- piece chicken nuggets and an apple pie. It was so tasty and just writing about it makes me hungry.

—Azuri Wyche

It’s important to me to sit and have pizza with my family. My mom, dad, brother, sister, and I sit down to eat. It’s always a great time because we can talk about our days and get closer.

—Cliffari Joseph Jr.



Illustration by *Healthy Roar* reporter

### *Eleanor Emlen Healthy Roar*

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

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

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# Reading builds empathy and more

When you read, you're building skills and you're also connecting with other people and the world. Health experts at the National Institutes of Health say that reading is good for your health in several ways.

Reading can:

- Improve brain health.
- Reduce stress.
- Help with sleep.
- Build empathy.

When you read books, you can experience a person or a world that is different from your own. Educa-

tion psychologist Michele Borba says that reading books lets you look at life through someone else's eyes and that helps build empathy.

Empathy is "the ability to understand another person's feelings," according to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary.

Emlen *Healthy Roar* fourth-grade reporters recently built empathy by reading a variety of books. A book like *The Invisible Boy*, reviewed by Azuri Wyche (on Page 4), helps the reader experience the world through the eyes of a boy who feels left out and lonely.

—By The Editors

## Book shows that it is OK to ask for help

*Spike, the Mixed-Up Monster*

Written by Susan Hood

Illustrated by Melissa Sweet

*Spike, the Mixed-Up Monster* is about an axolotl which is a type of salamander. Spike thinks he's a big scary monster but he's really just a tiny little animal.

He tries to be scary, but the other animals just think he's adorable, so he feels like he's a terrible monster and is having trouble making friends. When a big Gila monster comes along, all the animals are scared of him except for Spike and then they end up being friends.

"The story teaches us that sometimes you can be alone and let your emotions out, and sometimes you can ask for help," said one fourth-grade reporter who reviewed the book.

When Spike feels like the other animals don't want to be his friend, he sinks to the bottom of the lake to be by himself. When the Gila monster comes along and all the other animals run away, Spike stays and realizes that he just needs help finding his way to his cousin's fiesta. Spike knows how it feels to be judged and doesn't run from him.

Some of the words in the book are in Spanish. The reviewer said this book could be good for people who want to learn Spanish words. The book would also be good for people who like axolotls or Gila monsters. This book would be good for students in grades kindergarten to third grade, but it might feel too easy for older students.



Illustration by *Healthy Roar* reporter

# How a good friend can help others

*The Invisible Boy*

Written by Trudy Ludwig

Illustrated by Patrice Barton

*The Invisible Boy* is about a boy named Brian who feels invisible, sad, and left out at school. A new student named Justin comes to school, but other kids tease him when he has different food. Brian draws Justin a picture, saying that he thinks his food looks good, and Justin and Brian become friends. This helps Brian feel important and inspires other students to be kind to Brian and start to include him.

The illustrations show Brian as invisible when the story starts. After he and Justin start to become friends, he starts to have more color. The pictures helped me understand how the kids feel because you can look at their faces to see the emotions.

I really liked this book because I liked it when Brian became happy. If Brian is happy, then I'm happy! All of my friends would like to read this book.

—By Azuri Wyche



Illustration by Healthy Roar reporter

## Cub Corner

# Girl learns to treat others better

*Bernice Gets Carried Away*

Written and illustrated by Hannah E. Harrison

This book is about a girl named Bernice who is in a bad mood at a birthday party. She feels left out while everyone else is getting special treatment. She gets the worst drink, the worst candy, and a plain white piece of cake with no flower.

When balloons are brought out for the kids, Bernice grabs the entire bunch. She doesn't want to miss out on another fun thing. But the balloons carry her up into the air! She then learns an important lesson.

Several second-grade students in Ms. Lane's class said they enjoyed the book. But one student said, "I don't like the book

because it made me sad when the children at the party weren't sharing with Bernice." Another student thought that Bernice didn't follow the golden rule, which says to treat others the way you want to be treated.

The illustrations did a good job of showing how Bernice changes from the beginning to the end of the story.

This is a good book for a lot of different readers. Teachers could use it to teach students about being kind and that's something that everyone needs, said students in Ms. Lane's class.

This book might be too easy for students older than fourth grade. Ms. Lane's second graders recommend *Bernice* for younger students.