

YORKSHIP FAMILY SCHOOL

HEALTHY LION

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Empathy can help to unite people

Next time you see someone who is acting out or saying something mean, ask yourself: Are they having a bad day? Is something going wrong in their life?

They may need your empathy.

That means looking beyond what they are doing and trying to understand what they may be feeling.

“Someone’s behavior or words in the moment may not be a reflection or picture of who they really are,” said Dr. Ken Ginsburg, a pediatrician at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, in a recent interview with the *Healthy Lion*.

Seeking to understand what other people are feeling is an essential part of being human, Dr. Ginsburg said. Showing empathy connects you to others.

People “are designed to care about one another,” he said. “We are all born in a way that allows us to feel what others feel.”

Dr. Ginsburg specializes in working with adolescents who are sad, distressed, or in pain. He helps them discover ways they can build on their strengths and feel better. “And the only way you can really do that is by really listening to them. And in the process of listening, you experience empathy.”

Empathy can benefit everyone, he said. “Empathy is an incredibly important thing” because it “allows us to join together and get through difficult times.”

“We’re all healers,” he said. “We all rise together, and when we rise together, we support one another. And when we support each other, we see the best in people.”

It doesn’t take a lot to help others this way. “Notice when a friend is sad or an elder in your community needs some extra support,” he said. “Show up.”

(See *Put yourself* on Page 2)

Tips to deal with anxiety

It’s important for kids to know what to do when they’re faced with anxiety so that it doesn’t stop them from doing things they like to do.

Simply connecting to a pet, especially a dog, can help relieve stress, according to the experts from heart.org, the website of the American Heart Association.

There are many strategies that help kids deal with anxiety, including talking to a trusted adult.



Illustration by Rodrigo Heras-Juarez

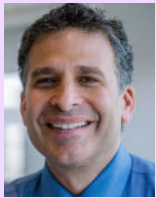
(See *Learning* on Page 3)

Find out how dancing can benefit your health. Read the article on Page 3.

Put yourself in someone else's shoes

(Continued from Page 1)

Smile. Or just ask, 'Is there anything you would like to talk about?'"



Dr. Ginsburg

Showing empathy can be hard for some people, Dr. Ginsburg noted. Some shut themselves down emotionally. Others are uneasy showing it. They actually feel a lot but pretend they don't. They want "to avoid the discomfort," he said.

For some young people who have had hard lives, it takes time and patience to help them feel safe enough to express their emotions, Dr. Ginsburg said. "It's not a word or two that makes people suddenly lower their masks."

He acknowledged that sometimes even he needs a break from caring so much about others. "It's OK to also recharge yourself," he said. He will take a day off. After watching TV, reading a book, taking a walk, or cuddling his dog, he is ready to listen and connect with others again.

Though showing empathy isn't always easy, Dr. Ginsburg said it is very valuable.

"Being open to other people's life experiences, including their pain, can hurt sometimes. That's not always comfortable," he said. "But it is worth it, because the people who care, who feel, who are sensitive and compassionate, make the best human beings on the planet."

—By *Healthy Lion* reporters

Dance teacher gets reporters moving

Healthy Lion fifth-grade reporters didn't know their interview with Camden native and retired teacher Mr. Benjamin White would end with them up on their feet—dancing.

Mr. White taught math at Hatch Middle School in Camden for 38 years. He also taught dance for Hatch's after-school program for many years. Now retired as a math teacher, he gives dance and choreography lessons for several community groups.

He said he was inspired by his mother to pursue dancing because she encouraged him to follow his passion.

"The most challenging part of teaching dance is working with someone who lacks confidence," said Mr. White. "The most rewarding part of teaching dance is watching former students go on to have great careers."

Some of Mr. White's students have performed on Broadway in *The Lion King*, *Hamilton*, and the revival of *The Wiz*.

"I feel fantastic and proud when I see my students go on to perform and do great things," he said.

Taking a group dance class is good for your physical health as a form of exercise, and research has also shown benefits for your motivation, social skills, and overall mood, says the National Institutes of Health website.

"Dance relates to the arts because everything flows through dance. Dance can connect everything and everyone together," said Mr. White. "Dance is a great way to connect with other people because usually when you dance, you have a partner."



Illustration by Sophia Valentin Flores

The arts and dancing can also be good for your emotional and mental health. "Dancers must really think when they are dancing to remember their steps. Dancing helps you focus and makes a lot of people happy. And physical dance makes you stronger and more flexible," said Mr. White.

Some kids may be hesitant to try the art of dance because they may think they aren't good at dancing. "You should try a lot of forms of dance until you find the one you really enjoy," Mr. White said. "There are many styles of dance, and you are bound to find the style you like."

Healthy Lion reporter Khamoni Davis-Victor asked Mr. White, "Do you think you could show us some dance moves?"

Mr. White told all the reporters to get up on their feet, and the interview ended with the reporters dancing.

—By *Healthy Lion* reporters

Learning how to deal with anxiety

(Continued from Page 1)

Healthy Lion fifth-grade reporters interviewed school social worker Ms. Cane about the impact anxiety can have on students and how they can deal with it. The interview has been lightly edited.

Q: Describe your job and how you help people.

Ms. Cane: I conduct social evaluations by asking parents questions to evaluate students.

Q: How do you define anxiety?

Ms. Cane: Anxiety is a feeling of worry, fear, or dread. It can be related to a future event or an event that has already occurred. It could even be related to something that you said or did in the past.

Q: How can anxiety affect a child's mental health?

Ms. Cane: Sometimes a certain level of anxiety can be a good thing. It may encourage you to study and prepare for an upcoming test. Sometimes it can motivate you to try harder. Sometimes it can be the opposite. It can sometimes prevent you from focusing and it can have negative effects on your health.

Q: How can anxiety affect a child's physical health?

Ms. Cane: Anxiety can cause tension and make your

muscles tight. It can also drain your energy, cause headaches, and stomachaches. Anxiety can also lead to phobias. A phobia is an extreme or irrational fear or avoidance of something.

Q: What do you want kids to know about anxiety?

Ms. Cane: I want kids and families to know that anxiety is treatable. There are strategies and treatments for people who deal with anxiety. I want kids and families to know that they are not alone when it comes to dealing with anxiety. Everyone experiences anxiety at some point in their life. Most importantly, if you find yourself experiencing anxiety, do not try to deal with it all by yourself. Talk to a trusted adult.

Q: What are some strategies to reduce anxiety?

Ms. Cane: It is important to learn and develop strategies so that anxiety doesn't take over your life and prevent you from doing the things you love to do.

There are some very effective strategies such as meditation and deep breathing, engaging in physical activities such as walking, and being out in nature. Some students may use stress balls or fidgets to cope with anxiety.

Cub corner: What causes kids stress

Healthy Lion third-grade Cub reporters shared their opinions on why kids should have access to the arts when it comes to reducing stress.

Research from Harvard Medical School says participating in activities such as art or music or attending a play or concert can have healing powers and improve your mood, the students learned.

Stress is what you feel when you're worried or uncomfortable about something. This worry can make your body feel bad. You might feel angry, frustrated, sad, scared, or afraid, says KidsHealth.org, a health website.

When asked what causes stress, several Cub reporters said their siblings.



Other reporters said schoolwork, especially taking tests, causes anxiety. Some of the other responses were speaking in front of the class, getting in trouble with their parents, and being bullied in school.

Four ways to calm down when you're feeling stressed are: deep breathing, arts and crafts, music, and dance, say researchers.

Some reporters shared other ways to reduce stress. They include playing with fidgets and Legos, taking a nap, going outside to get

fresh air, and playing their favorite sports.

—By Mrs. O'Driscoll and Dr. Banks' third-grade Cub reporters; illustration by a second grader in Ms. Gaines' class

Cub Corner

How we feel about getting sleep

To be at your best in school, it's very important to get proper sleep each night. Getting the proper amount of sleep each night is like recharging your phone.

Children in elementary school should get 9 to 12 hours of sleep each night, says the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When children get enough sleep, they pay attention better, have better behavior, get higher grades, and are healthier, according to health experts at Johns Hopkins Medicine, a hospital and research institution.

Healthy Lion second-grade Cub reporters shared how they felt when they're not well rested and how they feel when they are well rested.

How students felt unrested

Grumpy	Tired
Unable to focus	Irritated

How students felt well-rested

Happy	Energized
Ready	Focused



Illustration by Nation Walker, 5th grade reporter

KidsHealth.org, a website of health information, offers these tips for getting the proper amount of sleep:

- Use your bed *only* for sleep.
- Put away your phone and computer one hour before bedtime.
- Avoid long naps during the day.
- Exercise every day.
- Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, music, or stretching.
- Eat healthy food.

—By Mrs. Gaines' Cub reporters

Yorkship Healthy Lion

The *Healthy Lion* is a publication of Yorkship Family School in the Camden City School District in Camden, NJ. Contributing fifth-grade reporters include Esteban Arias De La Cruz, Elias Caba Pena, Essence Craig, Logan Craig, Zakeer Darby, Khamoni Davis, Victor Davis, Demere Davis, Arabella Garden, Cassidy Green, Ja'siah Heredia, Rodrigo Heras-Juarez, Andres Hernandez, Yisliany Lopez Flores, Jaiyonna Narvaez, Darrell Perry, Alex Pike, Lukas Robinson, Kylah Smith, Victor Tineo Rodriguez, Sophia Valentin Flores, Nation Walker, Rashay Wallace-Johnson, and Neiamah White. The *Healthy Lion's* faculty advisor is Ms. Bentley. The school principal is Dr. Michael Coleman.

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Illustration by a second-grader in Ms. Gaines' class.