

School Calendar

This Week

Friday, October 25

Trunk Swap at drop off and pick up

Looking Ahead

Wednesday, October 31

Ancestor's Day

Thursday, November 1

Dia de los Muertos

Friday, November 2

Moonshine & Millet Party at River Valley 6:30-9:30 pm

Thursday, November 8

Divali – in-school celebration

Friday, November 9

EC Lantern Walk

Tuesday, November 13

Garden Gate Open House 9:00-11:00 am

Thursday, November 15

Board Meeting 6:30 pm

Friday, November 16

1st & 2nd Grade Lantern Walk

Monday & Tuesday, November 19 & 20

No School – Parent/Teacher Conferences

Wednesday-Friday, November 21-23

No-School – Thanksgiving Break

How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org

lc@rivervalleyschool.org

bot@rivervalleyschool.org

pc@rivervalleyschool.org

FROM THE TRUNK

-- Winter Gear & Concert Attire Swap --

Friday, October 26th

Meet in the parking lot (between the All-Purpose Room & the garden) after drop off and after pick-up. See From Parent Council inside for details.

November Lunch Order Deadline This Thursday, October 25th

The November lunch menu is attached to this week's Current.



~ Grownup Get Down ~

Join us for another fabulous River Valley fundraiser on

Friday November 2nd 6:30-9:30.

We will Get Down with our favorite bluegrass band,

Moonshine and Millet!

\$10 suggested donation per person includes great music, beer and wine.

3rd and 8th grade families will be selling delicious food, drinks and desserts to raise funds for their class trips.

For questions contact -Tina 610-737-1290 or Liz 908-397-2737

What is the Day of the Dead?

Before the Spaniards came to America in 1492 people in Mexico made offerings for their loved ones when they died so they could help them in their trip to the land of the dead. They included things like food, arrows and torches.

They believed in several gods, such as Micantecuhli and Mictecacihualtl the god and goddess of the Mictlan, the land of the dead. Once a year for several weeks, death was celebrated around the Xocotl tree, with offerings of flowers, food, dances and all types of artifacts with images related to the dead, like flutes and rattles in the shape of a skull.

The Spaniards celebrated All Saints Day and All Souls Day. Since there was a similarity with this celebration and the ones from the indigenous people, there was a fusion of these traditions so the people would embrace Christianity more easily. Now we celebrate on November 1st, the souls of the innocent, that is the souls of the children that died, and on November 2nd, the Day of the Dead.

The Day of the Dead is celebrated by visiting the tomb of our loved ones, cleaning it and offering them food, flowers, candles, music, prayer and in some places holding a mass for the dead. Altars with offerings are displayed in houses and public places, even contests are held to see who can build the prettiest one. Market stalls cover the streets with all types of toys with images of skulls and candies to exchange in this season especially sugar skulls.

Funny poems named "Calaveritas" (that is skulls), are exchanged amount friends. Concerts and contests are held. The children wear costumes and go out to the streets asking for candy and treats, they call it "calaverita." It is a season of color and happiness, where we remember our ancestors, tighten bonds with friends, where life and death are part of the same whole, where we celebrate with enthusiasm and love.

RVWS SKI CLUB

Come join us this winter for a great time on the slopes at Blue Mountain Ski Resort. The Ski (and Snowboard) Club is a great way to enjoy 6 weekend night visits to the mountain. You can go any weekend night, Friday, Saturday, or Sunday from 4 pm to 10 pm.

There are different packages that include rentals and/or lessons. Prices are as follows:

Lift only \$150 - Lift and Rental \$234 - Lift and Lessons \$234

Lift, Rental, Lessons \$279

Helmets are included with the rental packages.

The dates for lessons are set for - Jan 11, 18, 25, Feb 1, 8, 15.

Children any age can sign up but they must be at least 8 years old to participate in the group lessons. Parents are responsible for their children's transportation to and from the mountain and for supervision while at the mountain.

Please invite your friends and family to join us.

For those of you who are ready to hit the slopes,
please use this link to join the RVWS Ski Club:

<https://webstoreskiblue.com/?groupId=0ad1487a-ad3c-48d2-ac1b-540b1fd8d602>

Any questions, please contact Ed George 908-884-7029 or edbillgeorge@yahoo.com

The deadline for joining is OCTOBER 26th.

From Administration

Pet Policy

We love all our animal friends, but during dismissal is not the best time for them to visit. The hallways are crowded and for children navigating to buses, aftercare, the snack stand, or simply needing to remember their homework or musical instruments, adorable animals are quite a distraction. Please arrange indoor furry-friend visits with your child's teacher or invite students to interact with pets outdoors on grassy areas well away from the bus loading zones.

Pets are welcome during school hours by arrangement with teachers. All pets should be on leashes on the grounds and common areas of the building. Service dogs on duty are always welcome. Please remember to clean up after your animal, indoors or out!

Thank you,
The Leadership Council

YOU MAY BE SELECTED!

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) is launching a 15-minute survey this week designed to explore how parents pay for private school tuition, what resources they use and generally how they make it work. NAIS will select 6,000 parents at random, who have completed a Parent Financial Statement (what RVWS uses to evaluate Tuition Assistance requests) for the 2018-19 school year. If you have been selected, you will receive an invitation from a research firm called Insightlink. The invitation will reference the fact that they are working with NAIS to conduct the study. Independent schools all over the country will be appreciative of your participation! We are all doing what we can to keep tuition within reach for as many families as we can and your responses will help schools know better how to help their families! Thank you, in advance, for your help.

Garden Update

Thank you to Justin Collins (husband of Rachel Howard and father of Kivin in the Star Room) for showing up faithfully to help in our garden week after week; your kind presence is so nurturing to the garden and all who join us! Thank you Jody Williams (father of Brooke in 7th grade) for joining us and bringing such fun and laughter, you made the time fly by!

We will be prepping the garlic beds this Thursday, after drop-off, for planting in just a few weeks to help our lunch and kindergarten snack programs, as well as doing a bit more weeding. Please join in the fun! Melissa Goldstein

Class Photos

It is class photo time! RVWS parent and photographer, Hilary Murphy, will be taking individual portraits and group photos over the next few weeks. We will send out information about how you can order prints online shortly, so you can be sure to have them before the winter holidays.

Here is the schedule:

Tuesday 10/23 – Star Room

Thursday 10/25 – Grades 5 through 8.

Friday 10/26 – Acorn Room (partial) and Moon Room

Pictures are taken outside, so some dates may need to shift but Tuesday, 10/16 looks to be good weather!

Below are some tips from Hilary:

Prepping For School Picture Day

Let your child be involved in the outfit chosen for picture day (as long as it's appropriate for the school's dress code). Kids feel much better about having their picture taken if they feel comfortable (no itchy sweaters!) with what is on their body and in their own style. Let them showcase who they are and they will shine from within.

Here are some helpful guidelines:

- Solid colors work best. Stay away from busy patterns.
- Choose colors that compliment your child's features.
- Small jewelry and accessories are great, but avoid anything distracting.
- Hair should be kept as neat and simple as possible. Don't try to change your child's natural hair. You can use product to keep styles intact, but don't overdo it. (As long as it's okay with their teacher, a brush or comb can be brought to school for last minute touchups.)
- Glasses are a part of your child's personality—they should wear them! Don't worry about glass reflection, it can be avoided during and fixed in editing, if needed.

Don't make a big deal out of picture day, especially for early childhood students. Sometimes children (especially little ones) can clam up and get shy when put on the spot. Please don't put a lot of emphasis on "how" they should act. I will work with the EC teachers on how to best approach each individual child for their portrait and it's best that there are no set expectations put on them ahead of time. It's okay for them to know about picture day unless you think it will cause resistance or undue self-consciousness, then please don't say anything and let the process naturally unfold.

Guidelines for preparing children for picture day:

- Please do not coach your children about specific poses, or instruct them to smile, I will work with them to help their personality to shine through!
- Please do reinforce a positive attitude by sharing with your children how much you're looking forward to seeing their portraits. Let them know you trust them to work politely with me to create a portrait they'll be proud to share.

We will have so much fun together!

Introducing the Sunbridge Institute Diversity Fund

Diversity. Equity. Inclusion. These social justice goals—widely discussed across today's society—also sit at the forefront of an important dialogue currently taking place inside the Waldorf movement. Nationwide, schools, teacher education centers, and affiliated organizations are examining the social and demographic climate of North American Waldorf schools, exploring what it means to create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Waldorf classroom and community culture that reflects and honors the broad diversity of our nation.

Established for the purpose of expanding and promoting racial awareness and representation in our teacher education programs, this fund will be used to deepen and broaden the representation of diverse voices and perspectives that enrich the quality of a Sunbridge education, and to prepare more Waldorf teachers and leaders who reflect the broad demographic diversity of our world. Through an application process, the Diversity Fund will provide scholarship awards to people of color -- an underrepresented segment of our teacher education students - - and will also finance projects aimed at promoting awareness of racial differences and viewpoints for all within our classroom settings.

Applications for Diversity Fund scholarships for 2019-20 teacher education students will be available this winter. Go to www.sunbridge.edu for more information.

Pizza Payments

From the third grade: If you are one of the several families who have not yet paid for the delicious pizza, please send your payment in ASAP. We thank you for your cooperation and support!

Drivers & Chaperones – ATTENTION PLEASE!

In keeping with new regulations by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, RVWS needs our drivers and chaperones to provide us with a criminal records check and history of child abuse clearance. Each of these can be completed online here: <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp> and here: www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis

When you indicate that you are a volunteer, there is no fee for these clearances. The criminal records check is required every 2 years and the child abuse clearance is required every 5 years. In addition to the two clearances, if you are driving for a field trip, RVWS will need a copy of your driver's license and insurance card each trip (not just annually).

Overnight chaperones must also obtain the FBI clearance, which requires fingerprinting in addition to the PA Criminal Record check and the Child Abuse History. There are many locations to obtain the FBI fingerprint check – two closest to RVWS include the Bucks County Intermediate Unit in Doylestown and the UPS Store in Hellertown (in the Giant shopping center). (This must be done in the Pennsylvania.) Details are found on the <https://www.identogo.com/> website. They will ask you for a code, which is: 1KG6ZJ

Thank you for your help in our efforts to ensure that all of our children are safe.

Open Houses for Area Independent Schools our Alums Attend

George School – Sunday, 10/28, 1:30 pm
RSVP 215-579-6547

Kimberton Waldorf School – Sunday, 11/4, 8:30-10:30 am – RSVP 610-933-3635 x108

Lehigh Valley Charter Arts High School – Tuesdays, 11/6 & 11/20, 5:30 pm

The Lotus School for Liberal Arts - Thursday, 11/17
Wednesday, 12/12, 3:00-5:00
RSVP 484.312.0011 www.lotusla.org

Policemen on Patrol

You, or your child, may have noticed a State Police car on school grounds recently. There is a new policy requiring the State Police to visit every school in the district twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. The patrolmen do not come into the building, they simply drive down the driveway to check on us. We have been told that this is not in response to a specific incident or threat; it is just a precautionary measure. If you see them in the parking lot, just smile and say hello.

Thank You

Thank you to Girl Scout Troop #21321 for the beautiful chrysanthemums! They give such a lovely touch of autumn to the front of the school. We appreciate your efforts!

From The Faculty

Dia de los Muertos Requests

Marigolds Needed

Senora Vargas would like to have marigolds to use as decorations for Dia de los Muertos. Please bring in flowers or plants and leave them for her in the Faculty Room. Gracias.

Calling All Bakers!

Help us celebrate our schoolwide festival for El Dia de los Muertos by baking a couple of loaves of Day of the Dead bread. This was a huge hit last year and we are looking for volunteers for this year's celebration which will be held on November 1. If you are able to help, we will send you a tried and true recipe for this sweet bread. Please reach out to Erica Chick if you are interested -- (215) 850-0770 or ericadchick@gmail.com.

From Parent Council

FROM THE TRUNK - Gear & Concert Attire Swap - Friday, October 26th

Meet in the parking lot (between the All-Purpose Room & the garden) after drop off and after pick-up. Bring your outgrown seasonal outdoor gear and concert attire pieces (black shoes, black bottoms, white tops) that you're willing to share with others. Browse neighboring car trunks/bins for items that your family can use!

- + Come to outfit your kids even if you don't have gear to give.
- + Come even if you only have gear to give but don't need anything!

After school, while you're swapping your kids are welcome to play on the grass and the playhouse/swings nearby.

8th Grade Babysitters

Help the 8th grade fund their class trip while you enjoy the RVWS Moonshine & Millet Party on Friday, November 2! Your children will receive care in the comfort and familiarity of your own home, and you get to have a fun night out!

- Sitting is \$8/hr for the 1st child and \$4/hr for each additional child, up to 4 children.
- Children MUST be potty-trained.
- Babysitters can serve prepared foods, follow bedtime routines, and provide bedtime stories.
- Babysitting window is 6-10 pm.
- Babysitters may be assigned singly or in pairs, depending on circumstances, but the rate is the same regardless of the number of sitters.

Sign up via our babysitting Survey Monkey, which asks a few quick questions to help the 8th Graders prepare in caring for your children. Space is limited, so sign up now!

Parent Choir

Join the awesome RVWS Parent Choir, building community one song at a time. Rehearsals are on Sundays starting October 28 at 3 pm at school. No singing experience necessary. Perform at Winter Fair, Mayfaire and Parent Stage!

Winter Fair Artisan Market

Calling all ARTISTS!

Parents and the River Valley community are gearing up for another Artisan Market! If you have some handmade items and would like to join us as part of the Winter Fair Artisan Market, please email Ivy at Karunagoddess@gmail.com

From Development

Annual Appeal Update

Thank you for your continued commitment and generosity to RVWS! We have received \$15,892 in pledges/donations to the Annual Appeal. Please help us reach our goal of \$40,000 and 100% participation. To donate now, go to <https://squareup.com/store/rivervalleywaldorfschool>

From the Community

KuneKune Pigs For Sale

Anna Murphy, 2nd grader has raised her first litter of KuneKune pigs and now has 8 week old piglets ready to go their new homes. KuneKune pigs are a dual purpose slow-growing grazing breed. They make wonderful pets, are extremely intelligent, friendly, child safe and easy keepers. Perfect for your homestead or farm! They are very social animals and need companionship, either by other animals or from their own kind. Being offered in pairs for \$400. Individuals for \$250. These are purebred KuneKune's, unregistered. Three piglets available immediately. For more information, contact Anna (through Hilary) at hilarymurphyphotography@gmail.com or 908-674-0455.

2018-2019 HOLY NIGHTS JOURNALS NOW AVAILABLE

During this darkest time of the year, when the outer world appears to sleep, our inner life awakens. Working with the Holy Nights, or "Time Between the Years" as it is sometimes called, is a potent way to connect more deeply with your awakening True Self.

We're pleased to let you know about a Holy Nights journal called the Sacred Nights of Winter, designed to support you in not only cultivating your inner life, but also in creating a personalized map to guide you through the coming year's opportunities and challenges.

For those interested in gaining clarity and direction, deepening your soul life, and having quality stillness, reflection and restoration during the holiday season, this journal will be a very helpful tool. You'll receive a discount when you order by November 12th.

Please direct any questions about the journal to Kim@KimMarieCoaching.com. We hope you find this resource helpful in bringing joy, peace and reflection to your Holy Nights and the holiday season. To order go to: www.KimMarieCoaching.com/SacredNights

Eat, Drink & Connect

Are you a professional in one of the following industries: Accounting, Law, Property & Casualty or Real Estate? Please join us for a Business Builder Networking Event! Be our guest to connect with local business partners at Juniper Hill Restaurant and Bar, 73 Beaver Avenue, Annandale, NJ 08801 on Thursday, Nov. 1st 6:00-8:00 Please RSVP to attend: smanoussakis@stonehillfinancial.net Hope to see you there!
Sponsored By: Stonehill Financial Wealth Management

Let the Right One In at Solebury School

This chilling fairytale will be performed by many of our alumni at Solebury School. Eli is 12 years old; she's been 12 for the last 200 years and she just moved in next door. Suggested for children 13 and older. Come out and see our talented artists.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, November 1st, 2nd & 3rd, 7:30-9:30 pm and Sunday, November 4th, 3-5 pm.
To buy tickets, go to: <https://solebury-school.ticketleap.com/let-the-right-one-in/>

NATIONAL DRUG TAKE BACK DAY SCHEDULED

The national drug take back day has been scheduled for Saturday, October 27th - please drop off any unused or unwanted prescription drugs at Springfield Elementary School or Wehrungs between 10AM and 2PM. Get them out of your medicine cabinets and keep them away from our youth! Also, it is better to drop off than to flush into our water system - thanks for keeping our community safe!

Over 54 tons of unused/unwanted drugs have been collected since the beginning of the program! There are 10 drop sites in Upper Bucks. The 8 Police Departments will be at their regular sites including: Dublin, Hilltown, Pennridge Regional, Tinicum (at Wehrungs), Perkasio, Quakertown, Richland Township and Springfield Township (at Springfield Elementary School). We also will now have drop sites on that day at Grandview Hospital Outpatient Center and St. Luke's Quakertown.

Hemp Oil

Why has hemp become so popular? What is the endocannabinoid system? Please join us for an informal presentation on the benefits of hemp/cbd oil for all levels of health and wellness. Wednesday, October 24th at 10:30 am. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Sara Fishkin. 908.323.9691 sarajoyfishkin@gmail.com

The Gift of the Golden Nothing *A Biography and Social Art Workshop*

What does it mean to give? What does it mean to receive? Through conversation and hands-on activities, we will trace the threads of giving and receiving in our lives. We will share the idea of the "golden nothing" and work to uncover our personal golden gifts.

Choose from Two Dates and Locations

Sat, Nov 3, 1-6pm, Circle of Seasons Charter School, Fogelsville, PA

Sun, Nov 4, 1-6pm, The Waldorf School of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA

Facilitators: Christopher Burke, Ph.D. is a psychology professor at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA. Anne de Wild, T.E.N. is a naturopath and kinesiologist based in Basel, Switzerland.

Contact us at burke.dewild@gmail.com with any questions, and visit <http://biographysocialart.org> to learn more about biography and social art. Suggested donation \$40 - Register @ <http://goo.gl/gnw2PJ>

Lenape Chamber Ensemble Children's Concert in the Round

For children ages 4-12, featuring music by Vivaldi, LeClair, Telemann and Couperin for violin, viola, cello, bass & harpsichord. Refreshments and Instruments demonstrations.

Saturday, November 3rd, 10-11 am at Delaware Valley University Life Sciences Auditorium, 700 Butler Avenue at State Street and Rt. 611, Doylestown, PA 18901. Children: \$2, Adults Free.

Lenape Chamber Ensemble Concerts

Friday, November 2nd, 8:15 pm, Upper Tinicum Lutheran Church, 188 Upper Tinicum Church Rd., UBE
Sunday, November 4th, 3 pm, Delaware Valley University Life Sciences Auditorium (See above for address.) Music by Fux, LeClair, Telemann, Vivaldi, and Couperin

Adults \$18, Students and Seniors \$15, Children \$5 For information: 610-294-9361 or www.lenapechamberensemble.org

Introduction to 5 Element Theory

Erin Foster (Acorn Room mom) of Bucks County Acupuncture Clinic will be leading a workshop to introduce the ancient wisdom of the 5 elements through the lens of Chinese Medicine. Each month she will explore a different element as it applies to the season. First Session: Sunday, October 28th, 4 pm-6 pm, \$35. Space is very limited. To register, call 267-733-7261. HeartWell House, 58 East Oakland Avenue, Doylestown, PA. www.heartwellhouse.com

**Come join the fun at OTAC this Fall at Ottsville Traditional Arts Center
250 Durham Road Ottsville**

OPEN MIC NIGHTS

Warm, fuzzy and friendly space to step out, reach up and share what you've got or what you're working on! Open Mic sign up list plus a featured performer/musician set. Coffee House will feature 2 or more performer/musician sets plus Open Mic sign up. Sea Shanties and sing along with Grace! ***Early sign up for kids!!! OTAC is a Great Space and has the most appreciative audience

Saturday 10/27 Open Mic Halloween Costume Party with DJ Zoe Bonham 6:00 - 10:00 or later!!

Skits, Songs, Spooks, Murder Ballads followed by Dancing! Get dressed, dark and dramatic! Kid's corner dress up and parade

November Saturday 11/10 THE EMPTY BOWLS SUPPER 5:00 - 8:00 Open Mic/Coffee House 6:00 - 9:00

The Empty Bowls Project is an international, grassroots, crafts-based effort to fight hunger. As guests arrive they will choose one of several handmade bowls donated by local artists and art students. Volunteers will serve soups donated by local restaurants. At the end of their meal guests may take home their chosen bowl as a thank you and a reminder of hunger in our community. Proceeds from our first supper will be donated to The Lord's Pantry in Ottsville, PA. For more information or to volunteer/donate, contact paula@focazio.com.

Artist Bowls, first come first serve! Minimum donation is \$15.

RSVP Facebook.com/ubebowls <http://tinyurl.com/ubemptybowls>

December Saturday 12/15 Open Mic/Sing Along/Coffee House for the Holidays 6:00 - 9:00

Bring a little something for the Food Pantry

OTAC Wednesday Jam and Songs 6:00-8:00 and Open Mic Nights - \$5 per person

For updates & further details check out ottsvilletradarts.weebly.com Facebook page

Questions, interest in a fundraiser, event, performance, workshop, etc. contact Grace Morgan gracefulm@aol.com

Ottsville Traditional Arts Center is a multi generational and varied community that provides service through what we all have to share.

Artyard

The Unlikely Whole – September 15-December 30 – Curated by Lucinda Warchol

ArtYard is pleased to present The Unlikely Whole, an exhibition featuring the works of Mariel Capanna, Amie Cunat, Osamu Kobayashi, Amy Pleasant, Kenny Rivero, and Rudy Shepherd. The selected works explore the landscape, the body, memory, and identity as sites of disassembly and reconstruction. Through methods of fragmentation, translation, and repetition, these artists both challenge and reimagine our conception of the whole.

Upcoming Events:

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 7:30 PM

Please join us for a screening of Kusama-Infinity, a film chronicling the life and career of one of the worlds most iconic artists, Yayoi Kusama, who overcame countless odds to bring her radical artistic vision to the world stage.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 7:30 PM

In My Corner, an original play by film director Jeremiah Chechik that tells a universal story in a unique way.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17 & 18, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM – Blizzard Fest

Renowned book artist Hedi Kyle and her daughter, Ulla Warchol teach a two-day paper folding workshop.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17

SONGWRITING SESSIONS 12:00 -3:00 PM, PERFORMANCE 7:00 PM

Accomplished and nationally recognized recording artists Kira Willey, Eve Sheldon and Noah Jarrett will hold a Songwriter's Rodeo.

NOVEMBER 29 – DECEMBER 2, 2018

PoetryYard's Intensive Residential Workshop with Gabrielle Calvocoressi offers students of poetry a rare opportunity to work closely with a nationally known poet in a workshop-style format that includes only five participants.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 7:30 PM

Screening of *Amarcord*, a carnivalesque portrait of provincial Italy during the fascist period, the most personal film by Federico Fellini.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 7:00 PM

Come to ArtYard to learn how to make your own crankie device from cardboard, wood, or reclaimed junk with Mike Tyksinski and Eric Fiorito.

To learn more about these events, please visit our website www.artyard.org
ArtYard, 62A Trenton Avenue, Frenchtown, NJ 08825

Sunbridge Institute Upcoming Events

- Open Day - Wednesday, February 13th for those interested in learning more about Waldorf Education, teaching, and teacher preparation
- Waldorf Weekend - Friday, January 25th and Saturday, January 26th for new and prospective Waldorf community members looking for more first-hand insight and information about the foundations and fundamentals of Waldorf Education

Partnering with Youth and Community

PYC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, non-affiliated community group based in Upper Bucks County PA that strives to give youth members the tools they need to develop into successful adults, bring together families, and benefit our local and global communities through service projects and activities. For more information go to this link:

<https://www.palisd.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=2447972>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE UPPER BUCKS EMPTY BOWLS SUPPER

November 10th, 5-8pm, Ottsville Traditional Arts, Durham Road, Ottsville PA

The Empty Bowls Project is an international, grassroots, crafts-based effort to fight hunger. As guests arrive they will choose one of several handmade bowls donated by local artists and art students. Volunteers will serve soups donated by local restaurants. At the end of their meal guests may take home their chosen bowl as a thank you and a reminder of hunger in our community. Proceeds from our first supper we will be donated to The Lord's Pantry in Ottsville, PA. For more information or to volunteer/donate, contact paula@focazio.com.

RSVP Facebook.com/ubebowls. Minimum donation is \$15

From the New York Times

Which Is Better, Rewards or Punishments? Neither

By Heather Turgeon

"I feel a sense of dread as bedtime rolls around. Here we go again."

A dad said this in our family therapy office one day, describing his son's pre-bed antics. The child would go wild as bedtime approached, stubbornly ignoring his parents' directions and melting down at the mention of pajamas. The parents felt frustrated and stumped.

They asked us a question we hear a lot: Should they sternly send him to time out and take away his screen time when he acted this way (punishments)? Or set up a system to entice him with stickers and prizes for good behavior (rewards)?

Many parents grew up with punishments, and it's understandable that they rely on them. But punishments tend to escalate conflict and shut down learning. They elicit a fight or flight response, which means that sophisticated thinking in the frontal cortex goes dark and basic defense mechanisms kick in. Punishments make us either rebel, feel shamed or angry, repress our feelings, or figure out how not to get caught. In this case, full-fledged 4-year-old resistance would be at its peak.

So rewards are the positive choice then, right?

Not so fast. Rewards are more like punishment's sneaky twin. Families find them alluring (understandably), because rewards can control a child momentarily. But the effect can wear off, or even backfire: "How much do I get?" a client told us her daughter said one day when asked to pick up her room.

Over decades, psychologists have suggested that rewards can decrease our natural motivation and enjoyment. For example, kids who like to draw and are, under experimental conditions, paid to do so, draw less than those who aren't paid. Kids who are rewarded for sharing do so less, and so forth. This is what psychologists call the "overjustification effect" — the external reward overshadows the child's internal motivation.

Rewards have also been associated with lowering creativity. In one classic series of studies, people were given a set of materials (a box of thumbtacks, a candle and book of matches) and asked to figure out how to attach the candle to the wall. The solution requires innovative thinking — seeing the materials in a way unrelated to their purpose (the box as a candle holder). People who were told they'd be rewarded to solve this dilemma took longer, on average, to figure it out. Rewards narrow our field of view. Our brains stop puzzling freely. We stop thinking deeply and seeing the possibilities.

The whole concept of punishments and rewards is based on negative assumptions about children — that they need to be controlled and shaped by us, and that they don't have good intentions. But we can flip this around to see kids as capable, wired for empathy, cooperation, team spirit and hard work. That perspective changes how we talk to children in powerful ways.

Rewards and punishments are conditional, but our love and positive regard for our kids should be unconditional. In fact, when we lead with empathy and truly listen to our kids, they're more likely to listen to us. Following are suggestions for how to change the conversation and change the behavior.

Look Underneath

Kids don't hit their siblings, ignore their parents or have tantrums in the grocery store for no reason. When we address what's really going on, our help is meaningful and longer lasting. Even trying to see what's underneath makes kids less defensive, more open to listening to limits and rules, and more creative in solving problems.

Instead of saying: Be nice to your friend and share, or no screen time later.

Say: Hmm, you're still working on sharing your new building set. I get it. Sharing is hard at first, and you're feeling a little angry. Can you think of a plan for how to play with them together? Let me know if you need help.

Crying, resistance and physical aggression may be the tip of the iceberg. Underneath could be hunger, sleep deprivation, overstimulation, having big feelings, working on a developmental skill or being in a new environment. If you think this way, it makes you a partner there to guide, rather than an adversary there to control.

Motivate Instead of Reward

Motivation is great, when it has the underlying message: "I trust you and believe you want to cooperate and help. We are a team." This is a subtle difference from dangling rewards, but it's a powerful one.

Instead of saying: If you clean your room we can go to the park. You better do it, though, or no park.

Say: When your room is clean, we'll go to the park. I can't wait. Let me know if you need some help.

Help Instead of Punish

The idea of a punishment conveys the message: "I need to make you suffer for what you did." Many parents don't really want to communicate this, but they also don't want to come off as permissive. The good news is that you can hold limits and guide children, without punishments.

Instead of saying: You're not playing nicely on this slide so you're going to time out. How many times do I have to tell you?

Say: You're feeling kind of wild, I can see that! I'm going to lift you off this slide because it's not safe to play this way. Let's calm down somewhere.

Instead of saying: You were rude to me and used swear words. That's unacceptable. I'm taking your phone away.

Say: Wow, you're really angry. I hear that. It's not O.K. with me that you use those words. We're putting your phone away for now so you can have some space in your mind. When you're ready, tell me more about what's bothering you. We'll figure out what to do together.

Engage the Natural Hard Worker

Humans are not naturally lazy (it's not an adaptive trait), and especially not kids. We like to work hard, if we feel like we're part of a team. Little kids want to be capable members of the family, and they like to help if they know their contribution matters and isn't just for show. Let them help in a real way from the time they are toddlers, rather than assuming they need to be otherwise distracted while we do the work.

Have a family meeting to brainstorm all the daily tasks the family needs to get done. Ask for ideas from each family member. Make a chart for the kids (or have them make their own), with a place to note when tasks are completed.

In the case of the bedtime-averse child, when the parents looked under the surface, they made progress. It turned out that he was overtired, so they let go of some scheduled activities and protected more wind-down time in the evenings. When he started to get wound up, his mom wrapped him in his bath towel and said he was her favorite burrito. She acknowledged that it was hard for him when she had to work late: "Maybe you've felt sad I missed bedtime the last few weeks — I know I have. Hey, can we read our favorite book tonight?" They made a chart listing each step of his routine and asked for his input. Over time, he stopped resisting, and the tone at bedtime went from dread to true connection and enjoyment.

No matter how irrational or difficult a moment might seem, we can respond in a way that says: "I see you. I'm here to understand and help. I'm on your side. We'll figure this out together."

Heather Turgeon is a psychotherapist and co-author, with Julie Wright, of the new book "Now Say This: The Right Words to Solve Every Parenting Dilemma."