



School Calendar

This Week

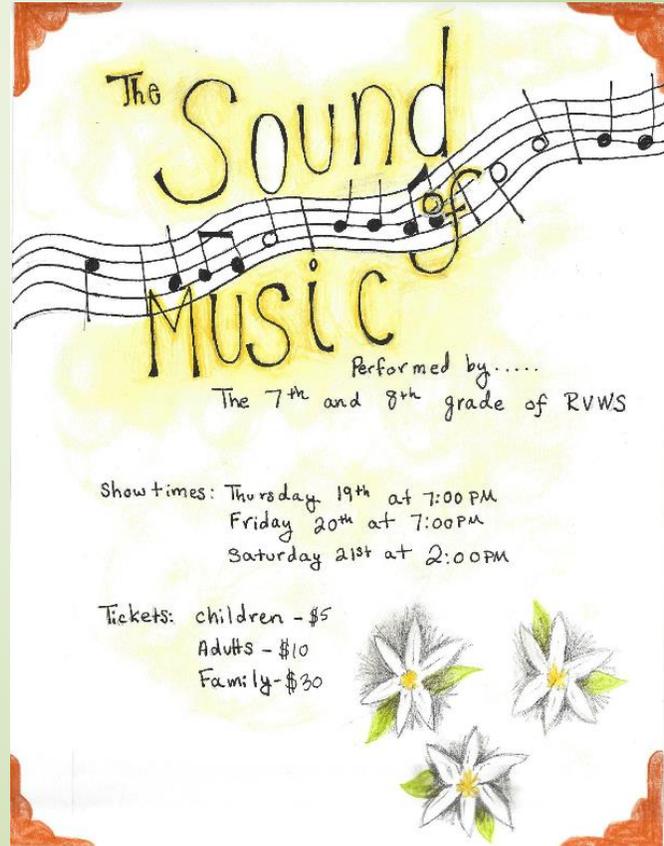
Thursday, Mar. 19	MS Musical, "The Sound of Music"	7:00 pm
Friday, Mar. 20	MS Musical, "The Sound of Music"	7:00 pm
Saturday, Mar. 21	MS Musical, "The Sound of Music"	2:00 pm

Looking Ahead

Thursday, Mar. 26	Early Dismissal -Parent Teacher Conf.	1:00 pm
	Board Meeting	6:30 pm
Friday, Mar. 27	No School – Parent Teacher Conferences	
Tuesday, Mar. 31	3 rd grade Parent Evening	7:00 pm

How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleysschool.org
lc@rivervalleysschool.org
bot@rivervalleysschool.org
pc@rivervalleysschool.org



The Sound of Music

The hallways are alive with the sound of music and it's time to reserve tickets for this year's production. The 7th and 8th graders are working hard to make this a performance you and your children will remember for years to come.

"The Sound of Music" will be performed on Thursday, March 19th and Friday, March 20th at 7 pm and Saturday, March 21st at 2 pm.

Please fill out the order form attached to the Current and put it in the folder on the office door. Seating is limited so get your orders in soon to guarantee a spot for you and your family.

Snow Day Make-up

Because of the time we missed for snow days this year, the following changes will need to be made to our calendar:
Thursday, March 26 – 1 pm dismissal
Grade School only:
Thursday, June 11 – Full day of school
Friday, June 12 – Full day of school

**Next Parent Council Meeting:
Wed. March 18th - 2:00pm at
Homestead General Store**

Save the Date Mayfaire – May 9th

On these cold winter days, remember, we'll be celebrating Mayfaire before you know it!

Reminder – No Samosas Until After Winter Break

Because of the middle school play, Parent-Teacher Conferences and Spring Break, Samosas will not be served again until Friday, April 17th. Please remember to pack lunch for your child.

**The Auction is Coming Home.
Save the Date- Saturday, May 30th**
The Auction Committee is bringing the big event back to school and this year's Gala will be yet another fantastic night out!

Summer Camp Registration Has Begun!

If you register before March 25th, you will receive a discount. A brochure with more details and registration forms are attached to this week's Current.

From Administration

AWSNA Invites you to Participate in the Conversation

The Human Encounter: Parent-Teacher Relationships in a Waldorf School Community. A Conversation with Torin M. Finser, PhD. Join us for a webinar on Apr 21, 2015 at 2:00 PM EDT.

Register now! <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8854050843730207746>

A school is a community, and like all communities its health depends upon the quality of its relationships. Join us as Torin speaks to the parent-teacher relationship in all its dimensions offering both practical advice and deeper, spiritual insights. This webinar is co-sponsored by AWSNA and the Anthroposophical Society in America. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

New! 3-day Mixed-age Early Childhood class to begin April 15, 2015

It is so exciting to see this class filling up with a great mix of children from new Garden Gate graduates to kindergarten-ready young ones. What a rich class experience they will have! 12 children is the most we can accommodate, and right now only a few spots remain, so if you or someone you know is interested – now is the time. This class is also a nice way for children to get familiar with RVWS and with some other students before jumping in, in September.

Amanda Blanco will lead the class through a morning of interactive play, both indoors and out, as well as special activities such as crafts, watercolor painting, circle activities, singing and story time in the thoughtfully simple classroom environment. Large and small motor skills and receptive language skills, social awareness, love for the natural world, self-care are some of what is developed as the children play and work with one another under the respectful guidance of their teacher. Children must be at least 2 years, 9 months of age and reliably toilet-trained.

Class will meet Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30am until 1:00pm. Children 3 and older may be able to extend their day until 3:15pm with our Afternoon Garden program (as space allows).

Please contact Cindy Schretlen with any questions, or to receive an application. 610-982-5606 x 203
admissions@rivervalley.school.org

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who brought food for the Open House. It was delicious!

From the Faculty

WHAT ARE THE CHILDREN LEARNING?

First Grade: Math

Second Grade: Language Arts

Third Grade: Fiber Arts

Fourth Grade: Language Arts/Science/Local History

Fifth Grade: North American History and Geography

Sixth Grade: History/Rome/Middle Ages

Seventh Grade: Drama

Eighth Grade: Drama

Circus Club is Going on the Road

Next Saturday (3/21), the RVWS Circus Club will meet in Hopewell, NJ from 10:30 am-12 pm. The middle school play has taken over the All-Purpose Room so we are temporarily re-locating. All skill levels are welcome. Fee: by donation. Call Mr. Friedman (610-847-8749) for more details.

From the Leadership Council

Next year's First Grade Teacher

The Leadership Council is very pleased to announce that Christina Hummel will be next year's first grade teacher. Christina has taught at River Valley for 18 years! She was first hired in 1998, fresh from her Waldorf training, as a kindergarten teacher. In September of 2000, Christina began her grade school journey with her first, first grade and this June, she will graduate her second eighth grade class. Christina is looking forward to the joy and wonder of first grade, and the excitement that is always found at the start of the grade school journey. The Leadership Council appreciates Christina's ongoing commitment to RVWS.

From the Board

A message from the Board of Trustees

As many of you are aware, our Board President Molly Watson recently moved to New Zealand to start a new adventure with her family. On behalf of the entire Board, I would like to recognize Molly for her exceptional service and leadership - certainly a tough act to follow. This unanticipated change has left a hole in our community and on our Board. To help fill the gap for the remainder of this school year, the Board has elected Will Carpenter as President and Rich Kroth as Vice President. Our Treasurer Nick Thompson and Secretary Kristyn Lederer will ably continue in their roles.

We filled the position but were left with a vacant seat. To fill the seat, Clare Wargaski-Brunell was asked and agreed to complete Molly's remaining term. Welcome and thank you to Clare! Additionally, alumni parent DeeDee Riffle has decided to step off the Board and has recently resigned. As we are close to the next election, this position will be left vacant until then.

A slate of new trustees will be presented in April and board officers will be elected in May as usual for the 2015-16 school year.

Many board members have heard of – and some felt themselves – dissatisfaction with the nomination and election process for new board members. This year the Board reviewed and has proposed several changes to the process, as stated in our by-laws. While not perfect, it is our hope that the new format will be more transparent and better understood. All proposed changes to our by-laws will be published in the Current this May. In the meantime, I would like to offer a brief explanation of the process for nominating and electing new board members.

The Board is designed to have up to thirteen members. The Administrator and two faculty members (elected by the Faculty to represent, share perspective and report back) have standing positions. The ten elected members serve 3-year terms. For continuity sake, the terms are staggered so that each year, three or four terms expire and three or four new members are voted in. Each spring the Nominating Committee presents a slate of candidates to fill the open positions in the forthcoming year.

The Nominating Committee is made up of two board members and may include two members from the broader community. The Board has proposed an amendment requiring the members' names be published in the Current each year. This year the NC was Molly and Rich, with assistance from the board officers. The Committee seeks out nominees who have been a part of RVWS for more than one year and who have skills and experience to compliment those of current members and that are necessary to support current Board obligations and initiatives. Any community member may suggest a nominee for consideration by the Committee.

New members are elected as a slate of candidates rather than elected individually. This puzzles some and displeases others. The Board discussed this at length and came to consensus that new members should continue to be elected as a slate. When a community member is asked and agrees to serve, we are grateful. The prospect of campaigning for a position or having a popularity contest seems both unnecessary and undesirable in a supportive community of volunteers.

Then why have a vote? The community is asked to vote and a quorum must be achieved or the slate is not elected. A vote to approve the slate may be considered a vote of confidence for the current Board. If the community is dissatisfied with the direction of the Board, enough votes opposing the slate or enough people not voting will require the Board to further engage the community, address the discontent and build support to move forward.

If questions or concerns remain, I encourage you to discuss the matter with a board member, as we had a healthy discussion to arrive at this point. We will continue to make every attempt to keep the community informed. Our monthly meetings are almost all "open" and anyone is welcome to attend. If you would like to discuss a specific issue, please email a week in advance so that time may be allotted on the agenda.

Thank you,
Will Carpenter

Class Fundraisers

8th Grade Class Fundraiser

8th Grade is so very grateful for all the support you've lent to our class trip -- from buying sweatshirts (contact Miss Hummel if you haven't purchased yours yet!) to eating heartily at Winter Fair. We thank you also for ordering samosas every week and for stocking up on them on the first Monday of each month. (If you haven't tried them yet, we urge you to do so--it's not too late to email Renell with a bulk order and have an easy meal at the ready!)

As we approach our fundraising goal, we are continuing our snack (and coffee!) sales in the lobby every Monday and Wednesday. Isn't it nice to know that you can send your child in with a couple of bucks to pick up a healthy snack to drop in their lunch box on their way into school? Our popular morning snack offerings currently include:

- Organic Popcorn with butter and salt \$1.50 (quart bag)
- Cheese Cubes \$1.50
- Organic non-GMO Corn Chips & Salsa \$1.75
- Homemade Beef Jerky \$2.00

In the afternoons we offer sweet breads, warm, ready-to-eat baby burritos, hot dogs kebabs (intriguing, no?), and other inspired, nutritious creations by Grandy.

From Parent Council

Parent Teacher Conferences--Thursday and Friday March 26th and 27th

This is a very busy time for teachers and parents help out by providing some meals for them.

We will do as we did in November and make food for our own teachers. Ask your teacher what he or she likes to eat, about any allergies and see if they need food for both days or just one etc.

We will also include the specialty teachers this time. Look for an email from your Classroom Coordinator in order to organize this. The faculty truly appreciates this wonderful service!

From the Community

Bucks Learning Cooperative

Bucks Learning Cooperative is holding an information session for families interested in knowing more about BLC's innovative approach to learning. BLC helps high school-age teens live and learn without school by creating a personalized education based on their interests, goals and abilities. All are welcome to meet and chat with mentors and parents about using BLC to provide an alternative to high school.

Please join us at:

Middletown Friends Meeting House
453 W. Maple Ave. Langhorne, PA 19047
On Thursday, March 19th at 7pm

Lawn Mowing Available

Aaron's Mowing (Aaron Dringus), 267-987-9904 / afd8073@hotmail.com. Call, text, or email for pricing and availability. Serving Upper Bucks County.

Items for Sale - Furniture Update

While much of our furniture has already found new homes we still have two bookshelves, and a brown armoire for sale. Please let Mrs Diven know if you're interested: (530) 209-2711

Maple Syrup from Tap to Bottle

Saturday, March 21 - 11 am

The Sugar Shack, Headquarters Road

By popular demand, Craig Schneiderwind will be back to demonstrate the maple syrup making process.

Tasting and hands-on opportunities for the kids! Email Bill Cahill cahill@ptd.net for directions and to sign up.

Sponsored by the Tinicum Conservancy

The Sword, the Pen and the Arrow Summer Program

July 5-10, 2015 at the Spacial Dynamics Institute, Mechanicville, NY

Unique week-long experience for boys and girls ages 11-14, introduces arts of fencing, writing and archer, paving paths for sovereignty, inventiveness and independence.

For information email: info@spacialdynamics.com, or call 518-695-6377. www.spacialdynamics.com

Upcoming Opportunities from Saharra White-Wolf

Learn to Create Harmony Within Yourself

LEI program, based on indigenous ways, 1 year course begins March 21st. For more information contact Saharra.

Yoga Loka

SHAKE IT OFF! WITH T.R.E

Learn how to release your trauma, drama and stress

TRE® (Tension, Stress & Trauma Release Exercise) is an innovative series of exercises that assist the body in releasing deep muscular patterns of stress, tension and trauma. Created by Dr. David Berceci, PhD, TRE® safely activates a natural reflex mechanism of shaking or vibrating that releases muscular tension and calms down the nervous system. When this muscular shaking/vibrating mechanism is activated in a safe and controlled environment, the body is able to return to a state of balance. After doing TRE®, many people report feelings of peace and well-being. This is a self-regulating process- the tremors can be immediately stopped by simply straightening the legs or rolling onto their side if one becomes uncomfortable. Amarjyothi will assist you in this process. When you are comfortable doing so, you can practice it at home on your own, without having to rely on a therapist to continue your healing process. However, working in a group is a very powerful experience, so come to as many sessions as you can!

No previous experience in anything necessary!

Wednesday, 3/18- 11:00-12:00

\$15. Space is limited

Back Care series

2 sessions, beginning 3/15, 3/22

Family Yoga

3/20 - All ages welcome

Visit the website to register and for more information - www.Yoga-Loka.com

Join us for the 2015 Philadelphia International Children's Festival, May 7-9!

Theater, dance and music performances for the whole family. Plus, a free outdoor FUN ZONE with interactive activities!

Pilobolus (Dance) What happens when contemporary dance, gymnastics, technology and playful props combine? Find out when the wildly creative troupe Pilobolus Dance Theater takes the stage.

Playing By Air (Circus) Traditional theatricality meets absurd comedy in this joyful fusion of music, juggling and circus. Playing By Air captivates their audiences with their playfulness, high energy, creativity, and breathtaking feats.

Lifeboat (Theatre) An extraordinary true tale of survival told with humor and adventure. A moving and uplifting play about two teenage girls who board a ship to escape the dangers of World War II.

Orchestra of Life (Music) Rock star violinist and composer Daniel Bernard Roumain pays tribute to Bob Marley. The audience will join together to create "An Orchestra of Life" using their hands, feet and voices to express themselves musically.

Circo Comedia (Circus) Following in the tradition of the Quebec Circus, duo Jean Saucier and Patrick Côté perform acrobatic tricks, daredevil stunts and magic, offering thrills and comedy.

Watermelon Magic (Movie) The charming story of Sylvie and her garden as she watches a patch of watermelons grow from seed to fruit. Audiences will enjoy the science and marvel of plant life.

Tickets for individual shows are \$10 and include access to the FUN ZONE.

Performances will take place at the Annenberg Center, 3680 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 //

AnnenbergCenter.org // 215.898.3900

Seeking Childcare

RVWS family is looking for a creative and caring soul to watch our 23 month old daughter, Valentina on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, from 8:30am to 2:30pm. Driving would be ideal. If you need to bring your child that may work out. Valentina is a funny, chatty and very friendly little girl. We live in Plumestead Twp, near the Gardenville Hotel @ 413. Please reach us at 917-670-9976 (Tom) or 917-297-2733 (Dayana). Thank you!

Help us support the youth of our community!

Bridgeton Athletic Association's Beef & Beer Benefit DJ, Dancing, Raffles, Silent Auctions, Fun & Fellowship for a great cause!

Saturday March 28th from 7-12pm, Bridgeton AA Banquet Hall, 1340 Bridgeton Hill Rd Upper Black Eddy, PA 18972 Adults 21 or older Only! Tickets: \$25 each/Door or \$40 couple. Call Ahead to Reserve Tickets & Tables.

Please Contact: Kerri Scheetz @

bridgetonaa@gmail.com or 484.325.1816

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Take Center, LLC

Outpatient Rehabilitation Services and Equine Therapy Program in Kintnersville, PA

Are you looking for an opportunity to learn more about horses and work with people with a disability? Take Center Outpatient Rehabilitative Services provides physical therapy with the use of a horse. Hippotherapy, as it is called, is used to treat people with various disabilities including physical and cognitive challenges. By putting the patient on the horse, the horse's movement is transferred to the patient, which helps improve strength, posture, balance and gait. There are many ways to help!

- Working as a leader or a side aide in the riding ring
 - Grooming the horses
 - Cleaning tack
 - Tacking up the horses for riders
 - Leading horses to and from the riding ring
 - Feeding the horses and making sure they have fresh water
 - Cleaning the stalls and barn
 - Riding ring maintenance
 - Making light repairs
- ...and more

We are looking for volunteers of all ages to help. Prior experience working with horses is not required – training is offered. Minimum age to assist in the riding ring is 13. We do ask that youth under the age of 10 are accompanied by an adult.

Our comprehensive volunteer training sessions will begin in mid-March and go through April. Please visit us at www.takecenter.com for more details.

Without you, we cannot provide the quality services we strive to achieve. By volunteering at Take Center, you are sure to walk away with unforgettable, valuable experiences from your connections with amazing people – and horses, too! Please contact us with any questions or interest. We'd love to hear from you!

Terri K. Long, MPT ph: 610-346-9446 e: tklong63@verizon.net

web: www.takecenter.com 1300 Woodcock Lane, Kintnersville, PA 18930

CALLING ALL ARTISTS

Welcome All Adults to an ongoing weekly gathering of artists who would like to individually pursue their craft in the company of other creative people in a friendly, supportive, and relaxing atmosphere. These are not lessons. You will be working independently within the group for your own enjoyment.

We will meet in the main floor Community Meeting Room of the Riegelsville Borough Hall every Thursday morning from 10 – 12 am, except the first Thursday of the month. All mediums are welcome. Please bring a sheet of plastic to cover the table and please leave your workspace clean. Any questions? Call Karen on 973.876.0401.

LifeWays Training Starting in Kimberton, PA

LifeWays North America is bringing its year-long training course for parents and early childhood professionals to the Mid-Atlantic states in 2015.

LifeWays Early Childhood Training and Certification is based on the work of Rudolf Steiner. With its emphasis on "The Living Arts" the training is ideal for parents, childcare providers, and early childhood teachers and their assistants.

The training will be held at Kimberton Waldorf School in Pennsylvania starting March 28-April 3, 2015. The three other sessions will take place over the course of a year, supplemented by guided study with a mentor in between the sessions.

To learn more, visit www.lifewaysnorthamerica.org and click on the Pennsylvania listing or request an information packet from Chinyelu Kunz at 610-933-3635 X109 or ChinyeluK@LifeWaysNorthAmerica.org.

Ready to activate your brain/body connection?

Dayana Henwood, GCFP, (mom of Sofia, Moon Room) is inviting you to discover the benefits of the Feldenkrais Method® at her new space in Pipersville (shared with Golden Cabinet acupuncture).

The Feldenkrais Method® is a remarkable approach to human movement, learning, and change, recognized for its strategies to improve posture, flexibility, coordination, athletic, and artistic ability, and to help those with chronic pain, restricted movement, and tension. Neurobiologists are making new discoveries about "neuroplasticity," or how our brain changes as it learns. As featured by bestselling author Norman Doidge, M.D. in his new book *The Brain's Way of Healing*, the Feldenkrais Method® is a low stress, safe and effective way to apply neuroplasticity and provide new hope for a wide range of people, from those suffering from autism, stroke, Parkinson's disease, balance problems, or scoliosis, to those looking to improve their yoga and exercise or find more comfort while typing, driving or sitting. Experience a cutting-edge approach to health and wellness in a private and safe environment.

Please mention RVWS when booking your first appointment to receive a complimentary \$20 off.
More information at www.dayanahenwood.com or 917-297-2733

Sound of Music Reservations

- Thursday, March 19th, 7pm # adults ____ # kids ____
- Friday, March 20th, 7pm # adults ____ # kids ____
- Saturday, March 21st, 2pm # adults ____ # kids ____

Ticket prices \$5 child, \$10 adult or \$30 per immediate family.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

We can only take prepaid reservations.
Make check payable to River Valley Waldorf School.
Bring form & check to office.

Joy: A Subject Schools Lack

By Susan Engel

When Jonathan Swift proposed, in 1729, that the people of Ireland eat their children, he insisted it would solve three problems at once: feed the hungry masses, reduce the population during a severe depression, and stimulate restaurant business. Even as a satire, it seems repulsive and shocking in America with its child-centered culture. But actually, the country is closer to his proposal than you might think.

If you spend much time with educators and policy makers (even if you just read editorials about education), you'll hear a lot of the following words: "standards," "results," "skills," "self-control," "accountability," and so on. I have visited some of the newer supposedly "effective" schools, where children chant slogans in order to learn self-control, are given a jelly bean when they do their worksheet, or must stand behind their desk when they can't sit still. When I go to these schools, all I can think of is Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*, in which Wackford Squeers, the headmaster of a school, says with great certainty, "Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them ..."

In the novel, Squeers is hell-bent on making sure that his students leave school with the knowledge they need to be "serviceable" in the adult world. It's not so different today. Everyone is worried about whether kids are "learning what they need" to get into college, finding good jobs, getting along in a big company, and learning new trades. The country's whole school system seems geared toward solving large-scale economic woes and producing future workers. It's most definitely not geared toward children. In fact, the prevailing view is that if teachers focus too much on students' pleasure they will somehow be encouraging wanton self-indulgence and dangerous hedonism.

A look at what goes on in most classrooms these days makes it abundantly clear that when people think about education, they are not thinking about what it feels like to be a child, or what makes childhood an important and valuable stage of life in its own right. This may explain why so many schools that I visit seem more like something out of a Dickens novel than anything else.

I'm a mother of three, a teacher, and a developmental psychologist. So I've watched a lot of children—talking, playing, arguing, eating, studying, and being, well, young. Here's what I've come to understand. The thing that sets children apart from adults is not their ignorance, nor their lack of skills. It's their enormous capacity for joy. Think of a 3-year-old lost in the pleasures of finding out what he can and cannot sink in the bathtub, a 5-year-old beside herself with the thrill of putting together strings of nonsensical words with her best friends, or an 11-year-old completely immersed in a riveting comic strip. A child's ability to become deeply absorbed in something, and derive intense pleasure from that absorption, is something adults spend the rest of their lives trying to return to.

A friend told me the following story. One day, when he went to get his 7-year-old son from soccer practice, his kid greeted him with a downcast face and a despondent voice. The coach had chastised him for not paying attention and not focusing on his soccer drills. The little boy walked out of the school with his head drooping downwards, shoulders slumped, dragging his way towards the car. He seemed wrapped in sadness. But just before he reached the car door, he suddenly stopped, crouching down to peer at something on the sidewalk. His face went down lower and lower, and then, with complete ebullience he called out, "Dad. C'mere. This is the most amazing bug I've ever seen. It has, like, a million legs. Look at this. It's awesome." He looked up at his father, his features brimming with energy and delight. "Can't we stay here for just a minute? I want to find out what he does with all those legs. This is the coolest ever."

The traditional view of such moments is that they constitute a charming but irrelevant byproduct of youth—something to be pushed aside to make room for more important qualities, like perseverance, obligation, and practicality. Yet moments like this one are just the kind of intense absorption and pleasure adults spend the rest of their lives seeking. In his masterpiece essay, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Sigmund Freud described childhood as a period of trying to balance primal urges to find pleasure and avoid pain with the growing need to be part of a group. Every piece of research since that essay has shown that Freud was right. Human lives are governed by the desire to experience joy.

(continued on next page)

Becoming educated should not require giving up joy but rather lead to finding joy in new kinds of things: reading novels instead of playing with small figures, conducting experiments instead of sinking cups in the bathtub, and debating serious issues rather than stringing together nonsense words, for example. In some cases, schools should help children find new, more grown-up ways of doing the same things that are perennial sources of joy: making art, making friends, making decisions.

Building on a child's ability to feel joy, rather than pushing it aside, wouldn't be that hard. It would just require a shift in the education world's mindset. Instead of trying to get children to buckle down, why not focus on getting them to take pleasure in meaningful, productive activity, like making things, working with others, exploring ideas, and solving problems? These focuses are not so different from the things to which they already gravitate and in which they delight.

Related Story

The Wisdom Deficit in Schools

Before you brush this argument aside as sentimental fluff, or think of joy as an unaffordable luxury in a nation where there is dire poverty, low academic achievement, and high dropout rates, think again. The more dire the school circumstances, the more important pleasure is to achieving any educational success.

Many of the assignments and rules teachers come up with, often because they are pressured by their administrators, treat pleasure and joy as the enemies of competence and responsibility. The assumption is that children shouldn't chat in the classroom because it disrupts hard work; instead, they should learn to delay gratification so that they can pursue abstract goals, like going to college. They should keep their hands to themselves and tolerate boredom so that they become good at being bored later on.

Not only is this a dreary and awful way to treat children, it makes no sense educationally. Decades of research have shown that in order to acquire skills and real knowledge in school, kids need to want to learn. You can force a child to stay in his or her seat, fill out a worksheet, or practice division. But you can't force a person to think carefully, enjoy books, digest complex information, or develop a taste for learning. To make that happen, you have to help the child find pleasure in learning—to see school as a source of joy.

Adults tend to talk about learning as if it were medicine: unpleasant, but necessary and good for you. Why not instead think of learning as if it were food—something so valuable to humans that they have evolved to experience it as a pleasure? The more a person likes fresh, healthy food, the more likely that individual is to have a good diet. Why can't it be the same with learning? Let children learn because they love to—think only of a 2-year-old trying to talk to see how natural humans' thirst for knowledge is. Then, in school, help children build on their natural joy in learning.

Joy should not be trained out of children or left for after-school programs. The more difficult a child's life circumstances, the more important it is for that child to find joy in his or her classroom. "Pleasure" is not a dirty word. And it's not antithetical to the goals of K-12 public education. It is, in fact, the sine qua non.