



# River Valley Current

March 29, 2016 No. 440

"Spring won't let me stay in this house any longer! I must get out and breathe the air deeply again."  
- Gustav Mahler

## School Calendar

### This Week

**Wednesday, March 30**

Homeopathy Lecture

6:30-8 pm

**Friday, April 1**

Middle School Dance

### Looking Ahead

**Monday, April 4**

3<sup>rd</sup> grade Parent Evening

6:30 pm

**Tuesday, April 5**

8<sup>th</sup> grade Community Service Projects

6:30 pm

RVWS Lecture Series – Sailboat Talk

6:30-8:30 pm

**Wednesday, April 6**

2<sup>nd</sup> grade play

5:30 pm

**Thursday, April 7**

EC Parent Enhancement Evening

6:30 pm

**Friday, April 8**

4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade Field Trip to Harrisburg

**Monday-Friday, April 11-15**

No School - Spring Break

### How to Contact Us

info@rivervalleyschool.org

lc@rivervalleyschool.org

bot@rivervalleyschool.org

pc@rivervalleyschool.org

## River Valley Lecture Series Introduction to Homeopathy

When: Wednesday March 30, 2016 at 6:30-8PM

Where: River Valley School, Upper Black Eddy, PA

Given by: Denise Timofai, D.Hom., C.Hom.

Homeopathy is not as widely practiced in the US as it is in Europe and in other parts of the world. For many people the subject of homeopathy is very unclear and many do not understand, exactly what it is, how it is used and what it can do.

This lecture will cover:

- What is homeopathy
- How does homeopathy work/address issues
- What is a homeopathic remedy and what are they made from
- How do you choose and take a remedy
- What issues can homeopathy help with- its' scope
- Where do you get information – the reference books
- Alternative ways of taking a remedy-RSBs, topical, wearing it, etc.
- How to successfully practice homeopathy on your own
- We will also cover remedy suggestions for various issues including colds, flu, trauma, depression, grief, head injuries, anxiety, arthritis
- Lastly we will have a question and answer period to clarify any misconceptions or issues about homeopathy

Come join us for a fun night of learning and an eye-opening experience into a new way of addressing health issues in your life.

## 2016-2017 CONTRACTS DUE THIS THURSDAY!

Take advantage of the \$100 (grade school) and \$50 (early childhood) on-time tuition discount, as well as the reduced deposit of \$250 per child when you turn in your enrollment contracts by Thursday, 3/31/2016.

Blank contracts are available in the PARENT FORMS holder across from the front office. Standard commitment deposit after the due date is \$500 per child. See Cindy with any questions.

## Save the Date Annual Open Board Meeting

On April 21<sup>st</sup> the Board of Trustees and the Leadership Council will hold an open meeting to discuss leadership roles in the school and communication. The BoT, LC, TDC, IAT and PC will each give a short explanation of the role they play in our school, followed by an open discussion about communication. Please join us.

## Parent Council Corner

Our next Parent Council meeting will be 4/20 at 6:00 pm at Becker's in Quakertown.



## Summer Camp

It's time to register for Summer Camp. There are four programs to choose from depending on the age of your child. Descriptions and registration forms are attached to this week's Current and are available on our website.  
[www.rivervalleyschool.org](http://www.rivervalleyschool.org)

## From Administration

### Thank you

A hearty thank you to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders and Mrs. Diven and Mrs. Birdsall for four amazing performances of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Thank you to the musicians who added so much and to the parents whose help made the production possible. Kudos to all.

## From the Faculty

### What the Children are Learning:

First Grade – Math

Second Grade – Drama

Third Grade – Social Studies/Fiber Arts

Fourth Grade – Math

Fifth Grade – North American Geography

Sixth Grade – Medieval Europe

Seventh Grade – Geometry

Eighth Grade – Chemistry

### From the Fiddler on the Roof Costume and Prop Crews:

Hello parents! Thank you all for your help in gathering costumes and props for the show. If your child has not brought a part of their costume home from the show please take a look on the rack outside of the handwork room and take home what belongs to you. There are also props on a table opposite the All-Purpose Room. Whatever is not claimed by Friday, April 1st will be donated to the costume closet or charity. Thank you!

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Community Service Project Presentation

In *Fiddler on the Roof*, you saw, yet again, what our middle-schoolers are capable of when given the opportunity and support. With only two and a half months to graduation, our eighth graders have more to share with the River Valley community! The focus of their eighth projects has been community service. The academic component of this project was carried through their language arts classes and required that they read and research the life of a world humanitarian, someone born between 1825 and 1950, a period that coincides with their history curriculum. They then wrote a lengthy paper as if they were the humanitarian or a close friend of the humanitarian. Concurrently, in art class they worked diligently to create a portrait of their chosen hero or heroine.

Next Tuesday at 6:30 PM in the eighth grade classroom, eighth grade parents and family members will be enlightened as each of our eighth graders delivers a monologue based on his or her completed and approved paper. Imagine stepping back in time to be inspired by John Muir, Susan B. Anthony, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jane Goodall, Rosa Parks, Rachel Carson or Nelson Mandela, to name but a few! It promises to be a wonderful evening.

Children in grades four and older will have a chance to see a replay on Wednesday morning, April 6, in the eighth grade room, 8:45-10:15. We also warmly welcome other interested community members at this time.

The other portion of their eighth grade project has been on-going community service, and they will share this portion on Wednesday evening, May 18. More news to follow...

We certainly hope that those of you who have a connection to this wonderful eighth grade will join us on Wednesday morning, April 6.

Thank you, Laura Birdsall

### Boat Building

As some of you may know, for the past year, the seventh grade class has been building a small sailboat on weekends. During the week of April 4th the class will receive a huge boost - the help of Mr. Dennis Hansen, an extremely experienced boat builder from Spruce Head, Maine. Mr. Hansen will spend a week working with our students and getting their vessel ready for launch in the early spring. Mr. Hansen has been building small wooden boats for decades now and loves sharing his passion with others.

The seventh grade class would like to invite the whole community on Tuesday April 5th at 6:30 pm, for an evening chat about sailboat building with young students, and its many positive effects on the individual. Mr. Hansen's visit to our school is completely a volunteer effort on his part and we would love to see as many of you as possible. A small donation of \$5.00 per person is strongly suggested to show Mr. Hansen our school's appreciation of his dedication to his work.

Respectfully, Euclides Santiago, 7th grade teacher

### **Have your kids outgrown their gear?**

Garden Gate families are looking for a few items for their little ones and we're wondering if any of our older River Valley friends have grown out of some gear!!! We would love to make use of any of your used things as we are now big enough to be outside in all the weather!

Muck/rain boots: Size Little Kid -5/6, 6/7,7      Adult size 8

Keen style sandals: Size 6/7

Rain pants: Size 18months and 3T

Rain Coat Size 18 months

Summer hats for the 2-4 year old set

### **An Opportunity**

Every child works at his or her own pace in Handwork and sometimes a project does not get completed by the end of the year. Miss Till is offering after-school opportunities (free of charge) for help with current or past handwork projects. She will be offering these most Tuesdays 3:30 - 4:30. Please get in touch with her to let her know to expect your child. [mtill@rivervalley.school.org](mailto:mtill@rivervalley.school.org)

## **From Parent Council**

### **A new Triple Crown: Fiddler on the Roof. Capital Campaign. Parent Stage.**

Those 7th & 8th graders surpassed all expectations with their Fiddler on the Roof. Bravo! The capital campaign team has posed a challenge to acknowledge this achievement. If 20 new pledges come in by March 31, Louanne and Will will sing "Do You Love Me?" at Parent Stage! So please, please make your pledge. Help boost our participation above 36%. Do it for me -- I NEED Louanne & Will on that stage April 30!

Thank you for your generosity, Chellie Bader

### **A Request**

I have been a member of the parent body at River Valley for over 9 years, and in that time I have seen the parents' at the school band together to accomplish great things, support each other and the school, and really come together as a family. Yes, sometimes we quibble, but all in all we have each others' backs. That being said, I was a bit discouraged at the graphic I saw in the Current last week. A graphic that revealed only 36% of parent body have made their pledges to the Capital Campaign.

Anyone who has been to an all-school assembly in the past few years knows- we need more room. Assemblies are not only standing room only; they're "you better really like your neighbor" room only, because you WILL be getting cozy. Now I know that if you've heard the spiel from the Capital Campaign committee you are thinking: "no matter how they spin it \$3,000 to \$5,000 is a lot." Let's face it, a lot of us are just trying to think of ways to come up with tuition. I'm not asking you to contribute thousands of dollars, but I ask you to please contribute what you can. Think of the Capital Campaign as your change jar at home. Every day or week you throw your spare change in the jar. It's not much, probably not even a dollar, BUT when that jar is full and you go to cash it in, suddenly there is a couple hundred dollars in it! Now think, if every family at the school threw in what they could, how quickly it could add up and get us so much closer to our goal. Let's show the world, and any outside body that might want to help us expand, that we are ALL invested in our family, this school, and maybe, just maybe, I'll be the only one standing in the back at an assembly.

Tiffany Robinson - The lady standing on the chair at the back of the room.

### **Mayfaire Festival is Coming - Saturday May 7, 2016**

The following items are needed from each family:

1. 20 Pocket fairy items (collection box in lobby)
2. Colorful bright & pastel acrylic yarn (collection box in lobby)
3. 2-3 bouquets of flowers (to be collected the day before Mayfaire)

Please see your classroom coordinator if you have any questions.

Also, we are looking for entertainment, which includes singing, music, poetry reading & dancing from grades 3rd - 8th. If your child is interested please have them sign up on the sheet located outside their classroom.

## People are talking . . . about Parent Stage!!

April 30th at 7:00 PM, at school. Adults only! Pot luck!

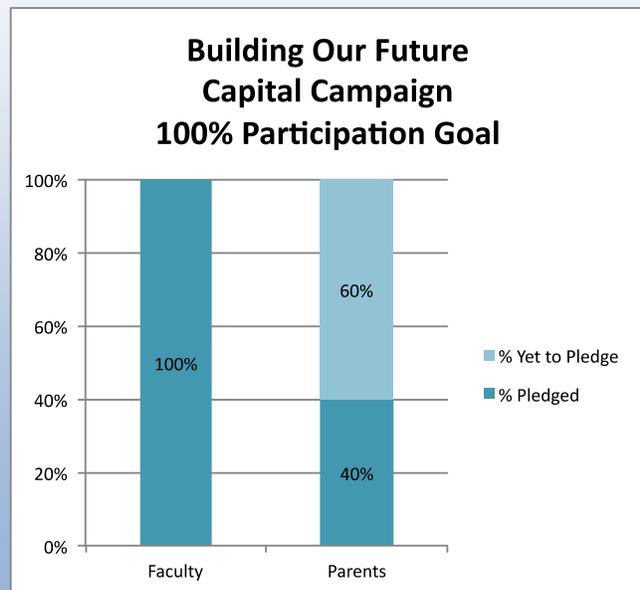
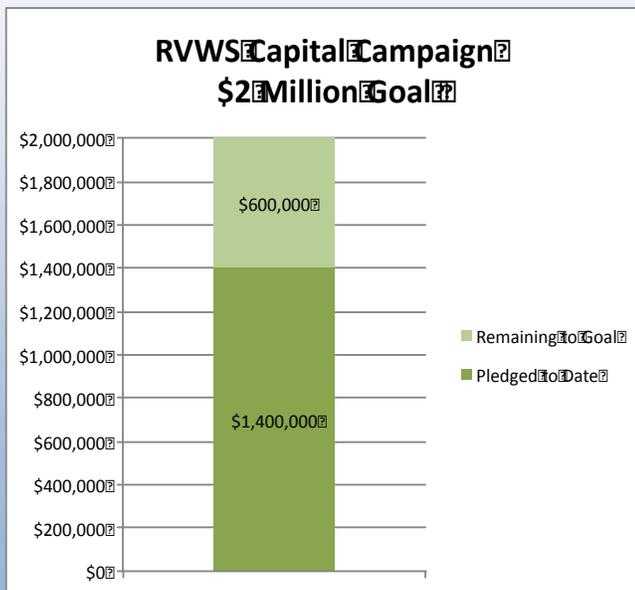
What's Parent Stage? Only the finest event for River Valley parents on the school calendar. A variety show that will blow your socks off — parents performing for parents. And it's free! Come show your stuff — do you sing? play? act? dance? If you don't want to sing in your own bit, come join the Parent Choir. And of course, snag your babysitter and come to the party.

Contact Chellie Bader ([michelle@smorgasb.org](mailto:michelle@smorgasb.org)) or Kira Willey ([kirawilley@rcn.com](mailto:kirawilley@rcn.com)) [parent choir] for more information.

## From the Capital Campaign Committee

### BUILDING OUR FUTURE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: AN UPDATE

Thanks no doubt in part to the amazing Middle School production of "Fiddler on the Roof" we are thrilled to announce that we recently received pledges from River Valley families bringing our participation rate up to 40%. If you have not made your pledge yet please consider what you can do to help us reach 100%!



## Building & Grounds

### School Work Days

Below is the calendar of the upcoming workdays. Please note that some changes have been made from the school calendar. Please RSVP to Mary K. Till ([mtill@rivervalleyschool.org](mailto:mtill@rivervalleyschool.org)), to let us know if you will attend. This way we can plan what projects can be undertaken. Mary K. Till and Lynne Allbaugh - Building and Grounds

### 2015-2016 Work Days

TBD - 5th grade

April 23 - 1st grade

May 14 - Early Childhood

## From the Community

### A Request from An 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Student

Dear RVWS parents and community members,

The 8th grade classes at RVWS have been doing projects for years and years, and this year is no exception. The difference between this year and previous years is that this 8th grade class is doing a much more community service oriented project. For my community service, I have been working with a local organization called Grow A Row. Grow A Row is a non-profit farm that grows fresh produce for people in need. During the harvesting season, I helped pick greens and package them, but then the season passed and I needed to find more ways to help out. So I started thinking of ways to bring Pennies for Produce, a campaign that Grow A Row has launched, to the school. This is where the rest of the RVWS community comes in. You can all help by taking a jar home with you and putting it in your kitchen, your car or even a local business, then, when the jar is full of change, bring it back to the school and I will deliver it to Grow A Row. There will also be jars in various classrooms as well as in the lobby. We might also have some fund raising games later in the year to support the Grow A Row.

Thank you in advance, Dominique Wander

### Costa Rica Rental

Casa de Iguana is a private home built and designed by Ivy Giacchino-Berrocal and her husband Mauricio Berrocal (parents of Lila in the Moon Room). The home is located in Herradura, Costa Rica and is all family owned. It is a two story home with a large comfortable sitting area on first floor with wrought iron spiral staircase leading to a 2nd floor with wraparound porch with views of the mountains. with 2 Large fully equipped stone tiled bathrooms on both floors, open kitchen layout! The home sleeps 10, possibly more.

For more information or to schedule time at Casa de Iguana, email [karunagoddess@gmail.com](mailto:karunagoddess@gmail.com) or call 201-694-5166.

You can view pictures here:

<http://www.thekarunashala.com/Casa-de-Iguana.html>

### WE WANT YOUR GENTLY USED SHOES!

Help us Wear Out Poverty by simply repurposing your gently worn shoes. Ike (G8) and Mary (G6) Aherne are collecting used shoes for Soles4Souls.org. Please bring in to RVWS your gently used shoes and sneakers and place them in the collection box in the lobby. Ike and Mary will collect, tally, and contribute them to the Soles4Souls organization for distribution to those in need.

### New Yoga Basics with Felicia Ruth Holtz

Red Hill Medical Center, 7137 Old Easton Road, Suite 101, Pipersville, PA

AND

Reiki Level 1 with Felicia, May 1, Dig Yoga, Lambertville, NJ  
2:30-7:30 pm.

### The Feldenkrais Method

Ready to receive Spring with awareness and joy? Still carrying "the weight" of winter and looking forward to reclaim your uprightness and get rid of aches and pains? Take some time to care for your Self and let the Feldenkrais Method® help you!

Either participating in group classes or receiving individual private sessions, the possibilities for improvement and wellbeing are endless. Some benefits of the work include:

- \* Improvement of Posture and Breathing
- \* Rehabilitation from Injuries and Surgery
- \* Profound Strength
- \* Better Balance
- \* Sounder Sleep, Reduced Anxiety, Relaxation
- \* Emotional Wellbeing
- \* Alignment of Thinking, Feeling, Sensing and Will Power
- \* Increased Self Awareness, Focused Attention
- \* Injury Prevention
- \* Pain Relief

"We do not work with people's problems, but with their health. Health as the capacity to recover from shock; the ability to overcome obstacles; the capacity to live one's dreams." Moshe Feldenkrais

**Call Dayana to schedule a free consultation at 917-297-2733**, and visit the website for more information: [www.dayanapereira.com](http://www.dayanapereira.com). Thank you!

### Looking For A Nanny In Doylestown For 2 Children

Doylestown family needs a part-time nanny asap for our two girls, ages 3 and 6. You'll be responsible for after school pickups in Upper Black Eddy, PA and care until end-of-workday/ dinnertime in Plumstead/Point Pleasant, PA. Starting the week of April 18th our youngest will be eligible for after-care, so at that point and through the summer the hours will be from 3-6:30 p.m. It is important to us that you have your own reliable car and have a good driver history. We have a large yard and garden and the children like to be outside as much as the weather will allow. We'd like someone who enjoys exploring the outdoors, playing games, and arts & crafts, as the girls are very tactile and interested in crafting.

Pay commensurate with experience. Please email Tom at [th47@hotmail.com](mailto:th47@hotmail.com) to schedule a time to chat.

## Ottsville Traditional Arts Center

Every Wednesday

Open Jam with Richard Finch

6:00-8:00 pm • \$5 suggested donation

Contrawaltz with Raise the Roof and Friends

Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, \$14 combined entry to both events, Half off for kids under 12

6:30pm Waltz workshop with Peggy Leiby & Ret Turner (\$7)

7:30pm Contradance Beginners' Workshop

8pm Contradance (with extra waltzes!) with Raise the Roof and Jan Alter (\$9)

More at [ottsvilletradarts.weebly.com](http://ottsvilletradarts.weebly.com) • 250 Durham Rd. Ottsville Pa.

### From Yoga Loka

#### TRE and Meditation

What people are saying about TRE:

"I love it!" "I have never felt so relaxed before in my life" "When can I do it again?" "This has changed my life. I can be a better mother, wife and friend because of TRE" "Crazy!!" "I have never felt so in my body and so aware of my surroundings" "What happened? My head stopped talking!" "Yes! Finally I can relax." "This is wild"

**Wednesdays 11:00 am-12:00 pm 3/30, 4/20, 4/27.**

Join a group session, see for yourself. TRE helps release stress, tension and trauma from your body. It is easy, accessible, powerful and pleasant to do. TRE date night! Bring a friend or partner, have dinner after! Friday 4/8 from 7:00-8:00.

#### Movie Night at Yoga Loka

TRAPPED!

Friday April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 pm, Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3:00 pm. Tickets at \$10

U.S. reproductive health clinics are fighting to remain open. Since 2010, 288 TRAP (Targeted Regulations of Abortion Providers) laws have been passed by conservative state legislatures. Unable to comply with these far-reaching and medically unnecessary measures, clinics have taken their fight to the courts. As the U.S. Supreme Court decides in 2016 whether individual states may essentially outlaw abortion (Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt), Trapped follows the struggles of the clinic workers and lawyers who are on the front lines of a battle to keep abortion safe and legal for millions of American women. Trapped is a feature-length documentary from director Dawn Porter, whose previous work includes Gideon's Army — the Emmy and Independent Spirit Award-nominated film about public defenders in the Deep South — and Rise: The Promise of My Brother's Keeper.

Trapped premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the Special Jury Award for Social Impact Filmmaking.

### Oofa What? Oofa Miaow!

May 7th and 21st

Muck and Gold (re)lab presents *Oofa Miaow!* a workshop created and taught by play guru, Sarah French, open to parents, teachers, dancers, poets, artists, thinkers, entrepreneurs, and anyone who is curious about the role of play in our lives, and how it can brighten our awareness, feed our dreams, spark discoveries, generate solutions, and even awaken memories. For details and registration please visit [www.muckandgold.com](http://www.muckandgold.com). Muck and Gold (re)lab is a collaboration between Chris Bodwitch and Scott Gallagher, parents of 3rd grader Loie.

### Self-Directed Learning Cooperative for Teens – an alternative to HS

River Valley parents Scott Gallagher (Loie 3rd grade) and MaryBeth Healy (Jaida 1st grade) are excited to announce that they are partnering to open a learning cooperative for teens in Flemington, NJ. Raritan Learning Cooperative will join sister centers Princeton Learning Cooperative (in 6th year, Princeton, NJ) and Bucks Learning Cooperative (in 2nd year, Langhorne, PA) in offering a personalized learning community for teens who are not thriving in a traditional school setting.

What is Self-Directed Learning? Why do teens thrive in this learning model? What paths to college are available if you leave high school? Join us to find out:

Info Session at River Valley - Tuesday, April 26th @ 3:30

Info Session in Flemington, NJ - Sunday, May 1st @ 2p

Contact MaryBeth or Scott @ 908-824-0238 or [info@raritanlearningcooperative.org](mailto:info@raritanlearningcooperative.org).

### Developing a Relationship with the Etheric World

A Lecture by Bastiaan Baan

Wednesday, March 30, 7:30 p.m. Waldorf School of Princeton Grade School Building

Co-sponsored with the Princeton Group of the Anthroposophical Society

1062 Cherry Hill Rd, Princeton, NJ 08540  
[www.princetonwaldorf.org](http://www.princetonwaldorf.org) 609.466.1970

A donation of \$10 per person is suggested at the door.

## **Free Community talks at the Doylestown Food Market/Coop**

On Friday, April 8, Connie Guerin will be presenting a talk on Holistic Addictions Recovery - a very important topic for our greater community. Learn about the missing link in many recovery programs. Studies show a balanced approach provides a dramatic increase in success rates, stress reduction, better mood, increased energy, ease of symptoms.

Location: Doc Bakers in Doylestown, from 6:30 - 8 pm.

There are two other events scheduled the 2nd Friday of May, and again the 2nd Friday of June. You can check out the complete calendar listing here:

<http://www.connieguerintherapy.com/CommunityCalendar.en.html>

## **Announcing a Doylestown Retreat in The Work of Byron Katie**

The Work of Byron Katie has been called "Yoga For The Mind" by certified facilitator, Tania Fierro. Tania will be guiding a weekend retreat introducing this tool for peace April 1-3 in Doylestown, PA.

The Work is Inquiry; a tool for slowing down and questioning the assumptions that are underpinning your stress. During the retreat, Tania will introduce how to use this simple tool. People who practice The Work for a while report a diminished impulse to shield themselves from difficult emotions. Instead, they listen to the thoughts causing the story, (generating the emotional reaction) and chose inquiry over staying stuck in a fearful reactions. They practice The Work and liberate themselves.

Early Bird cost of \$240 until March 15th (\$270 after the 15th).

For more information and to register, contact Lisa Naples at [LisaNaplesCeramics@gmail.com](mailto:LisaNaplesCeramics@gmail.com) or by calling 215-340-0964.

From [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com)

## **Screentime Is Making Kids Moody, Crazy and Lazy Six Ways electronic screen time makes kids angry, depressed and unmotivated**

By Victoria L. Dunckley, M.D.

Children or teens who are "revved up" and prone to rages or—alternatively—who are depressed and apathetic have become disturbingly commonplace. Chronically irritable children are often in a state of abnormally high arousal, and may seem "wired and tired." That is, they're agitated but exhausted. Because chronically high arousal levels impact memory and the ability to relate, these kids are also likely to struggle academically and socially.

At some point, a child with these symptoms may be given a mental-health diagnosis such as major depression, bipolar disorder, or ADHD, and offered corresponding treatments, including therapy and medication. But often these treatments don't work very well, and the downward spiral continues.

### **What's happening?**

Both parents and clinicians may be "barking up the wrong tree." That is, they're trying to treat what looks like a textbook case of mental disorder, but failing to rule out and address the most common environmental cause of such symptoms—everyday use of electronics. Time and again, I've realized that regardless of whether there exists any "true" underlying diagnoses, successfully treating a child with mood dysregulation today requires methodically eliminating all electronics use for several weeks—an "electronics fast" (link is external)—to allow the nervous system to "reset."

If done correctly, this intervention can produce deeper sleep, a brighter and more even mood, better focus and organization, and an increase in physical activity. The ability to tolerate stress improves, so meltdowns diminish in both frequency and severity. The child begins to enjoy the things they used to, is more drawn to nature, and imaginary or creative play returns. In teens and young adults, an increase in self-directed behavior is observed—the exact opposite of apathy and hopelessness.

### **It's a beautiful thing.**

At the same time, the electronic fast reduces or eliminates the need for medication while rendering other treatments more effective. Improved sleep, more exercise, and more face-to-face contact with others compound the benefits—an upward spiral! After the fast, once the brain is reset, the parent can carefully determine how much if any electronics use the child can tolerate without symptoms returning.

Restricting electronics may not solve everything, but it's often the missing link in treatment when kids are stuck.

*(Continued on next page.)*

But why is the electronic fast intervention so effective? (link is external) Because it reverses much of the physiological dysfunction produced by daily screen time.

Children's brains are much more sensitive to electronics use than most of us realize. In fact, contrary to popular belief, it doesn't take much electronic stimulation to throw a sensitive and still-developing brain off track. Also, many parents mistakenly believe that interactive screen-time—Internet or social media use, texting, emailing, and gaming—isn't harmful, especially compared to passive screen time like watching TV. In fact, interactive screen time is more likely to cause sleep, mood, and cognitive issues, because it's more likely to cause hyperarousal and compulsive use.

**Here's a look at six physiological mechanisms that explain electronics' tendency to produce mood disturbance:**

1. Screen time disrupts sleep and desynchronizes the body clock (link is external).

Because light from screen devices mimics daytime, it suppresses melatonin, a sleep signal released by darkness. Just minutes of screen stimulation can delay melatonin release by several hours and desynchronize the body clock. Once the body clock is disrupted, all sorts of other unhealthy reactions occur, such as hormone imbalance and brain inflammation. Plus, high arousal doesn't permit deep sleep, and deep sleep is how we heal.

2. Screen time desensitizes the brain's reward system.

Many children are "hooked" on electronics, and in fact gaming releases so much dopamine—the "feel-good" chemical—that on a brain scan it looks the same as cocaine use. But when reward pathways are overused, they become less sensitive, and more and more stimulation is needed to experience pleasure. Meanwhile, dopamine is also critical for focus and motivation, so needless to say, even small changes in dopamine sensitivity can wreak havoc on how well a child feels and functions.

3. Screen time produces "light-at-night."

Light-at-night from electronics has been linked to depression and even suicide risk in numerous studies. In fact, animal studies (link is external) show that exposure to screen-based light before or during sleep causes depression, even when the animal isn't looking at the screen. Sometimes parents are reluctant to restrict electronics use in a child's bedroom because they worry the child will enter a state of despair—but in fact removing light-at-night is protective.

4. Screen time induces stress reactions.

Both acute stress (fight-or-flight) and chronic stress produce changes in brain chemistry and hormones that can increase irritability. Indeed, cortisol, the chronic stress hormone, seems to be both a cause and an effect of depression—creating a vicious cycle. Additionally, both hyperarousal and addiction pathways suppress the brain's frontal lobe, the area where mood regulation actually takes place.

5. Screen time overloads the sensory system (link is external), fractures attention (link is external), and depletes mental reserves.

Experts say that what's often behind explosive and aggressive behavior is poor focus. (link is external) When attention suffers, so does the ability to process one's internal and external environment, so little demands become big ones. By depleting mental energy with high visual and cognitive input, screen time contributes to low reserves. One way to temporarily "boost" depleted reserves is to become angry, so meltdowns actually become a coping mechanism.

6. Screen-time reduces physical activity levels and exposure to "green time."

Research shows that time outdoors, especially interacting with nature, can restore attention, lower stress, and reduce aggression. Thus, time spent with electronics reduces exposure to natural mood enhancers.

In today's world, it may seem crazy to restrict electronics so drastically. But when kids are struggling, we're not doing them any favors by leaving electronics in place and hoping they can wind down by using electronics in "moderation." It just doesn't work. In contrast, by allowing the nervous system to return to a more natural state with a strict fast, we can take the first step in helping a child become calmer, stronger, and happier.

Dr. Dunckley is the author of 'Reset Your Child's Brain: A Four-Week Plan to End Meltdowns, Raise Grades, and Boost Social Skills by Reversing the Effects of Electronic Screen-Time.'