

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Hawthorne School District



Volume 9, Issue 48

January / February 2019

Thank You / Gracias Alexandre Monteiro



Please see page 3.

Board of Trustees



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**Every child deserves a chance to succeed!
¡Cada niño merece la oportunidad de triunfar!**

Preschool Program

HSD Preschools offer early childhood educational programs for children who are three and four-years old. Families must meet State income requirements.

Programa de Preescolar

Las Escuelas Preescolares de HSD ofrecen programas educativos de primera infancia para niños de tres y cuatro años de edad. Las familias deben cumplir con los requisitos de ingresos del Estado.



Hawthorne School District Preschool



Brain Development

By enrolling your child in preschool, you are giving your preschooler the chance to develop the brain at an amazing rate through age-appropriate, play-based learning opportunities. From talking, singing, and playing, your child will rapidly develop their learning capacity and social skills. Our preschool classrooms provide a nurturing and educationally enriching environment where children are encouraged to explore, experiment, and expand their learning every day.

Desarrollo Cerebral

Al inscribir a su hijo(a) en el preescolar, usted le da la oportunidad de desarrollar el cerebro a una velocidad increíble a través de oportunidades de aprendizaje apropiadas para su edad, basadas en el juego. Hablando, cantando y jugando, el niño(a) desarrollará rápidamente su capacidad de aprendizaje y habilidades sociales. Nuestras aulas proporcionan un ambiente acogedor y educativamente enriquecido donde los niños son animados a explorar el experimento y ampliar su aprendizaje cada día.



Reina Robledo
Principal



Thank You / Gracias Alexandre Monteiro

Mr. Alexandre Monteiro has served the students and families of the Hawthorne School District as a Trustee since December of 2007. Mr. Monteiro's service to the District began long before this as a partner and advocate for our students. He was instrumental in executing a grant that created Moneta Gardens Improvement, Incorporated. This nonprofit community-based organization works to educate families to promote a safe and healthy community. His commitment to education is steadfast, providing preschool education to children each year to ensure a successful start to their school career.

Mr. Monteiro will be leaving the Board of Trustees to continue his community service as a City Councilmember. He was elected to his seat in November 2018. We are grateful for Mr. Monteiro and his unwavering commitment to the Hawthorne School District. We know that our relationship with Mr. Monteiro will continue as a community partner and advocate for students. We wish Mr. Monteiro continued success in his new role. Thank you, Mr. Monteiro!



Dr. Helen E. Morgan
Superintendent

El Sr. Alexandre Monteiro ha servido a los estudiantes y las familias del Distrito Escolar de Hawthorne como fideicomisario desde diciembre de 2007. El servicio del Sr. Monteiro al Distrito comenzó mucho antes de esto como socio y defensor de nuestros estudiantes. Jugó un papel decisivo en la ejecución de una subvención que creó Moneta Gardens Improvement, Incorporated. Esta organización comunitaria sin fines de lucro trabaja para educar a las familias para promover una comunidad segura y saludable. Su compromiso con la educación es constante, y proporciona educación preescolar a los niños cada año para garantizar un comienzo exitoso de su carrera escolar.

El Sr. Monteiro dejará la Junta de Fideicomisarios para continuar su servicio a la comunidad como miembro del Consejo Municipal. Fue elegido para su puesto en noviembre de 2018. Estamos agradecidos por el Sr. Monteiro y su inquebrantable compromiso con el Distrito Escolar de Hawthorne. Sabemos que nuestra relación con el Sr. Monteiro continuará como un socio comunitario y defensor de los estudiantes. Le deseamos al Sr. Monteiro el éxito continuo en su nuevo rol. ¡Gracias, señor Monteiro!





Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Neta Madison
Netragrednik

Happy New Year!

This is our 9th year publishing the excellence from the Hawthorne School District. Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

In this issue you will read about many topics from the importance of daily school attendance to creating a college culture to bullying prevention. I have to say that each time I read an article about bullying or a kindness club I am reminded of being a child and kindness being taught at home. The world is changing at such a rapid rate and educators are tasked with the challenge of preparing students for competing in the 21st Century.

It seems the very least we as parents can do is teach our children to respect others. It may take financial resources to wear the latest fashions or to buy the latest car, but it does not cost anything to be polite. Perhaps you remember asking permission to be excused from the table or saying please and thank you. Unlike fashions, manners never go out of style. My wish in the new year is that adults and students accept the responsibility of kindness and civility toward each other. Remember children model what they see and we must set the example we want them to follow.

Our next issue is March 6.

School News

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www.schoolnewsrollcall.com

Covering the

HAWTHORNE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Bud Carson *Middle School*

13838 S. Yukon Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/676-1908 • www.budcarsonmiddle.org



LaTima Jones
Principal

The BCMS Kindness Club

This school year our new counselor, Erin Hart, started a lunch-time “BCMS Kindness Club.” The Club meets every Wednesday to help create a more positive school climate on our campus.

Fifty to eighty students from all grade levels gather weekly in the GEAR UP College and Career Center to engage in activities that promote a kindness culture. Some of the activities have included creating positive keychain messages to be given to peers, generating weekly kindness quotes for morning announcements, random Acts of Kindness Week activities, meditation, yoga, and campus clean-up.



The Club also supports activities during Red Ribbon and Bullying Prevention Weeks.

Students also create submissions for the Anti-Bullying Art Contest in which seven BCMS students won recent honors.

During one session, students gathered together in a circle and used the “Kindness Ball” to choose a speaker and share a positive remark or compliment about another participant. They discussed how it felt to hear nice things about themselves that weren’t related to physical characteristics.

Our students were positively receptive of the compliments, and beamed with appreciation. This Club has had a huge positive impact on the Bud Carson community.

Hawthorne *Math & Science Academy*

4467 W. Broadway, Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/973-8620 • www.hawthornemsa.org



Esau Berumen
Principal

San Bernardino Forestry Challenge

Six students comprised two teams to represent Hawthorne Math and Science Academy (HMSA) at the 2018 San Bernardino Forestry Challenge, a three-day academic competition on technical forestry skills and current forest management topics.

Students learned how to identify trees, measure tree height and diameter, and use forestry tools. They also met people in

the industry. Students collected data to evaluate a fuel reduction project with the primary goal of reducing wildfire severity. At the end of the competition, each team created a forest management plan and presented it to a panel of judges. An HMSA team earned a spot in the California State Forestry Challenge Championship, to be held in April 2019.

“Being able to bring my students to Forestry Challenge and have them work on issues affecting our environment is way better than any lesson I can teach them in the classroom,” said HMSA teacher Meredith Brandon.



Hawthorne Math and Science Academy students at YMCA Camp Whittle for the 2018 San Bernardino Forestry Challenge.

Eucalyptus *Elementary*

12044 S. Eucalyptus Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/675-3369 • www.hsd-ca.schoolloop.com



Mike Goldstein
Principal

A Worthy 'Move'

*By Barb Mensinger,
Special Projects Teacher*

Eucalyptus School moved to end bullying in October. The schoolwide kickoff for the OLWEUS antibullying program was a huge success, with participation from students, teachers, parents and community partners including the Hawthorne Police Department, a fitness club and a cable company.

Mrs. Ortiz, the dean of students, started the morning with a powerful message to remind everyone that Eucalyptus School is a safe and welcoming school, thanks to everyone who makes the choice to follow the antibullying components found in the Effort, Safety, Responsibility and Respect expectation matrices. Fitness instructors then took the stage and led students in 20-minute dance/

exercise routines. An officer from Hawthorne Police brought Gabby the Talking Car and reiterated the message of making good and healthy decisions. The cable company filmed the event and captured the excitement of the day.

It was great fun to see everyone exercising and moving to end bullying!



Hawthorne *Middle School*

4366 W. 129th St., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/676-0167 • www.hawthornemiddle.org



Akila Jones
Principal

Kindness Goes a Long Way

HMS kicked-off the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program with a week of events and activities all geared toward being kind. The theme and intent of the week was "Kindness Goes a Long Way."

Each class watched a video titled "Bully-Proof Heart" and designed a door display that answered the question "What touches your heart?" The next day, there was a Kindness Goes a Long Way walk during lunch in which parents, students, teachers and staff walked the track together in support of kindness while the DJ played uplifting and motivational music. Each participant was awarded a bracelet that read "Kindness is Free."

Later that week, students recited and signed an anti-bullying pledge with our school counselor. During the culminating event, "Chalk It Up to Kindness," students were greeted at the school's entrance with chalk art that said, "Be Silly, Be Honest, Be Kind" and "Just Be You."

Everyone benefits when we are all kind to one another.



Jefferson *Elementary*

4091 W. 139th St., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/676-9423 • www.hsdjefferson.org



Josh Godin
Principal

Quality Family Time

Isn't it nice to get away from all of the technology in our lives and sit down with family members and spend quality time as a family? At Jefferson we make that happen! Jefferson had its annual family board game night. A packed crowd made it

through the cold and rainy weather in order to make this night a success. We had over 60 board games, puzzles, and card games for families to sit and have quality time together. All of these educational games helped students practice the many concepts that they have been learning in class, but in fun and exciting environment with low stress and high competition between parents and children. There is a lot of math that goes into playing board games and communication is a very important skill used in these games. So continue to spend family time playing games at home or at school.



Free College Classes for South Bay High School Graduates!

Enrollment fees for the first year will be paid for full-time students who are enrolled in the El Camino College **SOUTH BAY PROMISE**.

To be eligible, in-district high school students must complete the Steps to Enrollment and complete a South Bay Promise form by **April 30, 2019**.

SOUTH BAY PROMISE students receive priority registration, access to in-demand English and math courses, and additional support to connect with student success programs and services.



El Camino College

For more information, go online:
www.elcamino.edu/southbaypromise

Kornblum *Elementary*

3620 W. El Segundo Blvd., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/970-4294 • www.hsdkornblum.org



Marisa Stewart
Principal

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage

On November 15th, Kornblum School honored our Hispanic Heritage event with some great student performances! Children from kindergarten, first grade, second grade, fourth grade, and fifth grade celebrated what they had

learned about Hispanic Heritage with

musical numbers.

Countries of origin and styles of music were explored, including Shakira from Colombia, music from El Salvador, Cumbia by Selena, and salsa and music from the movie *Coco*. The grand finale was a fun dance of the Macarena that all of our families were able to join in on.

The students gave a total of four performances, with

three during the school day and one in the evening for parents. A special thanks goes to the wonderful parents who decorated our stage for the performance. We are very proud of our Kornblum Cardinal performers!

The students will have another chance to show their talents at our upcoming African-American History Program in February.



Prairie Vista *South Campus*

13928 Kornblum Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/970-7550 • www.hawthorne.k12.ca.us



Reina Robledo
Campus Administrator

Welcome Back Mr. Alan Hesser!

Alan Hesser is a Special Day Class Teacher in the preschool program at Prairie Vista South. He grew up in Central California in a small town called Kingsburg with his parents and a younger brother. He moved to Southern California right after graduating from Fresno State University, where he earned his BA in Education.

Mr. Hesser currently resides in the Southbay with

his wife and two dogs. They love long walks and trips to the beach. They also enjoy doing home improvement projects on the weekend. Twelve years ago, they bought a “fixer upper” which seems to provide an endless supply of weekend fun.

Mr. Hesser started his career right here in Hawthorne School District at Eucalyptus School as a student teacher 25 years ago. Since then, he has been teaching Preschool for the County Office of Education in Southbay. In those intervening years, Mr. Hesser earned a Master’s Degree

in Education and Technology at Cal State Dominguez Hills as well as certification as an Assistive Technology Specialist. This past year, he has come full circle, returning to Hawthorne School District. Mr. Hesser is a skilled and compassionate teacher, who provides an enriching and successful education program for his students with exceptional needs.



Prairie Vista *Middle School*

13600 Prairie Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/679-1003 • www.prairievistamiddle.org



Wendy Ostensen
Principal

Creating a College-Going Culture

The Parent Institute for Quality Education, in association with CSU Dominguez Hills and GEAR UP, recently provided several weeks of parent workshops at PVMS.

These workshops trained and engaged our parents in the following topics: supporting academic achievement of adolescents, connecting academic success and positive self-esteem, overcoming obstacles, motivating teenagers to read, reviewing key

concepts, and preparing students to meet the university admissions requirements.

By significantly increasing knowledge of the K-12 and college systems, PIQE enabled our parents to become advocates for student success not just in their homes but also in the community. Thirty-eight parents graduated from the program at PVMS, and a celebration was held in order to recognize them. During this ceremony our parents expressed their appreciation for the partnership, and for the tools and knowledge they gained to help their children go to college and achieve academic success.



PVMS Parents Graduate from the PIQE Program!

Ramona *Elementary*

4617 W. 136th St., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/675-7189 • www.hsdrmona.org



Patricia Ray
Principal

Art is Blooming

The Arts Docents program combines two things that we love at Ramona Elementary School: art and parent volunteers! The Arts Docents are parent volunteers who have been trained to work in teams in order to teach art lessons in the classrooms. The program was created as a way to sustain arts education for all students, and everyone benefits.

Children are creating art, classroom teachers are learning new ideas and techniques, and parents are actively engaged in the educational process.

The Arts Docents kicked off the program this fall by providing our Transitional Kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms with an enjoyable and creative art project. The suns that the children created tied into their language arts unit on the needs of plants and animals. The Arts Docents will expand to first grade in January and return to kindergarten with a new lesson in the spring.



Washington *Elementary*

4339 W. 129th St., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/676-3422 • www.hsdwashington.org



Maritza Cruz-Brown
Principal

Bullying Prevention

By Victor Hatten, *Dean of Students*

Washington School kicked off the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program during the month of October. Dean of Students Mr. Victor Hatten spoke to the students during their grade-level assemblies about our district's bullying prevention program. The school's anti-bullying rules and definitions were also presented to our staff members and students.

In addition to the program's introduction, students and staff had the opportunity to interact and enjoy a number of school-wide activities. The classroom teachers have also started with their class meetings, which are a part of the program.

Based on school data, our main areas of focus are communication and peer relations, which are also the topic of our discussions during the meetings. Every Friday between 8:45 and 9 a.m. our students have the opportunity to role-play or engage in discussions based on different scenarios. Our Washington Wildcats are excited to be participating in this program.



York *Elementary*

11838 S. York Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/675-1189 • www.hsdnyork.org



Jennifer Beekman
Principal

Daily Attendance Matters!

York Staff closely monitors daily attendance, early pickups and tardies. Illnesses and emergencies do occur, but please give your child a

medical, court or parent note for any absences. Students are recognized for perfect monthly, trimester and yearly attendance; mascot Leo the Lion visits the classroom with the month's highest percentage of perfect attendance.

The primary rationale for attendance data is the relationship between student attendance and student achievement. Absence, excused or not, denies students the opportunity to learn.



Teacher effectiveness is the strongest school-related determinant of student success, but chronic student absence reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide learning. Students who attend school regularly generally achieve at higher levels than students who do not.

This relationship between attendance and achievement may appear as early as kindergarten. Recent studies indicate that absenteeism in kindergarten is associated with negative first-grade outcomes like greater absenteeism in subsequent years and lower

achievement. This tells us that attendance is an important factor in achievement. We want all our Superstars to have every opportunity available!

Zela Davis *Elementary*

13435 S. Yukon Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250 • 310/679-1711 • www.hsdzeladavis.org



Matt Rohrer
Principal

Family Science Nights

Zela Davis just completed a three-part Family Science Night series. The events were coordinated by parent volunteers, engineers from an innovative space-travel corporation, The Aerospace Corporation and our STEM intervention teacher, Mrs. Franklin.

Zela Davis partners with Iridescent and Curiosity Machine to present design challenges that each family must complete. During each session, families are presented with a different design challenge that tasks them with creating different items ranging from a space capsule to a robot. The engineers presented the design challenges through the Curiosity Machine website and provided support to the students and families. Design challenges increased in complexity with each event to build prior knowledge and keep families challenged.



In addition to the hands-on engineering challenges, families brought food for a potluck-style dinner. Families ate, worked directly with engineers, and worked with one another in a collaborative atmosphere. Everyone involved had a great time and are looking forward to similar events!

CAMPING—Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put Hawthorne in the subject line.

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| MAP | FOOD |
| BOOTS | SNACK |
| JACKETS | BEDROLL |
| COMPASS | MATCHES |
| GPS | FLASHLIGHT |
| BACKPACK | FLARES |
| THERMOS | CELLPHONE |
| KNIFE | CAMERA |
| TENT | BUGSPRAY |
| BLANKET | COT |
| WATER | |

Entries must be received by February 15, 2019
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a GAZUMP card/dice game - fun for all ages!



Congratulations to Helen Blades
Winner of our November Word Search Contest!

Alana's Book Review



Alana F.

Captivating Narrative

The Three Questions

Based on a story by Leo Tolstoy

"When is the best time to do things? Who is the most important one? What is the right thing to do?"



We all ask ourselves these haunting questions at some point. In this astounding children's book, *The Three Questions*, Jon J Muth reveals to us the answers to these questions. With what I think can only be a little bit of magic, the author seems to perfectly state not just the answers to these inquiries, but also the meaning of life. At least, in my opinion!

I'd give this book 7 out of 8 trifold shards for its sheer emotional power that somehow still remains logical. It provokes deep thought, even in children. It's the perfect blend of a calm, serene tone, and a captivating narrative. It didn't strike me as the normal children's story — I think absolutely anyone could benefit from it. I'd certainly recommend that you give it a read.

Alana is a student columnist and a self-proclaimed "huge nerd." When she doesn't have a book in her hands, she loves to play video games and write fiction. She rates books on a scale of 1-8 trifold shards with 8 being the highest

Lucy's Book Review



Lucy Davis

Intense

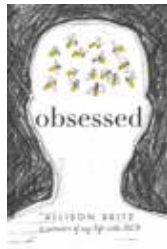
Obsessed by Allison Britz

After a cancer-related nightmare, sophomore Allison prepares for another day: pass class and run track. Her brain, though, is traumatized. Suddenly everyday sights are dangerous - threatening to enlarge the tumor that may or may not be in her brain.

Blue pens. Sidewalk cracks. The color green.

Allison develops rituals. Everywhere she goes, there is a safe number of steps. Her Protector keeps her safe from cancer, and she does as he says. Soon, Allison's grades drop. She pushes away her friends, and fights with her family. She is alone - until she finds the pamphlet in her doctor's office titled OCD. From that point on, it is all about the uphill climb.

Allison Britz's memoir is raw, honest, and touching. A glimpse at the struggle of mental illness, she explains her journey with OCD and her ascent from the dark room that is obsessive-compulsive disorder. Five out of five bookworms.



Lucy is a 7th grade student. When she isn't immersed in a book, she loves musical theater, ballet, and singing. She enjoys stretching her imagination by writing short stories of her own. Lucy will rate the books 1 to 5 bookworms with 5 being the best.

Richard's Book Review



Richard J.

Sibling Rivalry

The Lemonade War

By Jacqueline Davis

The is a book about the difficulties of a brother/sister relationship. The older brother Evan and his younger sister Jessie are complete opposites of each

other. The brother is people-smart and the sister is math-smart. They start a competition on who could make the most money selling lemonade after Evan gets mad that Jessie is going to skip a grade and be in the same class with him. He feels that not only his kid sister is too smart for her age, but being in the same class with him she will embarrass him in front of his friends. The battle is on! However, after all this they both end up learning a good lesson about the undeniable value of teamwork. I like this book because it kind of relates to me and my sister. We often disagree with each other, but we always work better together. I give this book 4 out 5 stars.



Richard J. is a 4th grader. Richard likes math, playing sports, physical activities like bike-riding, swimming, diving and running. He is a hard-working student who enjoys reading, seeing and learning new things and spending time with his family and friends.

Isabella's Book Review



Isabella A.

Truly Inspiring

Heidi by Johanna Spyri

Heidi is a sweet young girl that is taken to live with her sour uncle. While Heidi resides in the Alps, she meets the young shepherd who loves food.

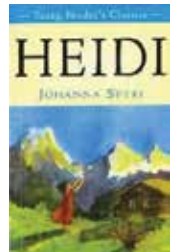
Heidi loves the Swiss Alps but is suddenly sold to a wealthy family in Germany. She is to be friends with Clara, a girl who is paralyzed and is lonely.

On a quest to attempt to see the Alps in a German city, Clara and Heidi escape from the house, landing Heidi in deep trouble. Heidi is sad and attempts to run away. When she is caught and denied permission to return home, Heidi becomes depressed.

When Heidi begins to sleepwalk and go outside at night, the doctor says it is because of her depression. The doctor says that she needs to go home.

Will Heidi be allowed to go home? Or will she find a home in Clara's house?

I would give Heidi 5 stars. I hung onto every word and anticipated every page



Isabella is a 7th grader and just published her first short story in a school anthology of young authors after winning first prize with her work. She rates books on a 5 star scale.

B is for Book



Bailey

Fantastic to the End!

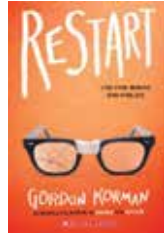
I just LOVED *Restart*, by Gordon Karman. It made me laugh and kept me interested with the action.

Boom! Chase wakes up in the hospital. What happened? Where's his mother? He can't remember anything, except

a blonde girl with a blue dress. With each day that goes by, Chase meets "new" people and finds out "new" things about him that help bring back the memories of his old life: a cherry bombed piano, a stolen medal of honor, a football star, a cruel bully... Will Chase be able to remember his past? Will he be able to fix it? Or will he remain the rotten kid he was before?

Gordon Karman definitely wrote a great book! I like how the book shows the point of view and opinions from the different characters. I rate this book 4 out of 5 stars.

Bailey is a 7th grader who loves being with her friends and reading. When she isn't doing these things, she's dancing ballet or lyrical.



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Sophie's Choice



Sophie O.

Saving the Seven Seas

Waterfire Saga Deep Blue

is the first book of a series that I've been wanting to read for a long time since I own the second book. The Waterfire Saga series is about a group

of mermaids who are brought together by the Isle, or water witches. Sadly they are brought together not for a good reason, someone is trying to release a monster that their ancestors had put in prison. Throughout the series, the girls try to stop the bad people from unleashing this monster, because if they don't, it will destroy what they call home, the sea.



Sophie O. is a 6th grader who loves to play soccer and bake. She's an avid reader and writer and is working on writing her first book. She hopes to be an architect one day

Book Review By Katrina



Katrina D.

Dark Twist

Vicious by V.E. Schwab is a dark twist on superheroes and super villain origins. The story focuses Eli

and Victor, two college friends who couldn't be more different, as they work together to explore

and explain EOs or Extra Ordinary people. People with unusual abilities like super strength or metal manipulation. But when Victor proposes they try to make themselves extra Ordinary too, their dreams, futures and very lives spiral out of control. Now flipping between ten years ago and now, Eli and Victor must finally confront each other and settle the score once and for all. Filled with betrayal, murder and a glass of chocolate milk, this book will make you question the fine and often blurred line of heroism and villainy. Schwab is a diabolical genius of a writer with a gift for storytelling and anyone who loves heroes, villains and superpowers will adore this book. Katrina rates this book five out of five crescent moons.

Katrina is an 11th grader who loves to write stories, sketch and lose herself in good books. Katrina hopes to publish a book, research genetics, and animate a cartoon in her lifetime. Katrina will rate the books between 1 to 5 crescent moons with 5 being the best.



Victoria's Review



Victoria L.

Werewolf Love

Claire De Lune by Christine Johnson is a book filled with mystery and teen romance. Claire is having a great Sweet Sixteen party when she learns that there are werewolves in her town. She starts to worry when her mother breaks the news that she is also a werewolf. Claire now has to figure out how to still have a normal life but lie to everyone she knows. Then suddenly she falls in love with a boy, Matthew. Claire feels awful lying to him every day about her identity. Can Claire keep her forever love with Matthew alive while still staying loyal to her pack? Read *Claire De Lune* to find out!!

I rate this book five out of five smiles!

Victoria L. is an 8th grader. She loves school and her favorite subject is Science. Victoria enjoys books that have mystery and fantasy plots and will rate them with a "Smiles." She is a member of her school's choir and also sings classical soprano in a local collegiate choir

Common Sense Media

Media Tips for Parents

By Caroline Knorr



Choose the good stuff (and not too much!). When your kids ask to see, play, or download something, don't just take their word for it -- check up on it. A lot of the age recommendations on media products are the creators' best guess and aren't necessarily a match for your child's age and developmental stage. Read product reviews from independent sources (like Common Sense Media). Say no if you're not comfortable with it. And when you approve something, help your kids enjoy it along with their other activities.

Don't use screens right before bed, and keep them out of the bedroom overnight. Kids really need their sleep. Screens in the bedroom -- especially in the hour before bedtime -- interfere with the entire process of winding down, preparing for rest, and waking up refreshed and ready to tackle the day. If you're unable to make the bedroom a screen-free zone (which is optimal but not always possible), keep TVs off for at least an hour before bedtime and set tablets or phones to night mode, turn off any notifications, and/or consider using Guided Access or another device setting to keep phones/tablets locked on a music or an alarm clock app.

Turn off the TV if no one is watching it. A lot of parents of young kids keep the TV on for company. But so-called background TV has been shown to get in the way of parents talking and interacting with their kids -- which are key to helping kids learn language and communication. Background TV can also expose kids to age-inappropriate content. Seek out other forms of entertainment that you can listen to with your kid, such as music, kids' podcasts, and audiobooks.

Make time for enjoying media with your kids, especially reading. Reading to your kid is one of the best things you can do -- period. It's great for bonding, but it also sets the stage for learning. While it's nice to have a little library of books at home, you can read whatever is available and it'll be good for them. Product labels, signs, packaging copy -- anything with words is fine. If you're raising your kid in a place where you don't

completely know the language, feel free to read books or articles to them in your native tongue. Or just make up stories -- it's the rhythm, sounds, and communication that are important for kids to hear.

Practice what you preach. Remember, your kids are watching you. When your kids are little, create a family media plan to help you balance media and tech (theirs and yours) with all of the other things that are important to you. This isn't just for them; it's for you, too. Schedule in downtime, chores, homework, outdoor fun, reading, meals, etc. And then figure out how much extra is available for TV shows, games, apps and other media activities. Don't worry about counting up daily screen time minutes -- just aim for a balance throughout the week. Try to carve out times and locations that are "screen-free zones." Hold yourself to them. Kids learn more from what we do than what we say, so make sure you're role-modeling the right habits.

Common Sense Media is an independent nonprofit organization offering unbiased ratings and trusted advice to help families make smart media and technology choices. Check out our ratings and recommendations at www.commonsensemedia.org





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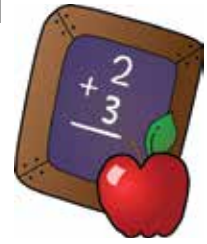
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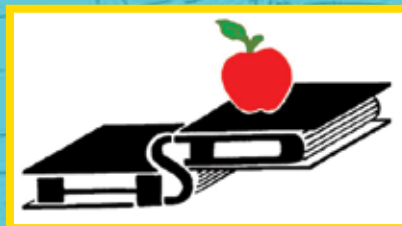
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