

CCC Newsletter

Publisher: CCC

Volume No.15 Issue No. 1

Date: September 12, 2019

The mission of Concord Children's Center is to cultivate an intimate, welcoming community where children develop respectful relationships and inquisitive minds, build confidence in their individual gifts, and are engaged, prepared and inspired to learn



September/October Calendar

Sept. 18 Board Meeting 7 PM WC

Sept 24 Emerson Back To School

Sept 27 Fall Social

October 10 Board Meeting



October 14 CCC Closed Holiday

October 16 Ripley Back To School

October 17 West Concord Back To School

Back to School: A Special Night for Families



CCC parents, grandparents and guardians are invited to join us at Back to School Night. At Back to School Night, you will have a chance to meet your child's teachers, learn about what to expect this year, your child's routine, our educational philosophy, and curriculum. Families will also learn about our special events, the Board, committees and ways to get involved at CCC. We are very proud of our tradition of being a community not only for children but for their families as well. Please join us at these special nights.

Have a question? Give us a call – 978-369-6790

CCC Policies and Practices Pat Nelson Executive Director

Billing Melisa Gallo, Business Manager

Development, Events, Volunteering Jennifer Saxe

Schedule Changes

Your Program Director



Our 2019-20 Board Committees are forming and it's not too late to join.

Contact Pat Nelson

executive@concordchildrenscenter.org or 978-369-3747 for more information or to volunteer.

IVY CHILD INTERNATIONAL



MINDFULNESS WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS, TEACHERS & CAREGIVERS

Ivy Child, in partnership with the Center for Parents and Teachers, is hosting a series of 8 mindfulness workshops beginning this Fall. Our goals are to:

- Share the benefits of mindfulness to help reduce and manage stress/anxiety, improve wellness, strengthen relationships, build healthy habits
- Provide tools and strategies to support self-care and use with children and youth
- Enhance community well-being

FALL 2019 SCHEDULE

All workshops: 7:00-8:30pm @ Concord Carlisle High School - Learning Commons

September 25: Mindfulness for Busy Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers

November 20: Mindfulness for Improving Performance and Reducing Stress

December 11: Mindfulness for Balance in Work and Life

FREE and open to the public.

Pre-Register at: tinyurl.com/mindfulnessforcaregivers

Ivy Child International is a nonprofit providing mindfulness programs to systems of education and care, serving children and communities. Our programs are culturally-tailored to support diverse populations.

ivychild.org • info@ivychild.org

This project is funded through CHINA 15 DoN funds from Lahey Hospital and Medical Center and Winchester Hospital.

In order to be sure you receive updates from your classroom, please remember to send email address changes to Candice at office@concordchildrenscenter.org.

From the Executive Director

The article below from the Wall Street Journal, was sent to me by CCC dad Greg Theriault. I am delighted to share these thoughts with our community. I was especially drawn, as was Greg, to the concept of the role of joy in education and very pleased to see this article appearing in the WSJ!

To Really Learn, Our Children Need the Power of Play

The U.S. can learn a big lesson from Finland's education system: Instead of stress and standardized testing, schools should focus on well-being and joy.

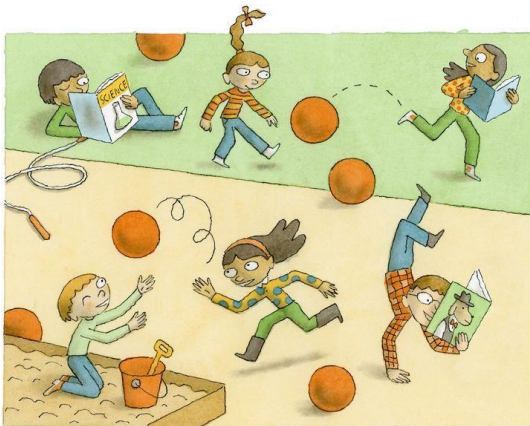


ILLUSTRATION: GREG CLARKE

By Pasi Sahlberg and William Doyle, Wall Street Journal

Aug. 8, 2019 7:00 am ET

Five years ago, we switched countries. Pasi Sahlberg came to the U.S. as a visiting professor at Harvard University, and William Doyle moved to Finland to study its world-renowned school system as a Fulbright scholar. We brought our families with us. And we were stunned by what we experienced.

In Cambridge, Mass., Pasi took his young son to have a look at a potential preschool. The school's director asked for a detailed assessment of the boy's vocabulary and numeracy skills.

"Why do you need to know this? He is barely 3 years old!" Pasi asked, looking at his son, for whom toilet training and breast-feeding were recent memories.

"We need to be sure he is ready for our program," replied the director. "We need to know if he can keep up with the rest of the group. We need to make sure all children are prepared to make the mark."

Pasi was flummoxed by the bizarre education concept of "preschool readiness." Compounding the culture shock was the stunning price tag: \$25,000 a year for preschool, compared with the basically free, government-funded daycare-through-university programs that the boy would have enjoyed back in Finland.

Pasi had entered an American school culture that is increasingly rooted in childhood stress and the elimination of the arts, physical activity and play—all to make room for a tidal wave of test prep and standardized testing. This new culture was supposed to reduce achievement gaps, improve learning and raise America's position in the international education rankings. Nearly two decades and tens of billions of dollars later, it isn't working. Yet the boondoggle continues, even as the incidence of childhood mental-health disorders such as anxiety and depression is increasing.

Finland focuses on equity, happiness and joy in learning as the foundations of education.

Meanwhile, in Finland, William Doyle entered the school system ranked as #1 in the world for childhood education by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Economic Forum and Unicef—a system built in large part on research pioneered (and increasingly ignored) in the U.S. Rather than pursuing standardized-test data as the Holy Grail of education, Finland focuses on equity, happiness, well-being and joy in learning as the foundations of education.

Finnish parents and teachers widely agree on several mantras rarely heard in U.S. schools: “Let children be children” and “The work of a child is to play.” A Finnish mother told William, “Here, you’re not considered a good parent unless you give your child lots of outdoor play.”

Finnish children learn to take responsibility and manage risks at very young ages, in school and out. Following local customs, William’s 7-year-old son learned to walk to school by himself, across six street crossings and two busy main roads. One day, on a forest path, William came upon a delighted Finnish father applauding his 6-year-old daughter as she scrambled up a tall tree—to a height that would have petrified many parents around the world. “If she falls and breaks her arm, it will be in a good cause. She will have learned something,” the father said nonchalantly.

In Finland, William experienced an education culture that protects and cherishes childhood, one in which students are immersed in a play-rich education that goes all the way to high school. At his son’s school, William saw children rush to the cafeteria in stocking feet, giggling, hugging and practicing dance steps. Students got a 15-minute outdoor recess every single hour of the school day, rain or shine.

“There are many reasons children must play in school,” explained the school’s principal, Heikki Happonen. “When they are moving, their brains work better. Then they concentrate more in class. It’s very important in social ways too.” He added, “School should be a child’s favorite place.”

The cultural shift is profound. Instead of annual, high-stakes standardized tests, Finnish children are assessed all day, every day, by a much more accurate instrument: trusted teachers who are selected, trained and respected as elite professionals.

Finland has a crucial insight to teach the U.S. and the world—one that can boost grades and learning for all students, as well as their social growth, emotional development, health, well-being and happiness. It can be boiled down to a single phrase: Let children play.

Back in the U.S., that idea has a powerful champion: the American Academy of Pediatrics, which has a membership of 67,000 doctors. “The importance of playful learning for children cannot be overemphasized,” declared the academy’s 2018 clinical report [“The Power of Play.”](#)

According to the doctors, play—including recess, playful teaching and discovery, as well as periods of self-directed intellectual and physical activity by children with minimal direct interference by adults—boosts mental and physical health, develops executive function and offers “the ideal educational and developmental milieu for children.” That is particularly true for children in poverty, who can be acutely deprived of opportunities for play inside school and out.

A new emphasis on play can be seen cutting across cultures and ideologies. In China, an experiment in outdoor-play-based preschool and kindergarten known as Anji Play is proving so successful in more than 100 rural schools that it is being expanded—and widely hailed as a national model for early childhood education. In Singapore, education officials are trying to shift a nation of high achievers away from stress, academic ranking and over-testing toward a new vision of childhood exploration and “purposeful play.” In a 2018 speech, Education Minister Ong Ye Kung said, “There is room for parents to step back, give children space to explore and play.”

‘The lifelong success of children is based on their ability to be creative and to apply the lessons learned from playing.’—American Academy of Pediatrics

Meanwhile, in school districts in Texas, Oklahoma, South Carolina and New York, tens of thousands of children are being given up to 60 minutes of daily outdoor, free-play recess. These experiments are directly inspired by Finland’s schools—and educators are reporting sharp improvements in academic performance, concentration and behavior.

Our own children now attend public schools in two great global cities, New York and Sydney, Australia. In both cities and countries, play is an endangered or nonexistent component of education—even though the American Academy of Pediatrics notes that “the lifelong success of children is based on their ability to be creative and to apply the lessons learned from playing.”

We should take a lesson from Finland, follow doctors’ orders and build our schools, homes and communities on the learning language of children: play.

—This essay is adapted from the authors’ new book, “Let the Children Play: How More Play Will Save Our Schools and Help Children Thrive” (Oxford University Press). Mr. Sahlberg is a professor of education policy at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, and a former director-general at Finland’s Ministry of Education. Mr. Doyle is a scholar in residence at the University of Eastern Finland.

Dates we are closed in 2019 - 2020

- September 2 *Labor Day*
- October 14 *Columbus Day*
- November 11 *Professional Development*
- November 28 & 29 *Thanksgiving*
- December 24 *Close at 1 PM*
- December 25 *Christmas Day*
- January 1 *New Years*
- January 20 *Martin Luther King Holiday*
- February 17 *Presidents Day*
- March 13 *Professional Development*
- April 20 *Patriots Day*
- May 25 *Memorial Day*
- June 18 & 19 *Professional Development*
- July 3 *Fourth of July Holiday (Observed)*

THE CCC FALL SOCIAL AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO “PLAY” FOR THE CCC GROWN-UPS.

CCC is very committed to play as the basis for the growth and development of children. We also believe that our families and staff grow and prosper when they have opportunities to play.

The **Fall Social** is the first adult-only community event of the year. For those of you new to CCC or if you have never had the opportunity to attend, it is a very casual and easy-going evening, generously hosted by a CCC alumni family. We try to make this an evening when families and staff can meet each other in a relaxed social environment. We hope to see you on the 27th.

Other adult-only opportunities include the **CCC Auction**, to be held on March 28th, 2020 in the Trinitarian Congregational Church Parish Hall in Concord Center.

CCC also offers community events for the entire family. The first of these events is our annual **Concord Bookshop fundraiser**, coming up on Saturday, November 2. On this day, the Bookshop kindly donates a percentage of all sales to CCC. Teachers and staff read to children in the Children's Corner while parent volunteers help shoppers select books for their child's classroom and for themselves! It's a great chance to get a head start on your holiday shopping while supporting CCC. We will also be holding our annual **family ice skating party** in early 2020 – date TBA.



The annual
Concord Children's Center

Fall Social/ Wine and Craft Beer Tasting

7-11 p.m., Friday, September 27
Home of CCC alumni parents
Halley and Bill McJewain
316 Heath's Bridge Road



*Auction 2019-
Through The
Looking Glass*

*Through the
Looking Glass
Co-Chairs
Lindsey Dempsey
and Katherine
Wilson*



Skating Party 2019