

NEWS LETTER

April SHOWERS



Spring May Flowers!

Look for Re-Enrollment!

Summer School Applications
Due!

Parent Open House
Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Public Open House
Saturday, June 9, 2018

Happy spring to all of you. This is a very busy and exciting time of the school year. During this time there are many special events such as Partnership Projects and Breakfast, re-enrollment, elementary and middle school students going to camp, parent conferences, standardized testing for the elementary students, Back to School Night, Public Open House and beginning of preparation for graduations. Please take extra time to read newsletters, information boards, calendars and notices in the sign-in books so that you can stay informed and up to date on all the Meher happenings.

Please return your summer school sign-up as soon as possible so that we can start planning our classes and so we know how many spaces we will have available for new students waiting to join our school during summer. If there are any question I can answer for you or anything you need, please feel free to contact me. I'm here at your service.

Peace and Love, Adela Muñoz

▶ Parent Conferences

We hope everyone had a nice Spring Break. Our second set of Parent Conferences will take place the week of **May 14–18**. Sign-ups the week before will show the times available for conferences. At the conference you will receive a written progress report. However, you certainly do not have to wait for a formal parent conference to talk to your child's teacher. Teachers always have time for informal conferences. Just ask.

▶ School Shirt Day

Don't forget! **Friday, April 27th**, is Meher's School Shirt Day! Let's have 100% participation so every class can have a party.

▶ Re-Enrollment Packets

Re-Enrollment Packets go home on Monday, April 30, 2018. Please return by Friday, May 11, 2018.

▶ Camps

The Elementary class and some of the older Lower Elementary students will be going to Camp Surf in San Diego the week of **April 23 – April 27**.

The Upper Elementary class and Middle School students will be going with Naturalists at Large to Lake Whitsett the week of **April 25 – April 27**.

▶ Summer School

Summer school forms went out and are due back by Friday, April 27th. We're having some fun and educational field trips. Summer School dates are June 18 – July 27.

▶ Parent Open House

Come one, come all!!! To our annual Parent Open House on Wednesday, May 23rd, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. All children, parents, grandparents, and other friends are invited. This Open House is a special time for your child to show you his or her work.



Hello everybody! We're all glad to be back to school after Spring Break. I hope everyone is well rested and this break gave everyone the energy and longing to be back at school!

The children in our class are full of enthusiasm and energy as they work in the classroom. Each child has an exciting story to relate to the entire group when we have our circle time with bubbling words on their adventures during Spring Break. I can tell that they had fun!

We welcome Max Pear to our class. He is four years old and has blended in and became friends with his classmates right away. He has worked on lessons in all four areas of learning and loves to work on them every day. We are happy to have him in our classroom!

The Lower Elementary Partnership Breakfast was beautiful, lively and memorable. Every year different projects are made by the graduating children in our class together with students of Ms. Tenold's. These projects were neatly posted and artistically designed on the wall of her classroom. As the graduating children came in they introduced their parents to Ms. Tenold. They are so proud to show the projects

that they worked on with the older children in the Lower Elementary to their parents. I could hear in the background parents commenting: "Aww, it is so beautiful, I am proud of you, Wow! You've learned a lot already, or Oh my! You did this...plus some questions they asked their children regarding their projects.

Another successful event we had last month was our Easter Party and egg hunt with the children. I'd like to thank all our parents who came to help me and my assistants make this event possible. They were there to prepare and hide the eggs and donated foods for our Easter snack party in the afternoon. A special "Thank you" to Angie Yan for demonstrating a simple but useful Easter project for the children to do before having their snack foods in the afternoon. The children enjoyed hunting eggs and had a pizza lunch and healthy snack in the afternoon. They went home with goodies too that were given by some of their classmates.

The children in our class were busy doing the following projects: colorful bunnies, Easter eggs and different flowers that they have punched accurately for spring. These

decorated our stairway and put us in the mood for Spring. I have been reading books that deal with animals and their homes and what they are called when they come in groups.

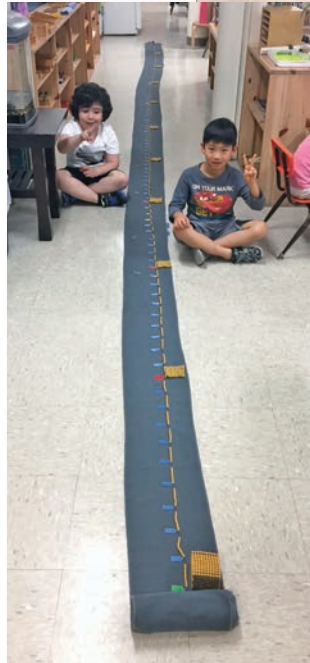
We'll have our summer classes beginning pretty soon! Our summer school information has been released and I'll be teaching this summer once again. It will start the first Monday after the week of our graduation schedules; we have six weeks of summer classes. Please sign in your children to have a fun summer aside from learning more and strengthening their skills.



I'd like to end my newsletter with a quote from Maria Montessori... "The things he sees are not just remembered; they form a part of his soul."

With love and at your service always,

Mrs. Rivera, Mrs. Suh, Ms. Bayon, Ms. Kulwicki and Ms. Ramirez





We all come back refreshed after our short Spring Break where we had the chance to relax and gather up strength for the days ahead.

Several events took place last month which are worth mentioning:

- The praying mantis pod in our classroom finally opened with lots of them crawling up and down the jar. The children were so excited to watch them closely and later we released them in the garden.

- The **Partnership Breakfast** which was held on March 29th was a success with a great turn out of parents attending with their children. The older primary students in our class who participated this year were Jorge Alcala, Jacob Beltran, Julia Madera, Azik Monterroza and Paolo Ramirez. Their projects were displayed in the Lower Elementary classroom (Ms. Tenold's class) on that same day. Much hard work and creativity were displayed by the children in the Lower Elementary who partnered with our primary students. The children dressed for the occasion and were very excited to share their projects with their parents. Congratulations to everybody for a job well done!

- The children enjoyed coloring

the hard-boiled eggs they brought to school and having the chance to peel and slice them. They patiently waited to have a turn doing the egg slicing job which was out on the shelf that whole week. Peeling those egg shells was a great way to practice their fine motor skills.

- Huge thank you to our Parent Volunteers who hid the eggs for our Egg Hunt: Tony Fan (Jessica's dad), Teresa Tran (Connor's mom) and Lizette Veneziano (Anasofia's mom)

This month of April, we will continue talking about the Season of Spring and read stories about tiny creatures they see in the garden like butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. We will also learn to sing songs about nature. In celebration of Earth Day (April 22nd), we will talk about ways to keep our planet Earth clean and green by disposing trash properly, recycling and planting trees.

Our April birthday celebrants are: Jordan Chavez, who turned 5 on April 8.

At this time of year, parents often need to make decisions regarding school for their child. It is helpful to look back and think why you chose a Montessori education. Here's something to think about: ".....Perhaps

EASTER HUNT

the biggest benefit of a Montessori education is that **it teaches children how to learn instead of just what to learn.** It instills in them a life-long love of learning, which prepares them to successfully go in any direction their skills and interests may take them." (from the article: "Benefits of a Montessori Education" www.Mthemagazine.com)

Till next time
Mrs. Roque



Songs In the Classroom:

"Busy Creatures" by Eileen Diamond

Woodpecker, woodpecker, tapping on a tree
Woodpecker, woodpecker, tapping busily.
Pecking your beak till the bark wears away,
Busy woodpecker, tapping all the day.

Buzzing bee, buzzing bee, buzzing in the air,
Buzzing bee, buzzing bee, buzzing everywhere.
Taking the pollen from flowers you can see,
Making honey, you're such a busy bee.

Grasshopper, grasshopper, chirping as you hop,
Grasshopper, grasshopper, do you ever stop?
Hungriily eating the plants that you take,
Busy grasshopper, what a noise you make!



Class News

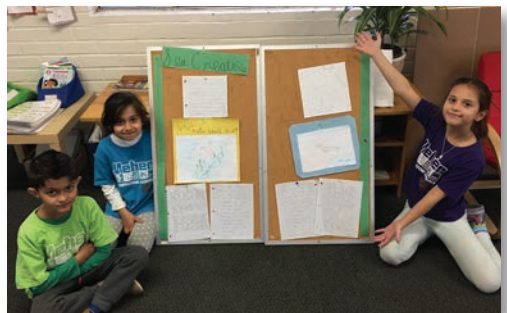
Our class came back from Spring Break ready to learn! The month before the break was dedicated to Partnership Breakfast projects, in which we worked with Primary students on exciting lessons to help with their transition into our class in the fall. We found some shared interests among students in our class and the Primary class, and the Primary students were lovely children to work with and get to know. At the end of March, our school held a lively morning breakfast event called Partnership Breakfast for families to come to the room before work and school and we showcased the collaboration done. Parents commented on how varied the work was, a major benefit of a Montessori class because children are encouraged to choose topics of interest. **Thank you** to my assistant, Mrs. Gonzalez, for her tireless energy helping students put the projects together, and to the families for taking time to come see the work and attend the party!

Curriculum News

As a Montessori teacher, I am often asked if the children work hard if they are allowed to “do whatever they want all day” (a common misconception of Montessori). I was asked about this during Spring Break when discussing Montessori education with a friend. Well, all year this class has shown a strong desire to learn that comes from within, but it was all the more reinforced the first day back from break, a time when we might expect students to be sleepy or still be in vacation mode. At least 5 students kept

working when it was time to clean-up, and one even continued studying on her own while the rest of the school went out to recess. And now, as I am writing this, that same student had only stopped to go to an after-school class but now I see her getting her animal research back out to resume working! School ended an hour ago.

The student's joy in learning and great energy is infectious. These kids are truly lifting each other up, making each other more knowledgeable and better behaved because of the unique strengths they all possess and are willing to share in this community environment. They are also eager to learn many lessons. Animals are always a favorite topic, but what is exciting is a child will read an information card about an animal they are interested in and see that it says a King Cobra can get up to 18 feet long! Then they will share this with their friends and form a group to measure the length of different animals using the yardstick and tape the distances on the ground for all to see. They organized the



MARINE MAMMAL CARE CENTER PROJECT

lengths themselves, labeling the spots on the floor from smallest to biggest animal. This also lead to wanting to find out how long our pet bearded dragon is. Not only did they want to work on this after class, but they picked right back up with it first thing the next morning in a joyful manner. The same goes for some of the other lessons we are working on, such as division and land and water forms with the second graders, and syllables and 3 states of matter with some of the first graders - the children choose these works to practice day after day after receiving lessons.

Calendar News

As of now, we have three major events coming up this spring. A Going Out is in the works to the Marine Mammal Care Center in late April, which is for a handful of students in my

class who have been learning about sea lions and ocean pollution. The group has set up a date to tour the facility, asked parents to drive them there, and are carefully putting together a poster of their research. Also, 3rd years are always invited to Camp Surf with the Upper Elementary and this year it is from April 23-27. Lastly, our class would like to participate in **Kids' Ocean Day** at Dockweiler Beach, 12000 Vista del Mar, Playa del Rey CA 90293 on **Thursday, May 24, 2018** for a beach clean-up with students around southern California. We will need your help to drive and chaperone the clean-up. This annual event put on by The Malibu Foundation has been running for over 20 years, and is a large production that would make our students feel connected to something big and show that kids can make a difference. Please let me know if you can volunteer to attend. Thanks!



The past month has gone by really fast and the class is ready for spring! After arriving back from New York in the middle of March from Montessori Model United Nations, we were busy completing the partnership projects with the third years from Lower Elementary, and our sixth years with the Middle School.

It was wonderful welcoming Ayushi, Geanna, Brandon, Josiah, Frances and Rafaela into the Upper Elementary for the partnership projects, and such creative work ideas were explored with their elder partners. Ayushi worked with Francesca on an extensive Walt Disney research and created large poster boards with lots of information and artwork. Josiah and Alik invented a President Bingo game that was fun to play, along with a report on Rovers. Frances and Destiny were happy working together on botany studies where they learned the parts of a fruit, and also a dog research. Rafaela, Joyce and TJ stayed busy learning about various animals in the sea, and even went on a Going Out to an aquarium to learn more. Brandon, Enzo and Julian spent their time together creating a lively game of DinoOpoly that everyone loved playing. Geanna, Kaya and Damian studied Peacocks and different types of trees, and made a lovely poster board with all of their work. The breakfast with the families was very special; the students were so excited to share their projects that they worked so hard on. Thanks to everyone for attending, and a special thank you to Mrs. Muñoz and Mrs. Chavez for setting up the incredible

feast for us all to enjoy!

We began an exciting new book as a read aloud together, called "*The Mysterious Benedict Society*," by Trenton Lee Stewart. Part of a series, the book is an adventurous and interesting story about a group of children with unusual talents. Everyone is enjoying it so far!

We are busy fitting in the rest of the lessons before the end of the school year is upon us. With just a couple months to go, I'm sure it will fly by quickly, and there is a lot to prepare. Happy Spring!



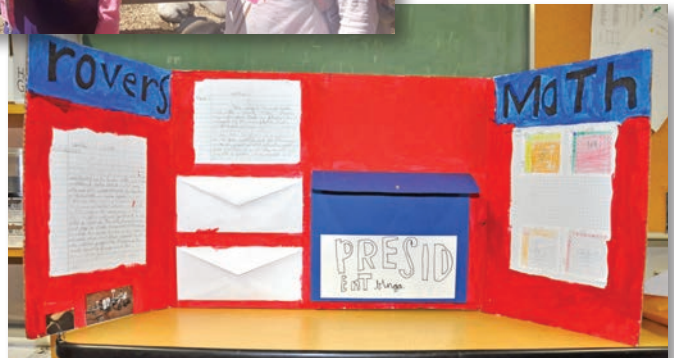
**TJ, JOYCE, AND RAFAELA
AT THE AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC
GOING OUT**



THE GOING OUT WAS PART OF THEIR PARTNERSHIP PROJECT BASED ON SEA ANIMALS. TJ, JOYCE AND RAFAELA WENT TO THE AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC.



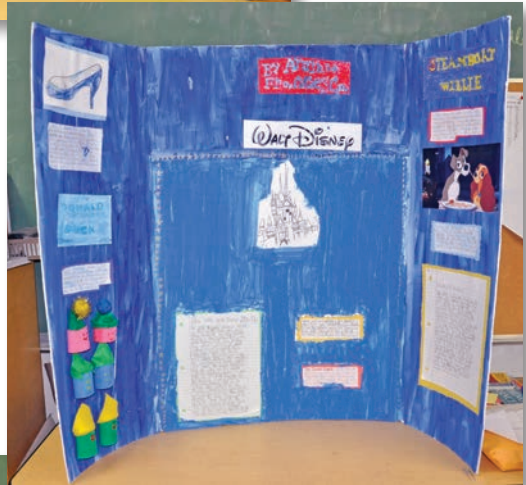
JOSIAH AND ALIK INVENTED A PRESIDENT BINGO GAME AND WROTE A REPORT ON ROVERS





**FRANCES AND
DESTINY
WORKED ON
BOTANY STUDIES
AND
DOG RESEARCH**

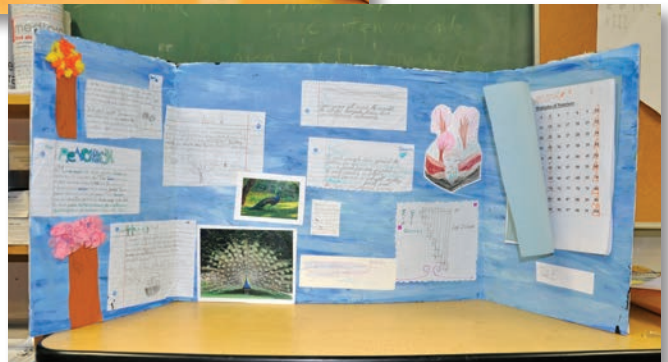
**BRANDON, ENZO
AND JULIAN
CREATED A GAME OF
DINOOPOLY**



**AYUSHI WORKED WITH
FRANCESCA ON AN
EXTENSIVE WALT
DISNEY PROJECT**



**GEANNA, KAYA
AND DAMIAN
STUDIED
PEACOCKS AND
DIFFERENT
TYPES OF TREES**



Welcome back! Hope everyone feels renewed and ready for the next two and a half months, which includes, among other things, the student's outdoor education trip with Naturalists at Large to the Sierras and breaking ground on the Middle School organic garden. If things go as planned with the garden, look for our fresh herbs and produce at the Middle School's **H₂Go Cart** in late May!

Early to rise!

We celebrated the Partnership Breakfast on March 22, which featured the traditional Partnership Breakfast menu of french toast, fruit, eggs, bacon, and hash browns. The morning was a wonderful culmination of the collaboration between the Middle School students and the sixth graders. They presented their work on the Fibonacci sequence, the science of sleep, and Einstein's modern interpretation of gravity.

Math by thinking

Watching the students work so thoughtfully on their Partnership Breakfast projects set me thinking about an anecdote that Richard Feynman, the Nobel Prize winning physicist, tells in his book - *Surely You're Joking Mr. Feynman*. In the story, Feynman's a young 11-year-old boy growing up in Brooklyn during the Depression. A curious tinkerer – always experimenting and building, or taking apart, things – Richard develops a reputation for being able to repair radios – an important technology for news and entertainment at that

time. However, being so young and inexperienced, he would often find himself baffled by what was wrong with the radio. In one particularly challenging case, Feynman was at such a loss about what to do that he absentmindedly started to pace back and forth as he mulled over the problem. Watching this, the man who hired him and was already skeptical that this young kid could fix his radio, asked impatiently, "What are you doing?"

"I'm thinking!" Feynman responds. In the end, Feynman successfully fixes the radio, and the man goes on to tell everybody that the kid is a genius who "fixes radios by thinking!"

I love that story because it's the way I want our Middle School students to attack their math problems – through thinking! That's why our study of percents these last few weeks has been more than simply learning techniques to solve problems, but focusing on what percent means. What's its relation to fractions and decimals; how is it used in everyday conversation; how it's applied in buying a house or investing in stocks and bonds. I also like to point out their use in other classes, like when Mrs. Chagoya asked the students to calculate the percent of time that a cell spends in growing.

Details, Details, Details!

Speaking of percents, here's one: the Census Bureau estimated in 2013 that 84% of American households own a computer. What about the percent of people that can program a computer?

Whatever that percent may be, Mr. Page's Middle School computer class is raising that number. Our students are writing actual software code and using programming concepts such as variables, arrays, loops, conditional statements, logical operators, and other terms that mean much more to software developers than to the average person. However, even if one of our students never writes software code after their Middle School years, their ability to think like a software engineer will always be with them!

Middle School gets their garden tools out!

The Middle School broke ground (literally) for their new vegetable garden on April 10th. Under knowledgeable tutelage of Ron Hegelen and Masayo Sufimoto from NutraGrow Garden Club, the students sowed seeds, collected slugs, and prepared the ground for their garden. Below, Damian Chagoya tells a little bit about his experience.

Natural Agriculture with Ron and Masaya by Damian Chagoya

At the Middle School, we just started a program with Ron Hegelsen and Masayo Sugimoto, who work at the Shumei Center, a spiritual organization that believes in natural agriculture as one of its core beliefs. We talked about three components of soil (clay, silt, and sand). Our soil at

Meher is mostly made of clay, which doesn't soak-up much water, but Ron said that's okay. We can still grow stuff in it because we are putting fresh soil over it. We also talked about mulch (a type of compost with decaying leaves and bark) and mycelium, a fungus that helps plants grow. We looked at compost and some of the things that live in it like grubs, worms, and larvae. We found a grub that was around three inches long the color of earwax. For some reason, the grub was squirming on its back, than squirming upright. We also found little, yellow flowers in the ground, which Ron told us were clover plants that fix nitrogen into the soil to support the growth of

other plants. So far, we sowed some basil, Japanese pumpkin, dill and tomato seeds in little pots, which, when they are old enough and poking out of the soil, we

will move to the plot that we prepared. Ron and Masayo will be coming back the first Tuesday of each month to help us with our garden. I personally like the experience with them and want to see my plants grow enough that I can eat what I grew.



MIDDLE SCHOOL GETS THEIR GARDEN TOOLS OUT!



Happy Spring!

I used to think February was our most action-packed month of the school year. Well, this year March took over the top spot! First off, our Irish Soda



Bread was once again a big success. Most of the children chose to eat it as is, without the

jam. The buttermilk in the recipe makes it moist. The currants and orange zest give it a nice sweetness without overpowering the flavor. We have a classroom full of excellent bakers. We rounded out our "Irish" day by listening to traditional Irish music during lunch and watching a little bit of Celtic Women performing some Gaelic songs.

Last newsletter I wrote about branching out in March to highlight Women's Month. In addition to the two wonderful compilation books Gabi Young and Maelin O'Connell lent me for the entire month, Kathleen Hanna, Julius's mom, brought in an amazing assortment of books for me to read to the class. Not only were the women diverse in appearance, every young woman in our class had someone they could physically relate to, the women in the stories were diverse in their achievements as well. From artists

and doctors to activists and scientists, these women changed history and inspired, and continue to inspire, future generations of young women. Because the Meher students are so versed in phrases like "That's not fair," and "It doesn't matter what you look like, you're just as good as anybody else" from our Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month lessons, this language transitioned seamlessly into Women's Month. I would once again like to thank Gabi, Maelin, and Julius for making this such a great inaugural year.

Speaking of strong women, Meher was privileged enough to receive a special presentation from Girl Scout Cadette Troop 4291 on March 29th. Former student Natalie Chan and fellow Girl Scout Angelina Fernandina did a presentation on kindness at our school for their Silver Award, which is the highest award a cadette can



earn. These young ladies started off by showing a brief video on kindness before asking all the children to share an act of kindness that they have shown to another person. Once our students all shared their





moments of kindness, they were asked to choose a “kindness rock” to keep. From there, they all then decorated their own kindness rocks to pass on to a family member. After that, the Girl Scouts read a short book on kindness before helping the class to make a “kindness chain”. An idea I am totally stealing, by the way. The hour + long presentation concluded with surprise donut holes and juice boxes for the class. The kindness chain is hanging in the classroom. I encourage all families to ask their children about it. Natalie and Angie were organized, prepared, and engaging in their presentation. They were better presenters than some of the presentations from professionals I have hired in the past. The children loved it!

As if that wasn't enough excitement, way back at the beginning of March, Education Through Nature came for a Dynamic Dinosaurs Presentation. Mr. Roach never disappoints, and

this year was no exception. He talked about fossils, sounds dinosaurs might have made, and how they might have traveled, all while providing hands-on experience. He concluded with a couple of live animals that are distant relatives of dinosaurs for the children to touch.

Now that we are in April, we are entering the home stretch before Graduation. Graduation will be on Thursday, June 14th, at 10:30 this year. The children have already begun practicing by listening to and learning the songs they will be performing.

However, before we get too deep into graduation, April and May both have events coming up. In May, Parent/Teacher conferences will be the week of May 14-18, the same week as our annual Scholastic Book Fair. Speaking of the Book Fair, I am looking for a volunteer, or two, this year to help set it up in the Founder's Room of the church. Please contact me if you

can help. Additionally, I will also need volunteers to run the Book Fair a few hours a day the week it is open. The sign-ups for that and conferences will both go out the first week of May.

It is time to close out the Newsletter with the important dates in April. On April 16th, the summer school info went home. The applications are due back on April 27th. It is imperative that I receive the applications by the 27th. I have a waiting list of families who are interested in starting Meher in the summer and may not have enough spaces to accommodate everyone. April 27th is also School Shirt Day. As last month was another month with 100% participation, the children will be making pancakes sometime this month.

One last note: **Summer School and Summer Camp are two different programs we offer here. Summer Camp begins the Monday AFTER Summer School ends, and is on a weekly, flat-rate basis.** The info on Summer Camp will go out either at the end of April or beginning of May. Please be advised; we will have super limited availability for at least the first two weeks of camp. This limited availability may extend to all five weeks. Miss Tinajero will be gone the entire summer to begin her first summer of AMI training. The Monterey Park campus and I are coordinating staffing to help cover Miss Tinajero's hours for Summer School, and hopefully Summer Camp. But as the weeks of Summer Camp are when much of the staff takes vacation time, we may have to reduce the amount of children we can accept.

Until Next Month,
Mrs. Wildhaber
Miss McCray & Miss Tinajero



**EASTER
HUNT**





**DYNAMIC
DINOSAURS
PRESENTATION**



U.S. News

fyi

by Steven Reinberg

April 9, 2018



SATURDAY, April 7, 2018

(HealthDay News) --

Parents who read to their

infants and toddlers may

help them develop skills

that pay big dividends

when they start school, a

new study suggests.



Reading to Your Kids Might Boost Their Social Skills

Specifically, reading aloud and pretend play may offset disruptive behaviors -- such as hyperactivity and aggression -- and improve attention, researchers found.

"When you read with your child, it's really a warm, nice time together," said lead researcher Dr. Alan Mendelsohn. He's an associate professor of pediatrics at New York University School of Medicine in New York City.

"But even more, when you read together, especially story books, the stories are about topics that are important and interesting to children," Mendelsohn said.

Stories often deal with characters who are sad or happy, and who have to learn how to cope with challenges in their lives, he explained.

"When you read a book together, you provide the child an opportunity to think about what it means to have those feelings and how to deal with them," Mendelsohn said.

In addition, when parents read to their



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kids, they all have to focus on the same thing and the children learn how to pay attention, he said.

To demonstrate the benefits of making a habit of reading aloud to children, Mendelsohn and colleagues randomly assigned 675 families to either take part in a program called the Video Interaction Project or to be followed without being in the program.

The program ran from birth through age 3. During pediatrician visits, families in the program were video-recorded reading or playing with their children. The video was then reviewed with a coach who helped parents learn more about their critical role in their child's development.

When the children in the program were evaluated a year and a half after the program ended, they maintained the behavior and attention skills they gained during the program, Mendelsohn said.

"When parents read aloud and play with their children, they can help their children learn to behave in ways that are going to be really helpful when the kids start school," Mendelsohn said.

Dr. Jefry Biehler, chairman of pediatrics at Nicklaus Children's Hospital in Miami, said that these results support what pediatricians have said for years.

"Reading and playing with your children has an impact on their development and how they are going to do in school," he said.

In addition, reading and playing with

your children can alleviate some of the behavior problems kids are prone to, Biehler said.

Biehler believes that the interaction between parent and kids aids their socialization, but parents may not be spending as much time playing and reading to their children as they once did.

Using other means of entertaining kids, such as computers or plunking them down in front of the TV, might not provide the same benefit that direct interaction does, Biehler said.

"It's very important to spend time with your child and read to your child," he said. "It's a special time for kids to interact with their parent, and that's important for developing babies."

The report was published online April 10 in the journal *Pediatrics*. ■

