

GOTWALS

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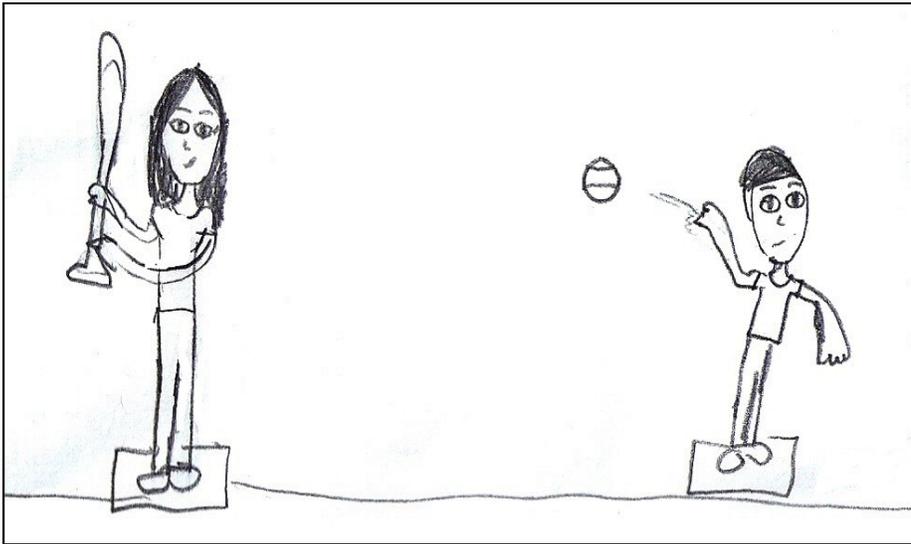


Illustration by Amayrami Lopez-Noya

Playing baseball or softball is one way to get some vitamin G.

Get a dose of vitamin G

Many people at Gotwals get vitamin G and don't even know it.

Vitamin G is when you spend time outdoors. The G stands for green time.

Health experts say it is important for kids to get vitamin G, according to the April issue of *Current Health Kids* magazine. It helps kids deal with stress better, be more resilient, and do better in school.

Many children hardly go outside. In fact, government numbers suggest they average only four minutes a day outdoors, *Current Health* says. They should spend an hour a day outdoors.

Mr. Ross, the music teacher, said he gets vitamin G by running and walking his dog. He also goes hiking with Mrs. Ross. He said he participates in these activities

because they are healthy and they make him feel happy.

Ms. Fanelli, a second grade teacher, said she walks a lot and gardens, which includes mowing the lawn. She likes to garden because she likes the end result. It is beautiful.

Another reason she spends time outdoors is to enjoy the fresh air. She also washes her car, plays with her dog, and rides her bike.

Effrain, a first grader, said he rides his bike to get his vitamin G. He rides his bike until his mother tells him to stop. He gets vitamin G every weekend.

Nathan, another first grader, said he gets vitamin G by running around his yard.

He said it energizes him. He also plays soccer, he said.

Leaders help community to become greener place

Gotwals students and staff recently celebrated Norristown's 200th birthday by dancing salsa, creating pictures, playing sports and tag, eating, and reading a book.

Many important people came to the event on April 30, including a state senator, county commissioners, and the Norristown Area School District superintendent. In interviews, they told the *Healthy Press* how they are making Norristown a greener and healthier place to live.

* * *

Ms. Leslie Richards, a Montgomery County Commissioner, said she plants trees in the community. "I do this to make it beautiful," she said. "I think it is good to help the Earth."

She also loves to work with people and kids to create a place to have fun. —By Amira Johnson and Amayrami Lopez

* * *

Pennsylvania State Sen. Daylin Leach said he tries to help people and the environment in several ways. At the Montgomery County Fair, he makes veggie

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Leaders promote 'green' efforts

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burgers so people can be healthier. Veggie burgers are like hamburgers but are made with vegetables.

Sen. Leach is also trying to cut down the use of plastic bags in grocery stores. He wants to require a fee for the bags so people won't want to use them.

Sen. Leach said kids in Norristown can help the Earth by recycling, turning lights off, and throwing away fewer things. —By Joseph Ortiz

As a Montgomery County commissioner, Mr. Bruce Castor said he tries to take care of the Earth by seeing that energy-efficient materials are used in buildings. He also uses energy-efficient light bulbs in his home.

Mr. Castor said kids can help the Earth by picking up trash, not littering, and walking to places close by. —By Rachel Poley

Dr. Samuels, Norristown school superintendent, said she encourages students "to become stewards of the environment." She wants them to recycle, conserve energy, and make good choices.

She also said the school district plans to make some changes in the lunch trays. She would like the children to use paper plates and supplies that can be recycled.

—By Yazzmin Hernandez
and Bibiana Armstrong

Mr. Josh Shapiro, a Montgomery County commissioner, said he helps keep streets clean and safe.

He helps the Earth by making sure the parks are well kept, roads are built, and buildings are energy efficient.

Mr. Shapiro said if everybody thought every day was Earth Day, the Earth would be a better place.

—By Xavier Wedderburn

Reporters help write book

Three *Gotwals Healthy Press* reporters contributed to a new book called *Leading Healthy Change In Our Communities* produced by Healthy NewsWorks.

The book profiles 12 leaders who are making the Philadelphia area a healthier place to live. Third graders Amira Johnson, Rachel Poley, and Xavier Wedderburn interviewed Dr. A. Scott McNeal. Dr. McNeal plays an important role in making sure people in Norristown and Philadelphia get medical care.

The book will be available in a print version and online at www.HealthyNewsWorks.org.

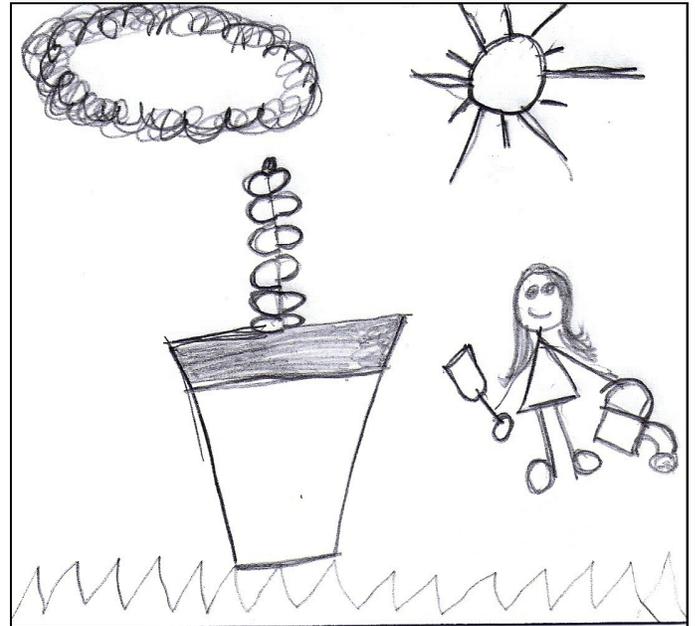


Illustration by Lilia Partida

Ms. Lindsay Barrett George, a children's book author, said she loves the environment. If she could, she said she would live in a treehouse.

She said kids can care for the Earth by taking short showers and making a compost pile outside. A compost pile is made of fruits, vegetables, leaves, and other living things. It can be used to help fertilize a garden.

—By Rachel Poley

Mr. Ken Olin, who studies Norristown's history, said he loves living here. He attended the birthday celebration, too. Like the other interviewees, he wants to make Norristown an even better place.

"I always look to the future and leave the past behind me," Mr. Olin said.

—By Amayrami Lopez-Noya and Rachel Poley

Gotwals Healthy Press

A publication of the Gotwals Elementary School in the Norristown Area School District in Norristown, Pa.

Student staff members include Alexis Avila, Bibiana Armstrong, Melissa Garcia, Yazzmin Hernandez, Derrick Honeycutt, Amira Johnson, Amayrami Lopez-Noya, Joseph Ortiz, Rachel Poley, Andy Reyes-Morales, Lilia Partida, Azaria Rollins, and Xavier Wedderburn.

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New trees and flowers help beautify Gotwals

Gotwals has six new trees and more flowers in the recess yard.

Ms. Fernandez, Gotwals principal, said the flowers and trees help make the school look even prettier.

Workers from the school district planted the trees. Ms. Fernandez said she thought it would be nice if the students had more trees to sit under and read books.

Ms. Fernandez said she wanted to plant flowers because she likes them and she wants to take care of them. The flowers have been planted around the

trees and they are called geraniums. She said she is planning to plant more flowers in the future.

To have a successful garden, Ms. Fernandez suggests:

- * Make sure it has enough sun or shade, depending on what the plant needs.
- * Water the flowers and trees regularly.
- * Learn about your plants so you can look after them properly.
- * Cut the weeds way from the flowers.

—By *Zavier Wedderburn and Amayrami Lopez-Noya*



Illustration by *Zavier Wedderburn*

Go outside for a dose of vitamin G

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Ms. Renish, the art teacher, said she gets vitamin G by riding her bicycle. She also walks her dog and collects objects to make recycling projects. She said vitamin G makes her feel happy.

Ms. Januszeski, a fourth grade teacher, said she gets vitamin G by walking, playing in the park, and gardening. She said these activities give her more energy and make her feel more awake. Ms. J also rakes leaves, waters plants, and plays with her dog.

Lorremy, a third grader, said she gets Vitamin G by playing tag with her friends. She believes vitamin G helps her get better grades in school. She also likes running, jumping rope, and playing hopscotch.

Ms. Casey, a first grade teacher, said she plants flowers in her backyard. She loves going outside because of the fresh air.

—By *Healthy Press reporters*

First graders enjoy trees

Gotwals first graders learned about trees and how they help people on a recent field trip to Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia.

Ms. Jarmon, a first grade teacher, said Morris Arboretum is important because "kids can see plants and trees up close." They learn how trees grow and how people take care of them.

Morris Arboretum has more than 13,000 types of plants, trees, and flowers. People visit the arboretum to learn about plants, to be in nature, and to relax.

It's really important to plant trees, Ms. Jarmon said. All living things depend on each other. For instance, trees provide oxygen that people need to breathe.

"That's why we need to plant more trees and not cut down so



Illustration by *Lilia Partida*

many trees," said Angelina, a first grader who went on the trip.

Ms. Harper, a first grade teacher assistant, said she liked that kids were excited to see the different kinds of pine cones and pick them up. She also said she really liked how the children had fun and enjoyed seeing a snake.

The students received saplings – which is a young tree – to plant at home.

Yesenia said she planted her tree in her backyard because it gets a lot of sunlight. Her favorite part of the trip was when the students smelled the flowers and went into a treehouse.

Ms. Casey, a first grade teacher, said the field trip was a good time to walk and learn.

—By *Yazzmin Hernandez, Joseph Ortiz, and Derrick Honeycutt*

Gotwals rallies against bullying

Gotwals students and staff marched against bullying.

They chanted in loud voices "no more bullying" as they walked from school to the Montgomery County Courthouse. The children had made small flags which they carried high so everyone could see them. As the students walked they noticed that people stopped to watch them from their cars and windows.

The school took part in the a national anti-bullying event called the Million T-Shirt March. The students wore white and green T-shirts.

A Montgomery County judge, district attorney, and sheriff were among the people who spoke about why bullying is harmful.

Judge Garrett Page told the crowd that bullying occurs in many ways such as teasing, name-calling, and internet postings. People's feelings are hurt when a bully says a mean word to a victim.

Judge Page said he was bullied as a child. He was punched and kick. He was terrified. He would tell his mother he was sick because he didn't want to face the bullies at school, he said.

People can help others restore their feelings with a compliment, Judge Page said.

District Attorney Risa Ferman said the march was a good idea because kids need to speak up and tell bullies to stop. She also said it was good for her to participate because she was bullied. It made her sad

**"No more bullying,"
students chanted**

because the bullies called her names. She told her parents and they made her feel better.

"It is a good experience for the whole school to come together in a

topic they believe in," said Ms. Koch, a fourth grade teacher.

She said she remembers being bullied and it did not feel good. It felt like she didn't fit in.

She said she thinks bullying is an issue and that it needs to be stopped. She has seen bullying at recess. She recommends kids tell an adult if they are getting bullied.

Tykequis, a fourth grader, said it was good that Gotwals went on the march. He believes some people will stop bullying and will be friends with other kids.

Rugayyah, a third grader, said she believes some bullies are bullies because they want attention. "Bullying is wrong," she said.

Mr. Don Demaio, who works for Continental Bank, said his bank helped pay for the T-shirts because its employees like children and don't want them hurt.

Sarah Goldbloom, a singer, taught the crowd a change: "Be cool, be a friend." The crowd repeated it.

Gotwals Principal Ms. Fernandez concluded the event by telling everyone that it is not OK to bully.

—By Gotwals Healthy Press staff

Third graders start recycling program

Miss Morrison's third grade class has started to recycle snack bags, glue bottles, and juice pouches.

She said the program is important because if people don't recycle "our world will be full of trash."

By recycling these items, Miss Morrison's class earns money for Gotwals. Next year, the whole school can get involved with the recycling program.

Miss Morrison said her students help with the recycling program by dumping crumbs out of their snack bags.

John, a third grader, said he likes the program because it helps protect animals.

"It is important to recycle because it (the trash) could get into our drinking water," he said.

"We need to recycle because we need to keep the Earth clean," said Daeshon, a third grader.

Jessica, a third grader, said the recycling program is important because it will help the Earth become a better place.

Miss Morrison said she learned about the program from Hancock Elementary School.

—By Rachel Poley and Lilia Partida

The staff of the *Healthy Press* wishes you a safe, happy, and healthy summer!