

HEALTHY COMET

Remember to take care of your teeth

PHILADELPHIA – The No. 1 childhood disease in the United States is tooth decay, according to a dental expert.

Mrs. Stacey Benner, education director at Kids Smiles, spreads the message that it is important to take care of your teeth and gums. Every year, Kids Smiles helps about 30,000 children in the Philadelphia area visit a dentist.

Mrs. Benner educates children about good oral health. She recently talked to student health reporters at a press conference hosted by the Independence Blue Cross Foundation.

It is important to have good oral health because it affects the rest of your body, Mrs. Benner said. If you have an infection it can cause a lot of pain and it can get much worse if it is not treated. It can make it hard to speak, pay attention in school, and even smile. It can affect your self-esteem, too.

To help prevent dental disease, you should visit your dentist every six months, Mrs. Benner said. You should also brush your teeth after meals. Each time, you should brush for two minutes.

It doesn't matter what kind of toothpaste or floss you use. However, the toothpaste should have

*(Please see **Teeth** on Page 2)*

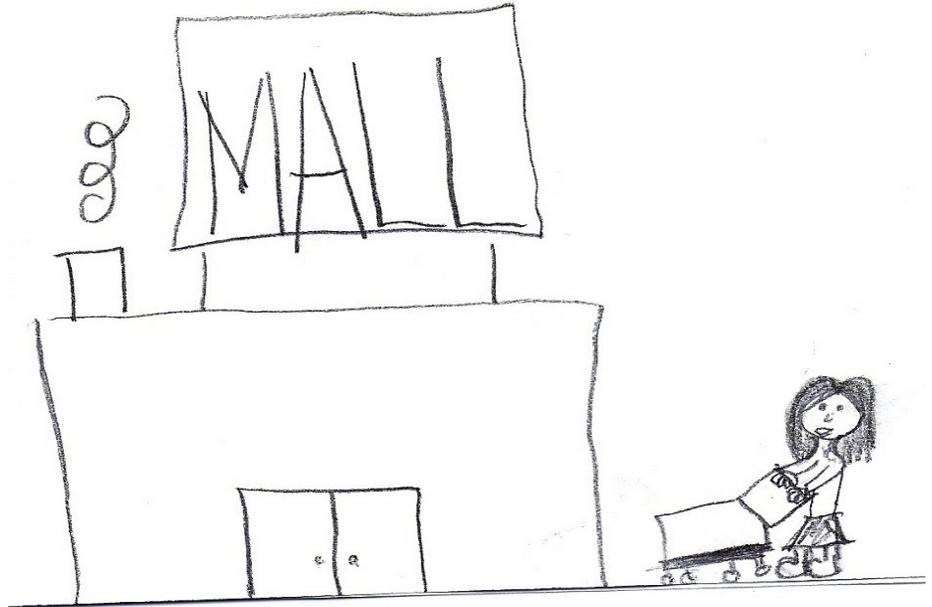


Illustration by Dzire McNeal

Tips to avoid holiday stress

Like most people, Cole Manor teachers have a lot to do during the holiday season.

However, the teachers have found ways to handle the holiday stresses and still enjoy family, friends, and the festivities, according to recent interviews.

A fourth grade student teacher, Mr. Hayes said his greatest challenge for the holiday season is preparing for a party. Mr. Hayes handles his problem with the help of his family who share responsibilities like cooking and cleaning.

To ease stress, he recommends getting an early start. Despite all the hard work, Mr. Hayes said "holidays are still full of joy and fun times to be spent with family."

Ms. Moore, the art teacher, said her greatest challenge is avoiding salty foods at parties. She said she doesn't buy salty snacks and she drinks a lot of water. Her advice is to keep alternative snacks nearby.

Mrs. Cooper, a fourth grade teacher, said her greatest challenge is "trying to get everything done that needs to be done during the holidays."

Her solution is prioritizing. That means that she does the most important things first. "Stay focused and keep a peaceful mind," she said.

Dr. Deminico, an instructional support teacher, said she also finds she has too much to do during the holidays. She tries to stay

*(Please see **Handling** on Page 2)*

Tending to recess accidents

Nurse patches scrapes

Accidents happen.

As of mid-November, 28 students this school year have needed to see the nurse after hurting themselves on the playground, said Mrs. Tara Bonsall, a Cole Manor nurse.

The most common injuries are bumps and scrapes, she said.

To treat the injuries, she uses bandages, ice packs, and antibiotic cream. She cleans cuts and scrapes.

Mrs. Bonsall said she loves her job. She wishes no child ever got injured while playing outside.

—By *Cydney Suber*

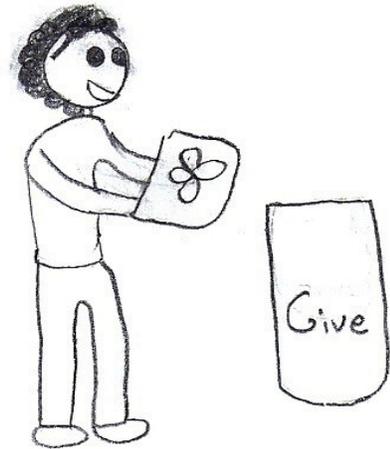


Illustration by Kayla Sparks

Teeth need attention

(Continued from Page 1)

fluoride. Fluoride is a mineral that helps your teeth stay strong. You should like the taste of it, too, so you will use it, Mrs. Benner said.

Finally, she suggested that you think about what you eat. Stay away from sugary treats, she said, and eat a balanced diet, including fruits and vegetables.

—By *Cydney Suber and former Healthy Comet staff writers, Abigail and Garrett Comrie*

The Independence Blue Cross Foundation is an organization that helps find ways to keep people healthy and safe.

It provides money to groups so they can help other people.

Kids Smiles is one organization that receives money from the foundation. It helps children by providing dental care for those who otherwise wouldn't get it. Kids Smiles helps about 30,000 children in the Philadelphia area every year.

Ms. Lorina Marshall-Blake, the foundation's president, said the foundation believes that children are the future. The Kids Smiles clinics are "vital" to make sure children have healthy teeth, Ms. Marshall-Blake said. —By *Garrett Comrie*

Editor's note: Independence Blue Cross Foundation recently invited a dozen Healthy NewsWorks reporters to Philadelphia for a press conference with Kids Smiles. Kids Smiles is a nonprofit group that provides dental care and education to children in the Philadelphia area and Washington, D.C. Kids Smiles and Healthy NewsWorks receive grants from Independence Blue Cross Foundation.

Handling the holidays

(Continued from Page 1)

organized. For instance, she goes shopping early. She said she tries to "stay focused on the important things such as family, friends, health, and happiness."

Mrs. Marin, the guidance counselor, said her greatest challenge is doing all she can to help those in need. She works with organizations and her church to provide help. She said there is just as much joy for giving as for receiving.

Ms. Kathy Vennera, who runs Extended School Child Care, wants to make everyone feel excited and comfortable. She receives help from her family to finish tasks. Asking for help from others is a great way to create a wonderful holiday season.

First grade teacher Ms. Corke's greatest challenge is not buying too much. She gives herself a budget for the amount of money she may spend. Her advice: Don't wait until the last minute to shop!

—By *Healthy Comet staff*

Cole Manor Healthy Comet

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

Student staff members include Taylor Conklin, Maggie Curley, Jaime Hernandez, Brynn Lecato, Haley Masters, Dzire McNeal, Dean Millard, Kayla Sparks, and Cydney Suber. Mrs. Shuler is the newspaper's faculty advisor.

A Healthy NewsWorks® project

www.HealthyNewsWorks.org

Healthy NewsWorks is a member of New Beginnings Nonprofit Incubator at Resources for Human Development in Philadelphia.

Healthy NewsWorks receives funding from individuals, organizations and foundations, including First Hospital Foundation, Green Tree Community Health Foundation, Independence Blue Cross Foundation, and Claneil Foundation.

This document is protected by applicable law. All rights reserved.