



## IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Friday, November 30 - Sunday, December 2  
**Teacher Powered Schools Conference**

Friday, December 7  
**Dress Like a Book Character Day**

Monday, December 10 - Friday, December 14  
**Book Fair**

November 30, 2018

Volume 22, Issue 11

### New Leadership Model Proposal Update

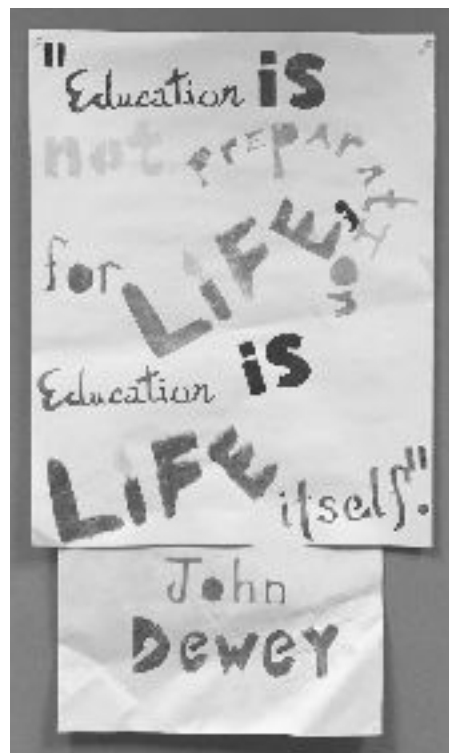
Dear Mission Hill School Friends, Families, Students and Staff,

A few weeks ago I wrote to inform you of a special vote that would happen at our school. Our governance board would vote on the proposal that I made to change the leadership structure of Mission Hill, to have two teacher leaders instead of one principal oversee the school.

The voting process was a messy one, but it felt right at the same time. The messy part had to do with the insufficient representation of students and community members in attendance face to face. A couple of community members participated by phone and proxy vote. Students were called one by one to cast their votes.

A quote from John Dewey that Deborah Meier uses in her book most recent book, These Schools Belong to You and Me, summed up the experience that led to our final vote. John Dewey writes, *"We have taken democracy for granted. We have forgotten that it has to be enacted anew in every generation, in every year and day, in the living relationship of person to person and all social forms and institutions."*

When the initial vote happened on November 8th, the majority of student members voted "no". There were adults at the table that raised concern about this. Did the students know what they were voting for? Should we have further discussion with them? Perhaps they would change their minds? Knowing that a previous discussion had been made with the students, and that they had time to think this over, I believed it was fair that they voted the way they did. I was at peace with the proposal not moving forward. However, because there were student members missing from the meeting I agreed to the recommendation that we reconvene on the morning of November 9th to take the vote again. We reconvened and the proposal passed.



On that Friday morning I had an opportunity to talk with one of the students that voted no. I asked her why she voted “no”. She explained that she voted “no” because it meant that I was leaving. She would miss me and she felt it would be too much of an adjustment for her and the other students. In that moment I realized that I was so focused on the adult voices and opinions, that I didn’t give equal weight in attention to what I heard from a few students prior to the vote. Dewey’s quote rang true.

What happens next? Our superintendent must consider the merits of the change and what she sees as the best decision for our school. After the superintendent makes her decision, the hiring process will begin.

As I think about supporting this new model and onboarding new school leaders, I am open to all of you, our students in particular, with your thoughts, ideas, and invitations to connect as I transition out of the principal role for Mission Hill School.

*Ayla Gavins*

## **KINDERGARTEN**

### **Room 106**

#### **Kathy, Liana & June**

What a wonderful Curriculum Breakfast we had on Wednesday! The students were so proud of their work and the adults were reading and enjoying everything so intently. A few days before the event, we were completing work on our "How To Make Ice Cream" books and the Peregrine Falcons were working really hard, using realistic colors and shapes to create illustrations. After they had worked for about an hour on the books, I asked them, "How did it feel to do hard work?" Here are their responses:

**Asa:** Challenging and good.

**Melina:** It felt like I was a big kid.

**Selma:** It was hard and it made me tired and so I slept a lot at nap but it felt good.

**McKenna:** It was kind of fun and the grown-ups will not know that those books were made by kids!

**Perse:** It felt hard and efficient and kind of exciting because my family will see it.

**Wyatt:** It felt very challenging and very fun!

**Manny:** Perfecto!

**Ben:** Good.

**Xander:** Fine.

**Jo:** Good.

**Elijah:** Exciting because my mom and dad will see it.

**Mira:** I didn't feel great but I felt good.

**Walter-** A little little little little nervous and a lot lot lot lot lot happy.



*Jonathan V. using some of the crayons that the Dragon Kitties made!*

### **Room 107**

#### **Jada & Manny**

In wondering about what other types of matter change their states, the Dragon Kitties came across some old crayons. We spoke about how adding heat to a solid can help change its state to a liquid, like our tongues melting our popsicles. Through conversation we learned that several students were familiar with this process. They suggested we put the crayons into the oven to melt. After a few days of stripping paper from our crayons, we filled our silicone molds and popped them into the oven at 250 degrees for 15 minutes. Just as they hypothesized, the crayons had changed to a liquid! We walked

the pan outside for safer observation and a few students noticed a change happening before their eyes. Now cool to the touch, several student's curiosity led them to touch the cooling melted wax. "It turned solid on my finger.", exclaimed G'lo. Meanwhile, others noticed the liquid was no longer as shiny. When they touched it, they had in fact turned back to a solid. By the end of the day we were drawing with our new crayons. Feel free to try it yourself!

*-Jada*

### **Room 108**

#### **Geralyn & Donna**

Relevance is one of our Mission Hill Habits of Mind, and in that vein we have taken a step back this week to think about why we are learning about water. Why is water important? To help us answer this question we have been making a growing list of ways we use water: water in our water bottles for drinking; washing hands; painting with watercolors; blowing bubbles made with water and soap; and brushing teeth. We also are documenting ways we see water being used in our world (from books and experiences): whales swim in water; ships travel on water; ducks, frogs and fish swim in water; and rain and puddles are water. Talk to your children at home...what would you add to our list? We have also been looking at world maps and

a globe to see how much of our world is covered with water.

-Geralyn

### Room 109

#### Katie & Mary

On November 15, we went on a field trip to the Museum of Science. The Rainbow Butterflies were truly in awe of the many interactive exhibits such as the Discovery Center, Hands on Laboratory, Making Models, and Super Cold Science. Our students were curious and engaged especially at the Hands On Laboratory where microscopes opened up the world of life inhabiting the Charles River. It was amazing to watch as they used the droppers to place a small amount of liquid on a slide and then see what comes alive under the microscope.

Super Cold Science dovetailed nicely with the experiment we had conducted in our class when making ice cream. The presenter asked if anyone knew what happens to ice when heat is applied and Rainbow Butterfly Theo answered with confidence, "it turns into water."

Making Models was also of great interest as the class has been discussing comparisons and building models with "Beautiful Stuff". The students were intrigued with how

scientists use models to learn about things that are too big or too small to work with directly. They learned that charts, graphs and maps are all examples of models. It was a great experience for all and brought together many concepts we are learning in our classroom.

-Katie

## GRADES 1 & 2

### Room 205

#### Ashleigh & Alana

I try to express gratitude to myself each day. Sometimes when I first wake up in the morning and sometimes before I

go to bed each night. There are days when I am grateful for the tangible things in my life like cozy socks, my dog's wagging tail, class supply donations from families, teaching at a school I believe in, and a homemade tea mug. Recently, I have been trying to focus what is intangible that I am grateful for as well. I'm grateful for the trust families have in me to care for and teach their children. I am grateful for my five senses that allow me to experience so many wonderful things in this world. I am grateful for my creativity and passion for making things with my hands. We also practice gratitude in our classroom from time to time

connected to our mindfulness practice, but it is something I think we could include more often. We need to make the time to be sure to include other experiences in our school day that help us take care of our hearts as well as minds. What are you grateful for? How do you express gratitude?



*Photos (above) are from The Dragon's (room 216) visit to the Boston Children's Museum*

### Room 216

#### Danny & Felicia

Continuing our study of bubbles, The Dragons visited the Boston Children's Museum. There is an amazing bubble exhibit at the museum where we spent lots of time playing and experimenting with bubbles. There were many new materials we were able to use to do new things, like putting a

bubble over our heads, catching bubbles, and putting our arms through bubbles. Here were some of our favorite parts of the trip:

"I put my head in a big bubble." - Yarian

"I was in a bubble." - Violet

"My favorite part was the bubble rope where you pull." - Janee

"I liked putting my hand through the bubble." - Raya

"I liked the bubble room because there was like this little tube and bubbles kept coming out." - Isaac

-Danny



*More photos from The Dragon's (room 216) visit to the Boston Children's Museum*



### Room 217

#### Kate & Kat

Last Wednesday, the Shooting Star Pals showed their work to families and friends at the chemistry theme curriculum breakfast. We have been learning about chemistry and color mixing for the past two months.

Leading up to the breakfast students worked diligently to finish impressive color wheels showing a lot of understanding of color ratios. They wrote written reflections on photos of themselves conducting experiments. Our classroom became a gallery of art work and photographs. Our two biggest writing projects, "How To" experiment books and teddy bear fiction stories were on display. Students were able to

finish their final drafts and publish their books in time. Families were able to walk around and see all the work we have done.

-Kate

## GRADES 3 & 4

### Room 203

#### Jenerra & Mayra

Before the break, we had our Fall curriculum breakfast. These gatherings are a time for families to come and see the work that their children have been doing for the semester. Some of the work is still in progress while other work is completed. Students and teachers work hard

all semester, and in the days before the breakfast prepare work and presentations to be shared. There is always a buzz of excitement and bit a nervousness, as we prepare and when the morning comes, they always do a fabulous job. This breakfast was no exception! The Ninjas were great as they gave explanations and answered questions about their experiments and other work. Here are some of their thoughts about it.

Kaia & Soley - It was fun showing everyone our motorized car.

Geneva - I really liked how my house turned out. I was really proud of it.

Arianni -

Natalia -

Wren - I felt happy about sharing with my mother and I thought I would get nervous but I didn't.

Darby - I felt proud of the motorized car I build.

Jediah - I felt proud when I did my whole house.

G'kharee - It was fun to perform our experiment/presentation.

Gabriel - I felt proud of the work I showed.

Fabian - It was awesome because I got to spend more time with my friends and meet some parents we didn't know.

We are all looking forward to the next!

-Jenerra

### Room 207

#### Amanda & Amina

Last week we held our first curriculum breakfast of the school year. The day before the breakfast, our students were in awe as they entered the room and saw their hard work hanging high from the ceiling, posted for all to see. On the day of the breakfast their happy faces beamed as they shared their chemistry experiments with family members and friends. They proudly led guests, step by step, through the experiments while they explained the chemistry that was taking place.

After the breakfast was over, we spent the rest of our time together playing a rousing game of dodgeball, during Wellness and enjoyed each other's company during recess at lunch. Just before dismissal with five students remaining, we did some reading, writing and drawing together before we said goodbye and wished each other a Happy Thanksgiving.

I spent the four days off with family cooking, eating, relaxing and shopping. It is my hope that our students and their families enjoyed the time off together and like myself are returning rejuvenated and ready to dive back into our work as we begin to wrap up the fall semester.

-Amina

### Room 212

#### Cleata & Ayan

No news. Check back next week.



*Photos of room 207 during the Chemistry Curriculum Breakfast!*



## GRADES 5 & 6

### Room 210

#### Nakia & Kendall

No news. Check back next week.

### Room 215

#### Abdi & Courtney M.

Mr. Browne, the fictional 5th grader teacher in our novel, Wonder, gives his students a monthly precept (rule/motto) to respond to in their journals.

“When given the choice between being right and being kind, choose kind.” This precept is integral to our work this year: be kind to yourself, be kind to others..., and it complicates our thinking. Would you choose being right or being kind? The curricular autonomy at MHS allows us to select readings and books that connect deeply with our social curriculum. In a full inclusion setting, a novel like Wonder allows us to imagine in order to be more empathic. Please read with your child at home as the novel will be coming home every night. Also, thanks to the families who made it possible for us to give a brand new copy to each child.

Enjoy reading,

-Abdi, Ms. Courtney

## GRADES 7 & 8

### Room 213

#### Jenna & Natel

On Wednesday, we had an exciting visit to the Margarita Muniz Academy's Chemistry class. The high school students prepared lessons for our seventh and eighth graders to participate in and served as teachers for them. The high schoolers taught us about density through three different types of experiments and helped us calculate the density of different materials. It was a huge success! Students

from both schools were highly engaged in the work, sharing ideas in both English and Spanish, and learning together. Our Mission Hill students were also a bit starstruck and were on their best behavior in front of the older students. When we left, I debriefed with the students and heard so many positive comments such as, “I finally understand density!” “that was so fun!” “when can they visit us?” “can we go again?”. It was very rewarding to see students so engaged in learning science and to also see how empowered they felt when they get to learn from people who look like them and are just a few years older. I hope to be able to bring them back to visit soon and am thinking about how to replicate this experience with my students and the younger students at MHS.

*-Jenna*



**Room 214**  
**Reginald & Frances**  
“Reginald, I need help.”

I really don’t like that statement. Mainly, it doesn’t really give me much information. It could mean a lot of things. It could mean that they are stuck or that they have a question or that they would like me to help them think through something. What I have realized is that more often than not, when students say that, they are speaking generally and are not really sure about the help they

need. One of the skills that I want to teach students, is how to work through assignments independently. So, I’ve made some adjustments in how I frame the new assignment.

First, I read the assignment and made sure that they know what is being asked of them. Then, I took time to help them make a list of their resources.

Also, I explicitly told them that before they ask me anything, they should first look through their resource. I also told them that in order for me to have a conversation with any of them, I need them to be specific.

I’ll continue to monitor their questions, responses and whether or not they are becoming more independent when working through an assignment.

*-Reginald*

**Ayla Gavins, Principal**  
**Deborah Meier, Founder**  
**Laura Perille, Interim Superintendent**

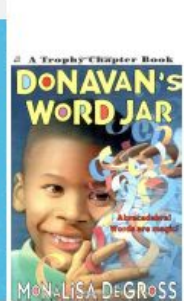
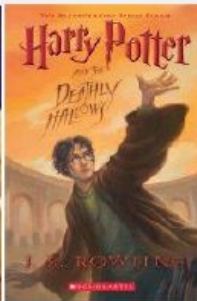
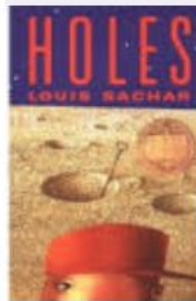
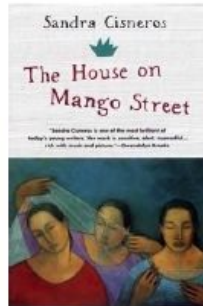
**Mission Hill K-8 School**  
**A Boston Public Pilot School**  
**WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG**

**20 Child Street**  
**Jamaica Plain, MA 02130**  
**T 617-365-6384**  
**F 617-635-6419**

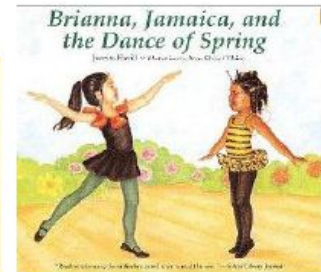
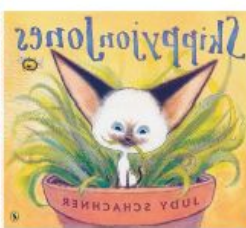
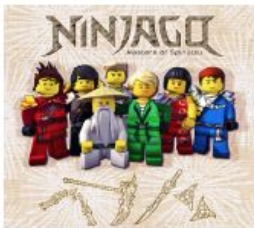


# Dress Like a Book Character Day!

😊 Who will you be? 😊



You are invited to come to school dressed as one of your favorite book characters!



Wear your costume for Friday Share or wear it all day!  
Just be prepared to answer the question,  
"Who are you today?"



When: Friday

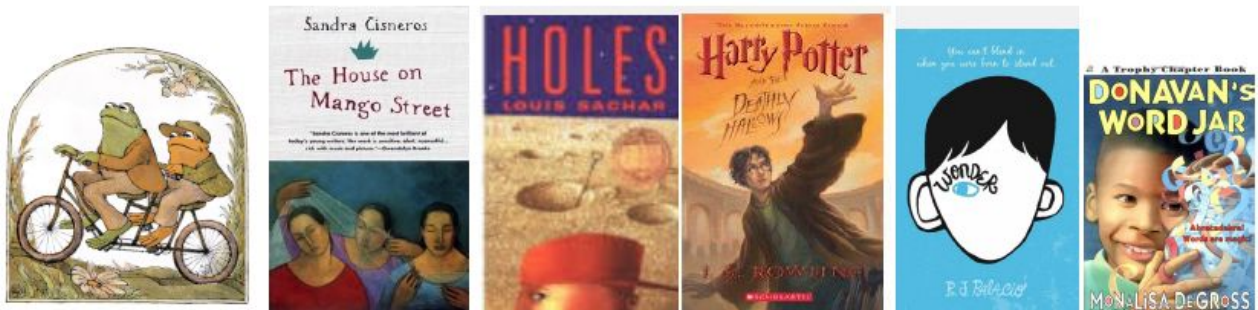
## December 7, 2018





¡Día de vestirse como un carácter del libro!

😊 ¿Quién va a ser? 😊



¡Se invita a venir a la escuela vestida como uno de sus personajes de su libro favoritos!



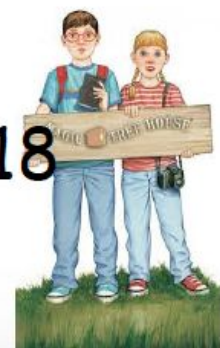
Use su ropa para compartir el viernes de compartir o manténgalo puesto todo este día!

Prepárese para contestar la pregunta,  
"¿Quién eres tú hoy? "



Cuando: viernes

El 7 de diciembre de 2018



# It's Dinner and a Board Meeting!

Upcoming Meeting Dates: 1/3/19 2/28/19 3/21/19 5/30/19

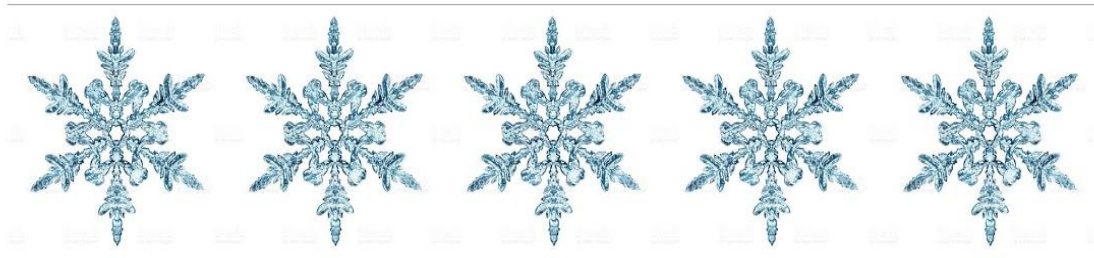


Hello Mission Hill families!

You are and have always been welcome to attend our Board Meetings. Please consider this your official invitation to come out and meet our board members, hear a little about important conversations in education, learn about ways to support our school and hopefully consider being a member in the near future. We consider your presence valuable so both dinner and childcare will be provided.

Please **RSVP for childcare at 617-635-6384.**

We hope to see you there!



When: December 13, 2018  
Where: Art Room (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
Time: 5:00-7:30 p.m.



# ¡Es comida y una reunión de la junta directiva de consejo de la administracion!

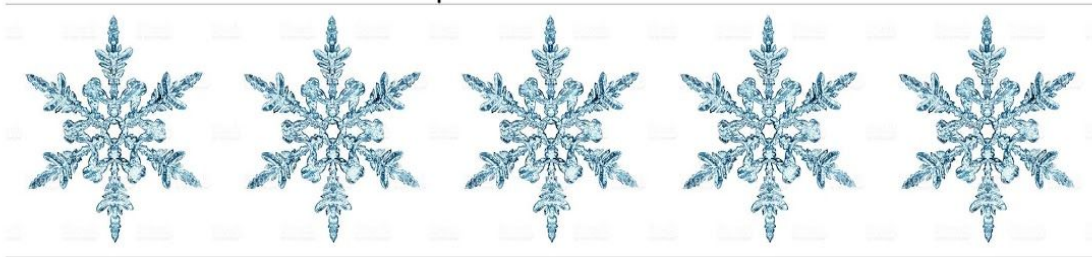
Fechas de la reunión próximas : 1/3/19 2/28/19 3/21/19 5/30/19



¡Hola familias de Mission Hill!

Ustedes siempre son bienvenidos a asistir a nuestras reuniones de la junta directiva. Por favor tengan en mente que esta es su invitación oficial para que conozca a nuestros miembros del consejo, escuchar conversaciones importantes de la educación, aprenda sobre modos de apoyar nuestra escuela y considere ser un miembro del consejo en el futuro. Consideramos su presencia valiosa, por lo tanto, se proporcionarán comida y cuidado de niño. Por favor RSVP para el cuidado de niño al 617-635-6384.

¡Esperamos verle allí!



Cuando: ueves, 13 de diciembre de 2018

Dónde: Cuarto de arte (2do piso)

Hora: 5:00p.m.- 7:30 p. m.



# It's Family Reading Morning ...and Pajama Day!

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Come join us and begin your day reading...in your pajamas! Whether you bring your favorite book or snuggle up with one from our collections, we look forward to sharing this special time with you! If your child attends the before school program, reading will begin at 8:00 a.m. in the cafeteria. If your child arrives at 9:15, reading will happen in classrooms. Please consider joining us for this event as well as our weekly Friday Share beginning at 9:40 a.m. in the auditorium.

When: December 14, 2018

Where: Cafeteria and Classrooms

Time: 8:00-9:30 (12:30)



Can you think of a better way to start your day?





# ¡Es la Mañana de Lectura Familia ...y Día de Pijamas!

¡ Acompañarnos y comienzan su día leyendo en sus pijamas! ¡Si trae su libro favorito o se arrime con uno de nuestras colecciones, Queremos compartir este tiempo especial con usted! Si su hijo(a) asiste el programa antes de la escuela, la lectura comenzará a las 8:00 am en la cafetería. Si su hijo llega a las 9:15, la lectura será dirigida en los salones. Por favor, considere acompañándonos para este evento, y también nuestro Compartiendo Viernes semanales comenzando a las 9:40 am en el auditorio.

**Cuando: El 14 de diciembre del 2018**

**Donde: Cafetería y Salones**

**Tiempo: 8:00-9:30 (12:30)**



**Pensarías en una mejor manera de comenzar su día?**





## Cold Weather Outdoor Play Boosts Immune System!

By: Anne Dodds, Keystone STARS Child Care Health Consultant



Cold weather, outdoor play- It's not only for children, but adults too!

Think layers – adults and children alike! Adults should wear layers of lightweight clothing to stay warm. Don't forget gloves and a hat! Because children's bodies can lose heat faster, young children and babies should be dressed in one more layer than an adult. Make sure their head and neck are covered as well as a warm pair of gloves.

Winter fresh air is good for everyone!

Outdoor winter play has long been blamed for colds and the flu. Our parents told us to "bundle up or you'll catch a cold," and their parents probably told them the same thing. But winter play gets a bad rap. Although going outside unprepared for the elements is unwise, viruses that are spread by other human beings and cause colds and the flu are indoors.

The indoor circulation of germs and bacteria is much more harmful to your child than playing outside. There are plenty of excellent references for winter safety tips, such as [this article by the American Academy of Pediatrics](#) that explains proper clothing, winter health and more. With the right preparation and understanding of winter weather, your child can have as much fun in the cold as he or she does in the sun!

## Here are Four Benefits of Outdoor Winter Play

### Breathe fresh air

It's no secret that most parents blame winter air as the cause for colds and the flu. Although the viruses that cause flu and colds are more common in the winter months, the circulated air in closed environments is the main cause of your child getting sick. All of the bacteria, dirt, dander, and other germs simply get recycled through the air vents over and over. The more time you spend inside, the more you are exposed. Nothing is more refreshing than that first deep breath of cold, winter air before starting hours of fun with outdoor play. In fresh, outdoor air, children do not have to rebreathe the germs of the group, and the chance for spreading infection is reduced.

### Strengthen immune system

Playing outside allows your child an escape from indoor germs and bacteria. This will not only be good for the healthy bunch; the sick kids benefit from the fresh air as well. Just make sure they are properly bundled up and moving around to capture and generate warmth. Being outside more often also allows your child to develop a stronger autoimmune system and a resistance to allergies. Studies have shown that children in rural areas or those who are active outside have the best overall health.

### Engage in physical exercise

Just because it's cold outside doesn't mean your children have lost their energy or desire to play. In fact, the [California Childcare Health Program](#) states outdoor winter play "gives children an opportunity for a change of environment, a balance in play and routine, and large muscle activities (gross-motor development)." You must remember your child is still growing during these months, and prolonged sessions of inactivity are not conducive to their muscular development. Physical activity gives your immune system a power surge for a full 24 hours. A stronger immune system leads to less illness and less use of antibiotics.

### Stimulate the imagination

The winter also offers a variety of ways to stimulate your imagination through play. Does your child like to build things? Build a snow fort in the backyard with tunnels and a home base. Do you have access to a park? Go for a wildlife hike and look for birds and other woodland creatures. With all of the technological advancements of the past decade, many children are using their imaginations less and less. Something as simple as building a silly snowman utilizes problem solving and imaginative skills they would not be using while sitting on the couch.

### **Remember:**

**Hand washing is the single most effective way to reduce illness!**



### **Kids' Section:**

#### **Making a Snow Volcano**

What do you need?

- Empty water bottle
- 2 spoonfuls of baking soda
- 1 spoonful dish soap
- A few drops of food coloring (red makes it look like lava)
- 1 ounce of vinegar

Next steps:

- Make a volcano in the snow with hole in the center to hold the water bottle.
- Add everything except the vinegar to the water bottle.
- Add the vinegar and watch the eruption!

Tip: If it doesn't work so well, add a bit more dish soap and vinegar.

Why is this science?

Vinegar (an acid) and baking soda (an alkali) react together to neutralize each other. This reaction releases carbon dioxide, a gas which is the bubbles you see, these bubbles make the dish soap bubble up to give the reaction.



Science experiment  
and photo courtesy of  
Science-Sparks.com