



Goosehill Primary School

Weekly Notes-May 5, 2017



Dear Parents,

This week is National Screen-Free Week, an annual event when children and families are encouraged to unplug from digital entertainment and spend time playing, reading, creating, exploring, and connecting with each other. It also happens to be Children's Book Week, which is a cornerstone program of Every Child a Reader, a literacy organization dedicated to inspiring a lifelong love of reading in children across America.

Participating in Screen-Free Week is a great way to recommit your family to reading time and to ensuring unstructured time for your children to play. Try visiting the library this weekend and choosing some great picture books to read aloud to your child. Find some joke books to read and enjoy as a family. Carve out a few minutes a day to turn off all devices and encourage every member of your family to read, draw, or even daydream. Remember, it takes two weeks to create a habit! Be patient with yourself and your children and start small if you need to. Just a few minutes a day can stretch into 30 minutes over the course of two weeks. Make sure to enjoy the time... and your children will too.

While technology is a powerful and important tool, we need to be mindful of the need for balance in children's lives. As a school community, we appreciate the benefits of technology. In fact, we support the position statement of *The National Association for the Education of Young Children*, which concludes that "when used properly and sparingly by adults so as not to replace activities such as creative play, real-life exploration, physical activity, outdoor experiences, conversation, and social interactions," technology can enhance children's learning and development.

The most important thing is for parents to be aware of how much time their children spend using tablets, e-books, TV, apps, digital games, and videos. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting screen time for children 2-6 years of age to one hour a day to ensure they have enough time to engage in other activities.

I hope you'll consider taking the "screen-free" challenge in some form in the coming days. You might decide as a family to be screen-free for a few days, or limit screens to 30 minutes a day. Don't worry that your children may be bored if they have nothing to do. Having "nothing" to do is actually good for children! They need time to doodle on the driveway with sidewalk chalk, build a tent with sheets in the living room, make mud pies, or create a kingdom with cardboard boxes. Give your children the gift of time...to explore, play, and even daydream.

Enjoy the weekend!

Warm regards,

Lynn Herschlein

