



Ames working with play-do

# Philomath Montessori School

*September 2015*



Aviva washing dishes

## Welcome, New Families!!

By Doni Manning-Cyrus

Greetings to all and a warm welcome to our new families! Let's meet them, shall we? We have quite a few this year as we aren't enrolling scads of siblings like we did last year. First on deck is Aayenda Asmatey-Stoll. Aayenda enjoys the outdoors and loves her kitty cat. Her parents are Yalda Asmatey and Jonathan Stoll. She is an educator of public health anthropology (I know, I never heard of that either!) at OSU who enjoys reading, writing and cooking and he is the director of Corvallis community relations for OSU. He also enjoys reading and writing as well as biking and community organizing. Congratulations to this family who just welcomed a new baby girl!

We will also be joined by Rolly Hart who loves to do water activities and play with Colorforms! I remember my own set fondly. Rolly's mom is Karin and she enjoys animals and the outdoors. Professionally, she is an artist and teacher of art history. Dad Sean is a forester who lists his interests as economics, farming and forestry philosophy. Welcome to the Harts!

Dahlia Deatherage will be among our ranks this year and she is always up for a trip to the park or an outing to gather rocks and sticks. Her parents are Audrey, who is a designer and is in sales at Blackledge Furniture. She likes to garden and hike. James is a journeyman plumber for Albin's Plumbing. He is a mountain biker and enjoys hunting as well. We are so glad to have you here, guys!

We will also have the company of Aviva Feldman, who likes DUPLO and dress-up. Her parents

are Stuart who is one of those mysterious "consultants" and Karin who is a risk manager. She likes cooking and gardening and he is into photography and drawing. This family likes to travel and explore new places. We are glad they decided to explore PhMS!

Ames Mabeck has been coming here to pick up big sis, Harper for a while, so you may know this little boy already. He likes balls and Legos and washing dishes. Harper has already been training him in Conflict Resolution skills, which always comes in handy, right? Mother Katy is a high school Spanish teacher who loves soccer and travel. Fortunately, father Jeff also enjoys travel when he isn't laboring at his job as an engineer. You know them. You love them. They're the Mabecks!

You returning families have probably also seen Peter MacClary in the hallway. He won't be here to drop off Annabel. This year, it's his turn! Peter, too, enjoys dress up and water play. His mom, Sarah, enjoys the Spanish language, cooking and hiking and his dad, Matt, does Brazilian jiu jitsu. I would recommend not sneaking up behind Matt in a darkened parking lot! Glad to have you back, MacClarys!

Little Piper Meyer just welcomed her new baby sister, Peyton, in July and is learning how to be a good big sister. Piper and her family like to go swimming and hiking and to play in parks. Piper likes Legos and dress up, too! Her mom, Jamie, is a veterinarian who enjoys yoga, art and reading and her dad, Dave likes biking, music and photography. He is a patient services coordinator at OSU Veterinary Medicine. We look forward to getting to know this family!

You don't know Adelynn Miller (Addy) yet, but you know her brother, Jaxson. Addy likes coloring, blocks and helping her family with the yard work. She has been staying home with her grandparents, but now she will be commuting all the way from Sweet Home, too. Adelynn's mom, Leanne, is an accountant at the Corvallis Municipal Airport and listed no personal interests! Let's all help Leanne find and follow her bliss, okay?!

Entering our classroom this year is little Ella Williams, who likes to play with her stuffed animals and look at books. Her parents, Dave Williams and Amy Basset, will be married in September! Congratulations, you two! Dave is the stay-at-home parent and he likes to surf and write. His bride-to-be, Amy, is into meditation and massage. She is a retail manager and she and Dave both like doing yoga and being active outdoors.

Our final family to welcome is Zirk Weil's. Zirk and his family like to go to the beach, grow and preserve food and go hiking. Zirk's mom is a homesteader and his dad is a beekeeper. She is Esme and likes sewing, cheese making and learning foreign languages. He is Jacob and is into woodworking. Zirk likes to create things with the recyclables and whatever else he can get his hands on.

We warmly welcome all these new children and their families. Say hello, include them in your after-school plans and lend an ear/shoulder as they make this new and sometimes challenging transition. I know you will because that's just the kind of folks you are! The kindest kind!

Best Regards,  
Doni



*Rolly working with opening and closing*

## *A New School Year!*

Just a few of reminders to make it safe, sweet and wonderful...

- **Extra Clothes** – please send in an extra set of clothes (tags labeled with your child's initials). Also rain gear and rubber boots for that upcoming Oregon weather.
- **Emergency packs** – please be sure to send your child in with a gallon-size Ziploc bag full of nutritious, non-perishable food by the end of the first week of school.
- **Please be on time** – we open the doors at 8:50 and will begin circle time at 9:10. You don't want your child to miss those wonderful stories, lessons and games that we do first thing in the morning! It's also a great message to your child that being on time is important.
- **Hallway decorum** – please remember to walk in the building and use quiet voices.
- **Birthdays** – please call us a week or two ahead of your child's birthday celebration so we can put it on the calendar and plan for it. We welcome ½ birthday celebrations, but please - only true May and June birthdays in May and June. Every year we seem to have an onslaught of birthday celebrations during those two months.
- **After-school play** – please remember that using the safety rules that we use at school keeps everyone safe and happy. Children all feel safer when parents set boundaries and consistently adhere to them.

## Newsline

- ❖ Thursday, September 17 is our **first parent meeting of the year**. It will be from 6:00 – 7:30. We will provide free child care for all children – the only requirement is that they are potty-trained. **Another parent meeting** follows on Thursday, October 15. Please put these dates on your calendar!
- ❖ **Thistledown Studios** will be coming to take class picture and individual photos of the children on Thursday, September 24 at 9am – so please be on time!
- ❖ Our **Parent Orientation/Workshop** will be Thursday, October 1 at 6pm. **Doni and Jessica** will be presenting Montessori in the Home. Please invite family and friends!
- ❖ Also no school on Wednesday, November 11 – **Veteran's Day**.
- ❖ Be sure to save the date for our big annual fundraiser! **The Love of Learning Auction** will be Saturday, February 6.
- ❖ During the year, we may see **fliers and brochures** on the bulletin board from various individuals and groups offering services that may be appropriate for your families. However, **it should not be taken as a recommendation** as we cannot investigate every source for quality.



Ella working with opening and closing



Ayenda washing dishes



Dahlia spooning beans



Piper working on a sewing card



# Screen time Is Making Kids Moody, Lazy and Crazy

## Psychology Today

Victoria L. Dunckley, M.D

The child or teen who is “revved up” and prone to rages or—alternatively—who is depressed and apathetic has become disturbingly commonplace. Chronically irritable children are often in a state of abnormally high arousal, and may seem “wired and tired.” That is, they’re agitated but exhausted. Because chronically high arousal levels impact memory and the ability to relate, these kids are also likely to be struggling academically and socially.

At some point a child with these symptoms is likely to be given a mental health diagnosis, such as major depression, bipolar disorder, or ADHD, and offered corresponding treatments, including therapy and medication. But often, particularly in today’s world, these treatments don’t work very well, and the downward spiral continues. What’s happening?

The problem is that both parents and clinicians are “barking up the wrong tree.” That is, they’re trying to treat what looks like a textbook case of “X” mental disorder, but failing to rule out and address the most common environmental cause of such symptoms—everyday use of electronics. Time and again, I’ve realized that regardless of whether there exists any “true” underlying diagnoses, successfully treating a child with mood dysregulation in this day and age requires methodically eliminating all electronics use for several weeks –an “electronic fast”– to allow the nervous system to “reset.”

If done correctly, this intervention can produce deeper sleep, a brighter and more even mood, better focus and organization, and an increase in physical activity. The ability to tolerate stress improves, so meltdowns diminish in both frequency and severity. The child begins to enjoy the things they used to, is more drawn to nature, and imaginary or creative play returns. In teens and young adults, an increase in self-directed behavior is observed – the exact opposite of apathy and hopelessness.

It’s a beautiful thing.

At the same time, the electronic fast reduces or eliminates the need for medication while rendering other treatments more effective. Improved sleep, more exercise, and more face-to-face contact with others compound the benefits...an upward spiral! After the fast, once the brain is reset, the parent can carefully determine how much if any electronics use the child can tolerate without symptoms returning. *Restricting electronics may not solve everything, but it’s often the missing link in treatment when kids are stuck.*

But why is the electronic fast intervention so effective? Because it reverses much of the physiological dysfunction produced by daily screen-time.



Adelynn tearing paper

Children’s brains are much more sensitive to electronics use than most of us realize. In fact, contrary to popular belief, it doesn’t take much electronic stimulation at all to throw a sensitive and still-developing brain off track. Also, many parents mistakenly believe that interactive screen-time—such as internet or social media use, texting, emailing, and gaming—isn’t harmful, especially when compared to passive screen-time like TV. But in fact, interactive screen-time is more likely to cause sleep, mood, and cognitive issues, because it’s more likely to cause hyperarousal and compulsive use.

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Here's a look at six physiological mechanisms that explain electronics' tendency to produce mood disturbance:

1. Screen time disrupts sleep and desynchronizes the body clock.

Because light from screen devices mimics daytime, it suppresses melatonin, a sleep signal released by darkness. Just minutes of screen stimulation can delay melatonin release by several hours and desynchronize the body clock. Once the body clock is disrupted, all sorts of other unhealthy reactions occur, such as hormone imbalance and brain inflammation. Plus, high arousal doesn't permit deep sleep, and deep sleep is how we heal.

2. Screen time desensitizes the brain's reward system.

Many children are "hooked" on electronics, and in fact gaming releases so much dopamine—the "feel-good" chemical—that on a brain scan it looks the same as cocaine use! When reward pathways are overused, they become less sensitive, and more and more stimulation is needed to experience pleasure. Meanwhile dopamine is also critical for focus and motivation. Needless to say, even small changes in dopamine sensitivity can wreak havoc on how well a child feels and functions.

3. Screen-time produces "light-at-night."

Light-at-night from electronics has been linked to depression and even suicide risk in numerous studies. In fact, animal studies show that exposure to screen-based light before or during sleep causes depression even when the animal isn't looking at the screen. Sometimes parents feel scared to restrict electronics use in a child's bedroom because they worry the child will go enter a state of total despair—but in fact removing light-at-night is protective.

4. Screen-time induces stress reactions.

Both acute stress (fight-or-flight) and chronic stress produce changes in brain chemistry and hormones that can increase irritability. Indeed, cortisol, the chronic stress hormone, seems to be both a cause and effect of depression – creating a vicious cycle. Additionally, both hyperarousal and addiction pathways suppress the brain's frontal lobe, the area where mood regulation actually takes place.

5. Screen-time overloads the sensory system fractures attention, and depletes mental reserves.

Experts say that what's often behind explosive and aggressive behavior is poor focus. When attention suffers, so does the ability to process one's internal and external environment, so little demands become big ones. By depleting mental energy with high visual and cognitive input, screen-time contributes to low reserves. One way to temporarily "boost" depleted reserves is to become angry, so meltdowns become a coping mechanism.

6. Screen-time reduces physical activity levels and exposure to "green-time."

Research shows these factors restore attention, lower stress, and reduce aggression. Thus, time spent with electronics reduces exposure to natural mood enhancers.

In today's world, it may seem crazy to restrict electronics so drastically. But when kids are struggling, we're not doing them any favors by leaving electronics in place and hoping they can wind down by using electronics in "moderation." It just doesn't work. In contrast, by allowing the nervous system to return to a more natural state with a strict fast, we can take the first step in helping a child become calmer, stronger, and happier.



*Peter working with a cylinder block*

## Art Friday

### September 2015

We will begin the Art Friday program with a study of color, talking about primary and secondary colors, color combining, and then painting. Each year the children paint and do printmaking on a cloth bag, which will stay in the classroom for the year and be used to contain ongoing projects, such as weaving or stitchery. We also will be doing different techniques of painting and resist on papers to create an assortment of papers that will be used through the year in collage. Each child will also make journals periodically through the year with some specific assignments each Friday to fill the pages. So not too much will be going home with the children for a while, except to send last years bags home so everyone will be making a new one this year, returning and new students.

-Jennifer Smith



Zirk working on a collage

## Thank You!

### Summer Yard Work

- Weeding & harvesting: **The MacClary, Plaire/Siegel, & the Wu/Emshwiller Families**
- Mowing & trimming the yard: **The Wu/Emshwiller & Plaire/Siegel Families**

### Parent Work Day!! So much accomplished in one day – inside and out!!

- Hard-working volunteers: **Katy & Jeff Mabeck, Yalda Asmatey, Jonathan Stoll, Jonathan Jensen, Allan Rack, Beth Runciman, Joy Ueng, Jasmin & Rigel Woodside, Julie Wiethorn, Amy & Brendan Ward, Julie Wiethorn, Lin Li, Sarah MacClary, Maya Emshwiller, Jamie & Dave Meyer, James Deathterage, Karin Bolender, Sean Cummings, Karin Feldman, Dave Williams, Amy Bassett**

### Classroom and Take Home Projects

- Iron laces of bow tie frame: **Giftai/Wiethorn Family**
- Prepare beginning of the year classroom art & sewing materials: **Julie Wiethorn, Elke Wiethorn, Lua Siegel, Amy Ward, Katy Mabeck, Esme Weil, Amber Kenoyer, Jamie Meyer, Yalda Asmatey**

### Year Round Jobs

- Library Parent: **Rachel Brinker**
- Marketing Parent: **AVAILABLE**
- Art Parents: **Esme Weil & Jenny Braxton**
- Volunteer Coordinator: **Amber Kenoyer**
- Outdoor Maintenance Parent: **Wu/Emshwiller family**
- Newsletter Designer: **AVAILABLE**
- Montessori Services Coordinator: **Amber Kenoyer**
- School Chronicler: **Dave Williams**
- Meeting Secretary: **AVAILABLE**

*Our sincere and humble thanks for the many things you do for us and give to us!! We are so fortunate.*