

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Newhall School District



Volume 1, Issue 2

November 2019–February 2020

Old Orchard Elementary Celebrates 50 Years!



SUPERINTENDENT

Blue Abounds in NSD

Newhall School District has three National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2019. Thirty schools in the state of California were chosen and NSD was the only District in the state to have more than two schools. The three schools on this year's list for high academic performance are Oak Hills Elementary, Pico Canyon Elementary, and Stevenson Ranch Elementary.

The coveted National Blue Ribbon Schools award affirms the hard work of educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content. Oak Hills and Pico Canyon are receiving this highly sought-after award for the first time in school history. Stevenson Ranch was previously recognized in 2001 and 2012. Principal Chad Rose shared "I am grateful for the support and teamwork of staff, parents, and students that allows for the accomplishments of our students earning us this award."

Now in its 37th year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed recognition on more than 9,000 schools. Previously, McGrath Elementary (2011), Meadows Elementary (1994), Newhall Elementary (1994), and Wiley Canyon Elementary (2007) were recipients of the National Blue Ribbon award in the Newhall School District. As a first time recipient, Oak Hills principal Wendy Maxwell shared "I'm ecstatic for the hard working Oak Hills Elementary School community of teachers, students, and parents. This recognition for their continued efforts to provide the highest levels of learning and achievement is greatly deserved."

On November 14 and 15, NSD staff and the Department of Education will celebrate with 312 public and 50 non-public school honorees at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. "At the heart of this Blue Ribbon School is a community of adults that work to create a student-centered environment from the moment a child steps onto our campus!" added Pico Canyon principal Tammi Rainville.



Jeff Pelzel
Superintendent

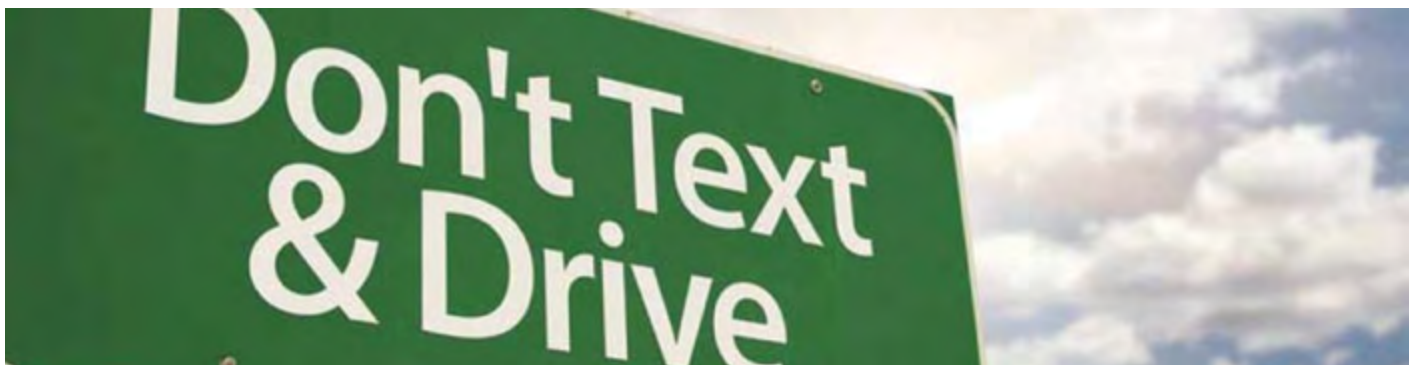
El Azul Fluye en NSD

El Distrito Escolar Newhall tiene tres Escuelas Nacionales de Blue Ribbon en 2019. Se eligieron treinta escuelas en el estado de California y NSD fue el único Distrito en el estado que tuvo más de dos escuelas. Las tres escuelas en la lista de este año por alto rendimiento académico son las escuelas primarias Oak Hills, Pico Canyon y Stevenson Ranch.

El codiciado premio Programa Nacional de Escuelas Blue Ribbon afirma el laborioso trabajo de los educadores, las familias y las comunidades para crear escuelas seguras y acogedoras donde los estudiantes dominan el contenido desafiante y atrayente. Oak Hills y Pico Canyon están recibiendo este premio muy solicitado por primera vez en la historia de la escuela. La escuela Stevenson Ranch fue reconocida anteriormente en 2001 y 2012. El director Chad Rose compartió: "Estoy agradecido por el apoyo y el trabajo del equipo del personal, los padres y los estudiantes que permiten los logros de nuestros estudiantes que nos han otorgado este premio".

Ahora en su 37° año, el Programa Nacional de Escuelas Blue Ribbon ha otorgado reconocimiento a más de 9,000 escuelas. Anteriormente, las escuelas primarias McGrath (2011), Meadows (1994), Newhall (1994) y Wiley Canyon (2007) recibieron el premio Nacional de Escuelas Blue Ribbon en el Distrito Escolar Newhall. Como recipiente por primera vez, la directora de Oak Hills, Wendy Maxwell, compartió: "Estoy emocionada por los esfuerzos de la comunidad de maestros, estudiantes y padres de la Escuela Primaria Oak Hills. Este reconocimiento por sus continuos esfuerzos para proporcionar los niveles más altos de aprendizaje y logro es muy merecido".

El 14 y 15 de noviembre, el personal de NSD y el Departamento de Educación celebrarán con 312 escuelas públicas y 50 no públicas en una ceremonia de premiación en Washington, DC "En el corazón de esta escuela Blue Ribbon hay una comunidad de adultos que trabajan para crear un ambiente centrado en el estudiante desde el momento en que un niño ingresa a nuestro campus!", agregó la directora de Pico Canyon, Tammi Rainville.



BOARD OF EDUCATION



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Help Plan The Future Needs of Your School!

A quality instructional program, passionate, motivated, caring teachers are obviously important to the learning success of our students, but just as important is the school environment in which they learn.

On September 24, 2019, the Newhall School Board approved a contract with the company SIM-PBK to take the District through developing an updated Facilities Master Plan (FMP). Every school will be evaluated. Families, educators, and community members at all 10 schools will have the opportunity to participate in this process to determine immediate and future needs at their schools. The FMP will take into account current and future enrollment, education specifications which supports our instructional framework, detailed needs assessment, conclusions and recommendations about the timing of projects and their financing. The FMP is the document that provides data that influences whether or when the Newhall School District could consider another school facilities bond.

Recently the District was notified that the State Allocation Board is awarding it approximately \$10.5 million for capital projects from a state bond that was passed by the voters several years ago. The updating of our Facilities Master Plan couldn't happen at a better time! The FMP will give us a definitive look at our most critical needs. Additionally the FMP will inform needs for future schools, such as in the Newhall Ranch Development.

The Newhall School District Governing Board encourages your participation in the FMP process and to stay informed. The Board deeply values your input and involvement, and is greatly appreciative for the long-term support and trust that is necessary to maintain the excellence that is Newhall.



Sue Solomon
President

¡Ayude A Planificar Las Futuras Necesidades De Su Escuela!

Un programa educativo de mucha calidad, maestros apasionados, motivados y afectuosos son obviamente importantes para el éxito de aprendizaje de nuestros estudiantes, pero igual de importante es el ambiente escolar en el que aprenden.

El 24 de septiembre de 2019, la Mesa Directiva del Distrito Escolar Newhall aprobó un contrato con la empresa SIM-PBK para llevar al distrito hacia el desarrollo de la actualización de un Plan Maestro de Instalaciones (FMP por sus siglas en inglés.) Cada escuela será evaluada. Las familias, los educadores y los miembros de la comunidad en las 10 escuelas tendrán la oportunidad de participar en este proceso para determinar las necesidades inmediatas y futuras en sus escuelas. El FMP tendrá en cuenta la inscripción actual y futura, las especificaciones educativas que respaldan nuestro marco de instrucción, la evaluación detallada de las necesidades, las conclusiones y recomendaciones sobre el calendario de los proyectos y su financiación. El FMP es el documento que proporciona datos que influyen si el Distrito Escolar Newhall podría o no considerar otro bono de instalaciones escolares.

Recientemente, se notificó al Distrito que la Mesa Directiva de Asignación del Estado le está otorgando aproximadamente \$10.5 millones para proyectos de capital de un bono estatal que fue aprobado por los votantes hace varios años. ¡La actualización de nuestro Plan Maestro de Instalaciones no podría ocurrir en un mejor momento! El FMP nos dará una visión definitiva de nuestras necesidades más críticas. Además, el FMP informará las necesidades de futuras escuelas, como en el Desarrollo Newhall Ranch.

La Mesa Directiva del Distrito Escolar Newhall anima su participación en el proceso de FMP y a mantenerse informado. La Mesa Directiva valora profundamente su aportación y participación, y aprecia enormemente el apoyo y la confianza a largo plazo que es necesaria para mantener la excelencia que tenemos en Newhall.



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

Thank you for the positive response to our first issue. I also enjoyed your comments when you emailed contest entries. (Be sure to enter our contest on page 11.)

This second issue begins with Superintendent Jeff Pelzel's message

about the District being a student-centered environment. In this issue you will also read about Hip-Hop Learning, STEM Expo, the Music Makers, the Friendship League and much more!

Our next issue is March 11, 2020.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays
from the School News staff!



School News

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Raising the Curtain Foundation

24607 Walnut St., Newhall, CA 91321 • <http://www.RaisingTheCurtainFoundation.org/>



Jen Gregg
Board President

Expanding the Arts Across Santa Clarita Valley

Raising the Curtain Foundation is the nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the Newhall Family Theatre. We take a creative approach to raising funds for the theatre by engaging the broadest segment of residents across Santa Clarita, bringing everyone together at the theatre, where art thrives.

On October 12th, we presented our first stage production, "The Man With Bogart's Face." We hosted a lovely reception on the patio with performances by West Ranch High School Jazz and served delicious food catered by The Fraiche Kitchen. Guests then moved into the theatre, where Newhall Family Theatre Manager Tom Lund directed a seamless cast. The play was set in the style of an old radio show taping, where the actors told a detective story, complete with riddles, caper, and lots of humor. Guests, dressed up in 1940's attire, gave the cast a standing ovation. Bravo!



Next up, Raising the Curtain's Board of Directors will explore programming for 2020. We are currently applying for grants to support educational projects and multi-cultural performances. Perhaps a workshop for students? Another play? What would you like to see on stage at the Newhall Family Theatre? Please, email me at raisingthecurtain.foundation@gmail.com. I'd love to hear your ideas!

Lastly, we have a few important seats to fill on our board of directors. We are looking for members of the community who want to develop arts programming at the Newhall Family Theatre and who have

the time and talent to help grow the foundation. We are specifically looking for a Treasurer with strong accounting and book keeping skills, and we need someone with a flare for social media and website management, a press and media manager, and energetic fundraisers! You have my email, so please contact me if you want to learn more about this fabulous opportunity to serve the community.

See you at the theatre!

NSD Music Makers PTA

<https://www.newhallschooldistrict.com>

We are the Music Makers!

By Rich Titus, President

Isn't it great to have music in our schools? Our music instruction program here in the Newhall School District has been running strong for 42 years now! This could not have happened without community support. Enter the Music Makers...

Shortly after the music instruction program began in 1977, a community led "Music Makers" booster club was formed to promote and raise funds for this nascent district-wide activity. This booster club demonstrated the community's appreciation of the program by volunteering time, gathering donations, and working to ensure that it could survive the scrutiny of the always looming budget cuts.

Eventually the booster club grew to become a genuine PTA, albeit now representing an instructional program rather than a school. Today the Music Makers PTA remains focused on offering the same support it always has, which is to coordinate volunteers, raise funds, and generally assist the music program where it is most needed.

If you are interested in joining this passionate group, please sign up for our email list on our website at

<https://www.nsdmusicmakers.org>. ... Even better,

take up a position on the Music Makers PTA Executive Board and keep alive the tradition of supporting music in our community!

Somewhere along the way spirit wear was added to our concert concession stand, where our students and adults can support the program by purchasing shirts, hoodies, hats, and more. Last year we also set up a small online store to sell hoodies through our website, and to great success.

This year we are expanding our online store to offer all of our spirit wear.

As the music program continues to grow, offering more choices to more students, Music Makers stands ready to help achieve the goal of making music instruction accessible to

all students in all grades across the entire district.

If you are interested in joining this passionate group, please sign up for our email list on our website at <https://www.nsdmusicmakers.org>, and join us at our bi-monthly association meetings. Even better, take up a position on the Music Makers PTA Executive Board and keep alive the tradition of supporting music in our community!

Thanks!

Dr. J. Michael McGrath *Elementary*

21501 Deputy Jake Dr., Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4091 • www.mcgrathelementary.com



Jennifer Boone
Principal

Hip-Hop Learning

By Joseph Soqui, Teacher—6th Grade

Good educators know the importance of finding ways to reach every student. Children need more than books and laptops in order to discover who they truly are and what they can accomplish and in order to express themselves effectively. The Newhall School District hip-hop program at McGrath Elementary School gives students the

opportunity to be creative and show sides of themselves that go beyond the classroom setting. Bonds are formed as self-confidence grows with each lesson. They learn the importance of teamwork and supporting others while having fun in the process.

Perhaps the greatest aspect of the program is the joy the children experience when they surprise themselves. Often, their reaction on the first day of the program is tepid: they worry about embarrassing themselves and often think about the



dancing skills they do not have. Those fears almost always quickly subside as students realize we are all learning together. Hip-hop crews are formed, leaders emerge, and everyone enjoys healthy competition while realizing that, at the end of the day, we are all part of the same community.

All of this is possible with the help of our hip-hop instructor and member of the McGrath family, Mr. Vince, also known as “Vincanity.” Mr. Vince uses his skills and cool demeanor to make students feel extremely comfortable over the 10-week course. In this short amount of time, Mr. Vince takes shy beginners and turns them into battle-ready, hip-hop dancers who perform in an assembly in

front of more than 200 people, including parents and the fifth-grade classes!

This type of confidence comes back to the classroom, as students are able to take risks during class discussions and presentations. The hip-hop program at McGrath is a perfect way to reach students in a new way while helping to create positive attitudes about themselves, their friends, and the community around them.

Meadows *Elementary*

25577 N. Fedala Rd., Valencia, CA 91355 • 661/291-4050 • www.meadowselementary.com



Dr. Juliet Fine
Principal

We are ROCKSTARS!

This year, our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team is focusing on reinforcing academic behaviors that contribute positively to our school environment. Students have the opportunity to earn ROCKSTAR tickets on campus

for displaying their Respect, Ownership,

Cooperation, Kindness and Safety (ROCKS).

The ROCKSTAR store provides experiences that students can purchase with their tickets. These include bringing a stuffed animal to school; having an assistant principal or the principal read a story to the class; and serving as an assistant principal during recess. Our favorite is the ROCKSTAR picnic, where students eat lunch together outside under our oak trees.



Additionally, our Kindness Ambassadors work with counselor, Ms. Harvey, and learn to help students who are having a hard day or who need a friend.

At Meadows Elementary School, we focus on growth in both academics and social-emotional learning. We are dedicated to educating the whole child—heart, mind, and body.

Newhall *Elementary*

24607 Walnut St., Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4010 • www.newhallelementary.net



Jackie Tapia
Principal

Adapting to a New Culture

Welcoming newcomers and ensuring that they thrive in a new school and community is a shared responsibility at Newhall Elementary. Our school is currently serving 19 newcomers in grades one through five.

When newcomer students and their families enter the United States, they

must become familiar with their new country's culture and customs, as well as a new school system and its myriad structures and expectations. These students may also have to adjust to life in a new family or home environment. On top of these challenges, many newcomers may also have had journeys here that involved hardship and trauma.

The Newcomer program at Newhall Elementary has been designed to meet this student community's needs as they develop linguistic survival skills and start adapting to the new culture. Students meet four times a week with certificated teachers to develop beginning English language skills, acclimate to the school system, learn about classroom environment and learning, and build confidence.



A group of primary newcomer students visiting the library.

Oak Hills *Elementary*

26730 Old Rock Rd., Valencia, CA 91381 • 661/291-4100 • www.oakhillsschool.com



Wendy Maxwell
Principal

STEM Expo

Oak Hills Elementary School is gearing up for our annual Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Expo. This program offers participating students the opportunity to design and test a scientific problem and to present their findings to judges with a background in science.

We are incredibly proud of our STEM Expo program, as it provides students with a chance to apply their scientific knowledge and to practice skills that will serve them in both college and career. This

program encourages students to practice the 21st-century skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving.

Last year, four of our sixth-graders entered their STEM Expo projects to the Los Angeles County Science and Engineering Fair. Two of these students were awarded second place, one received honorable mention, and one received the Office of Naval Research Award. Oak

Hills is incredibly grateful for the support of our families, teachers, and community members, who help make this program possible. We are anticipating many amazing projects from students this year!



Old Orchard *Elementary*

25141 N Avenida Rondel, Valencia, CA 91355 • 661/291-4040 • www.oldorchardelementary.com



Ken Hintz
Principal

Half a Century!

In September, Old Orchard celebrated its 50th birthday! The celebration kicked off with Kirk Mueller, a former teacher, leading the Owls in the Old Orchard Spirit Song.

The celebration brought together many Owls from the past and present. Several former

administrators, staff members and students shared memories from the past. Local dignitaries presented the school with many recognitions, and School Board members Sue Solomon, Donna Rose and Ernesto Smith were present to recognize Old Orchard's 50 years of service. A highlight was seeing State Assemblywoman Christy Smith lead the Owls in singing "Happy Birthday."



To mark the occasion, students from kindergarten through sixth grade filled a time capsule with hand-created items and messages for future Owls at their 75th birthday. Two of Newhall's former superintendents, Dr. McGrath and Dr. Winger, were there with Mr. Pelzel to reflect on Old Orchard's history and contributions to the community.

Peachland *Elementary*

24800 Peachland Ave., Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4020 • www.peachlandelementary.net



Diana Stenroos
Principal

Roadrunners Flock Together

Research has long held that students learn best when they are educated together in same aged-peer groups. District-wide, instruction has shifted to provide more student-to-student collaboration and discourse. In keeping with this practice, the Roadrunners have forged a path toward more inclusive practices. Students from preschool through sixth grade are provided with more

opportunities to learn side by side with peers across a range of skills.

In preschool, Special Day Class students are participating in center time and social-emotional learning with their general-education peers. During this time, students engage in self-directed, joint playtime, where they can build cooperative play skills and verbally interact with one another. They learn how to share, negotiate, and work together. Because social-emotional learning is such an integral part of preschool education, students benefit from teacher-modeled practices in sharing, communication, and demonstrating respect for others.

School-aged Roadrunners in select kindergarten through sixth-grade classrooms are benefiting from increased opportunities to learn in small groups. Small-group instruction is facilitated by general education and Special Education teachers. Students who receive specialized academic support receive services within their general-education classroom setting, providing an additional instructional resource to assist students in gaining understanding of the Common Core State Standards.

Our 2019–2020 educational journey is off to a great start! We are excited about the adventures yet to come!



Pico Canyon *Elementary*

25255 Pico Canyon Rd., Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381 • 661/291-4070 • www.picoelementary.com



Tammi Rainville
Principal

The Heart of a Blue Ribbon School

Pico Canyon School is one of three elementary schools in the Newhall School District that were recently named as a National Blue Ribbon School! We are also one of 362 schools across the country to be named a National Blue Ribbon School.

Like our neighboring schools in the Newhall School District, Pico Canyon has been recognized under the category of Exemplary High Performing Schools. This means that we are among our state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests.

What you really might want to ask us though is, "What is at the heart of a Blue Ribbon School?" Our shared work and resulting student successes wouldn't be taking place if we didn't emphasize building meaningful relationships with our students. Building relationships with students and

families is at the heart of what we do every day. We have created a warm and inviting atmosphere for all children, and our adults work hard to create a student-centered community from the moment a child steps onto our campus.

At Pico Canyon Elementary School, our students' academic successes are a result of school-wide systems and shared leadership. We operate as a community of leaders and learners. At each grade level, cycles of learning in English language arts and math are followed by "What I Need" (WIN) blocks of intervention or and/or enrichment, based upon data around student outcomes.

Academic optimism and the belief that all students can learn and grow is felt in every classroom, and discussed at every grade-level collaborative meeting, staff meeting, PTA meeting, and Instructional Leadership Team meeting. These are just some of the practices that are at the heart of a Blue Ribbon School.

Stevenson Ranch *Elementary*

25820 N Carroll Ln., Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381 • 661/291-4070 • www.stevensonranchschool.com



Chad Rose
Principal

Friendship League

In addition to serving the students of the Stevenson Ranch community, our school hosts a special-education program for students with moderate disabilities who reside within the boundaries of the Newhall School District. It is a priority for all students to feel included and connected to school and that students are included to the highest extent possible in meaningful activities

with grade-level-alike peers. Friendship League partners general- and special-education students with grade-level peers for music, art and dance and during unstructured class breaks to build peer connections. These opportunities are in addition to physical education and mainstreaming in relevant academic areas.

Friendship League is supervised by classroom teachers, school support staff and our school counselor. During unstructured brunch time on Fridays, special- and

general-education grade-level buddies have a snack together and then go and play together through the class break time of 35 minutes. Friendship League Music is for students in grades four, five and six. In addition to having the same options as general-education peers for orchestra and chorus, we have a specialized music period of time during which a grade-level buddy joins a special-education peer for a focused music lesson taught by our music specialist teacher. Our district visual-arts teacher works with all classes in grades three through six. In addition, she runs two classes for our special-education students with a grade-level general-education peer.

The experience of Friendship League has two benefits. First, it gives our special-education students opportunities to build connections across our campus and beyond the specialized classroom setting. For our general-education students, they learn to appreciate that everyone has strengths and challenges, and they develop acceptance for the differences in all.



Valencia Valley *Elementary*

23601 Carrizo Dr., Valencia, CA 91355 • 661/291-4060 • www.valenciavalleyelementary.com



Amy Gaudette
Principal

Lead Learners

Each spring, third-through-fifth-grade students interview to become part of the Valencia Valley Student Council for the following school year. With the guidance of Mrs. Gaisford and Mrs. Roth, these student leaders have a variety of responsibilities. They promote safety, social responsibility and school spirit all while acting as the voice of their peers.

Student Council members are on a rotating schedule to act as Student Valets all year long. They have been trained by SCV sheriffs to perform their role safely while setting a positive tone for students and families using the valet system. Student Council members host community-service activities, rallying VV Vikings around causes like Pennies for Patients and the SCV Food Pantry. They even take care of VV schoolwide recycling efforts.



One of the most important roles of the group is that they ignite school spirit. They promote spirit days and sell Holiday Grams to build community among students. In their leadership role, Student Council members provide valuable input about student programs for the Newhall School District Local Control and Accountability Plan.

Student Council members at Valencia Valley work hard to represent their peers and contribute to the school community with Viking Pride!

Wiley Canyon *Elementary*

24240 W La Gloria Circle, Newhall, CA 91321 • 661/291-4030 • www.wileycanyonelementary.com



Tim Lankford
Principal

Making a Difference

Sixth-graders at Wiley Canyon Elementary School are making a positive impact with their work in support of a global water initiative. Three years ago, students were motivated to start this project because of an inspirational speech given by Evan Wesley, a representative of a clean-water nonprofit organization. Students learned that over 6 million

people around the world live without clean water. People who live in these areas have to walk miles to get water for daily use. Most of that water is dirty and filled with bacteria and disease. Wiley Canyon's sixth-graders were inspired to make a difference, so the students developed a web page to accept donations and held fund-raisers, including our Fall Family Dance, a rummage sale, and other student-led projects.

To date, fund-raising efforts have raised \$11,688 of the \$12,000 needed to provide a clean-water well for a small village in Africa. This new well will provide clean water and allow children time to attend schools, as they will not have to walk to get water every day. In addition, this well will almost instantly end the diseases caused by filthy water.



We are excited to reach our goal after three years of hard work. More importantly, we are pleased to be able to provide a life-saving solution for people who live across the globe. Soon, there will be a water well in Africa with a plaque saying, "Donated by the sixth-graders at Wiley Canyon Elementary School." We are so happy to be making a difference.

Research: What Parents Need to Know About Kids, Media, and Body Image



How kids think, feel, and act about their bodies is a critical piece of their self-esteem and overall healthy development. Common Sense Media's new research report, *Children, Teens, Media, and Body Image*, examines the role of traditional and digital media in the development of children's and teens' body image. This review of existing research reveals some

surprising trends -- such as that half of 6- to 8-year-old girls feel their ideal body size is thinner than their current one -- but it also shows evidence that parents play a huge part in shaping how kids relate to their bodies. Some key findings:

- Many kids are dissatisfied with their bodies, and society's body appearance ideals are highly unrealistic.
- Body-image concerns start early; even preschoolers learn that society judges people by how they look.

- Parents' attitudes toward their own bodies are a big influence on how kids feel about their bodies.
- Unrealistic, sexualized, and stereotypical images and messages about bodies and gender are rampant in the media kids consume.
- Teens feel pressure to look good and cool online but also feel that social media helps their friendships and connections with like-minded peers.
- Although young girls are most susceptible, boys have issues with body image too.

Our report uncovers large gaps in research on body image and media. Several groups -- young children, boys, kids of color, LGBTQ youth -- are not well-studied, and research on online, digital media has yet to keep pace with the explosion in their use by kids and teens

Common Sense Media is an independent nonprofit organization offering unbiased ratings and trusted advice to help families make smart media and technology choices. Check out our ratings and recommendations at www.commonsensemedia.org

Things in the Sky--Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put Newhall in the subject line.

Entries must be received by December 15, 2019
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

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Congratulations to Brady Novean
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