

BULLDOG WELLNESS

Supporting the Academic, Social, and Emotional Health
of Grant Elementary Students, Teachers, and Families



UPCOMING DATES

- November 4: Picture Re-Takes
- November 20: Early Dismissal
- November 13: Angel Tree Forms Due
- November 25-27: Thanksgiving Holiday
No School

**CHOOSE KINDNESS
ACCEPTANCE
INCLUSION**

On October 21st, Grant Elementary students, faculty, and staff celebrated **Unity Day** in conjunction with schools and organizations across the country. Students were asked to think about why kindness, acceptance, and inclusion matter here in our community and add their ideas and artistic representations to the Grant Family Tree pictured above. In addition, the tree includes pictures from the classrooms and insights from Classroom Community Circles lead by Principal Ball. In these community circles students were asked to identify why their class was special. Their responses were incredible to hear, and have also been added to the tree. Some of our favorites include responses like, "My class is special because there is a place for me each day that I come to school" and "My class is special because there are people who support me all around me". Throughout November we'll be adding to the tree. **Online students**, we would love to have your additions! Stop by to pick up a leaf or hand and return it to the school!

UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN

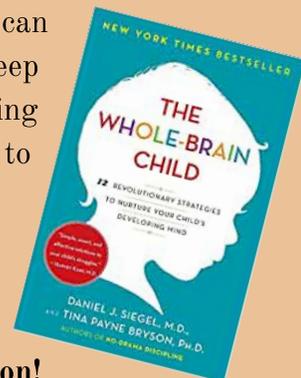
In the 2019-2020 school year, students were exposed to the MindUp curriculum. In our October Character Education lessons this year, we reviewed the basic concepts presented in MindUP, including these three parts of the brain: the Amygdala, the Hippocampus, and the PreFrontal Cortex. Below you will find descriptions of these essential features of the brain as well as new language we are using school-wide to describe our ability to be "learning ready".

- **Amygdala:** A small, almond shape part of the brain that helps keep us safe. It is where our emotions come from, which means that sometimes when we have really strong emotions, it can keep us from thinking clearly.
- **Hippocampus:** A U-shaped part of the brain, near the Amygdala, where we store our memories. It also works with the Pre- Frontal Cortex to help us learn.
- **PreFrontal Cortex:** Located behind the forehead, the PFC helps us make good choices, pay attention, and learn.
- **Downstairs Brain:** Described by Daniel Siegel (M.D) as the part of the brain that is more primitive, involves basic needs and instincts. When we are in our Downstairs Brain we might be overwhelmed with emotion, acting before thinking, or in our flight/fight/freeze response.
- **Upstairs Brain:** Described as the more sophisticated and responsible part of the brain. When we are in our Upstairs Brain we are able to make rational decisions, plan, balance emotions, solve problems and find solutions, have empathy for others, and connect with ourselves and others.
- **"Learning Ready":** Describes when we are in our Upstairs Brain, and are ready to learn - whether that is in school, in sports, at home, or anywhere else!
- **"Flipping your Lid":** How we describe what happens when our strong emotions take over, and we are not able to remain in the Upstairs Brain to solve the problem, stay calm, or think clearly. Having strong emotions is absolutely okay! But we need our Upstairs Brain to help us through them. Students identified ways that they can climb the stairs back to the Upstairs Brain. Suggestions included - taking deep breaths, asking for help, talking to someone they trust, getting a hug or giving themselves a hug, using Self Talk, visualizing something peaceful, listening to music, drawing, or doing something else they enjoy.

ONLINE & HYBRID LEARNERS!

Our online and hybrid learners can access Second Step lessons AND Character Education lessons online! Visit the [Grant Elementary Stronger Together Classroom](#) or [Mrs. Marsh's YouTube channel](#) directly!

For more information and references, check out
The Whole Brain Child by Daniel Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson!



HOLIDAY SUPPORT

Once Halloween has come and gone, the anticipation of the holiday season arrives in full force. With this, we all get excited for the months to come. Every year, there is such an outpouring of love and support from the community. It honestly is my (Mrs. Marsh) favorite time of year to see how much our community comes together to support one another. This year, more than ever, I am hoping that we will be able to continue this beautiful tradition of support, caring, and generosity. I will be sending out a form through ParentSquare for families to indicate what kind of support you may need. In addition, on the same form you can indicate if you would like to donate to the Holiday Support here at Grant Elementary. All information will be kept confidential. If you have any questions about this service, please contact me at smarsh@murrayschools.org.

Dates to Know:

- November 2: Forms Sent to Families
- November 13: Forms Due
- December 11: Donated Gifts Due to Grant
- December 16-18: Gifts Available for Pickup
(Mrs. Marsh will make arrangements with you in advance)

IS YOUR BATTERY LOW?

If you are feeling drained, overwhelmed, dazed, or exhausted... you are not alone. This year has brought an incredible shift in the demands on our time and energy. Science journalist Tara Haelle explained in an [August 2020 elemental+ article](#) that in the early months of the pandemic, people were tapping into their "surge capacity" (our mental and physical adaptive systems that we rely on for short-term survival) to deal with the changes brought on by COVID-19. However, we find ourselves many months later still facing the challenges, with our energy reserves depleted. Haelle describes that the radical shifts we are facing in our daily lives require coping strategies that are different than what we might typically use. These include; radical acceptance that life is different right now, expecting less from yourself, recognize and allow yourself to grieve, find activities that you can do right now to fulfill yourself, and foster important relationships. Check out the article, linked above, for more!

"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you." - Anne Lamot