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Editor: Miss Sara Servan

## In this Issue

Welcome to the fourth edition of our school newsletter. The second term has completed and the final term will continue to be eventful and remarkable. In this issue, you can find the highlights of MASS Sports day, Spanish Party, Ice skating trip, Easter Party and the Kadoorie Farm trip. Please take the time to read the newsletter and to learn more about your child's school life at MASS.

## Message from the Principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you all had a wonderful Easter holiday with your family. The second term has concluded with the Easter Party. You are encouraged to talk to your class teachers about the progress of your child. The full student report will be given to you at the end of the final term, together with the student portfolio.

This year, we have organised more outings for our older students. I had a great time visiting the Kadoorie Farm last week with K2 and K3. It was a good experience for children to enjoy the nature with their friends and teachers. Outings can reinforce the knowledge they have learnt at school. The fresh air, change of scenery and space allow children to explore freely and arouse their curiosity. Although it requires a lot of preparation for organising each outing, we believe it makes learning more engaging and interesting for the children. Parents are most welcome to join us as voluntary helpers as long as there is no admission limit by the host.

In June, K1 to K3 will be rehearsing for the year-end performance at the Graduation Ceremony. It will be a big day for our school, and your participation is highly appreciated! The Grand opening of the Spanish Primary School will take place in June as well. You will all be invited. Please stay tuned with our posts on Facebook!

Kind regards,  
Adriana



## Mark Your Diary

- 1. SPIS Spanish Fair**  
Date: 27 - May - 2017  
Venue: Tai Po Waterfront Park  
Time: 3 - 5 PM  
Open to public
- 2. Teachers' Development Day**  
Date: 29 - May - 2017  
Class: all  
\*no school for students
- 3. Graduation Ceremony**  
Date: 24 - June - 2017  
Venue: Sheung Wan Civic Centre  
Class: K1 - K3
- 4. Beach Party**  
Date: 28 - June - 2017  
Class: All
- 5. Graduation Party**  
Date: 29 - June - 2017  
Time: 5:30 - 7:30pm  
Class: K3
- 6. Parent's Day**  
Date: 30 - June - 2017  
Class: All

# Spanish Fiesta Party !

(17<sup>th</sup> March 2017)

¡Hola! Feliz cumpleaños. Happy Birthday to our March birthday children!

The children had a fantastic time at the Spanish Fiesta Party. Mass was filled with vibrant red and yellow clothes, flamenco dresses and even traditional bull fighters. The PN, K1, K2 and K3 children enjoyed mixing virgin sangria, making the Spanish flag with messy finger painting and even having a flamenco lesson!



# MASS Sports Day !

(18<sup>th</sup> March 2017)

The MASS Annual Sports Day was a huge success! We were lucky that the weather was not as bad as the forecast. Children enjoyed a variation of activities from long jump, obstacle courses, bean bag throwing, water balloon relays, testing football skills, and the three legged race.

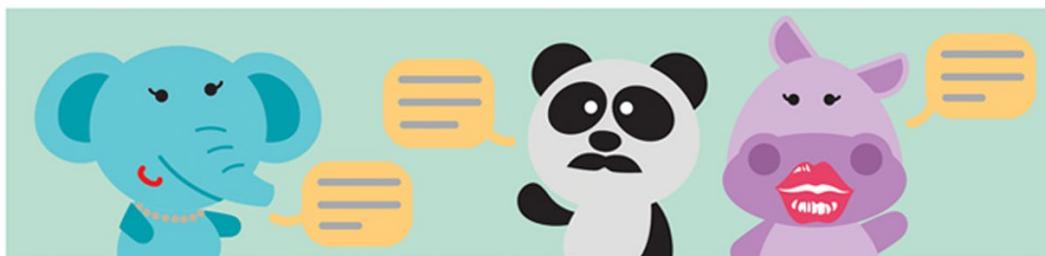
Once the activities were completed it was time for the class running races and relays. It was great to see the children getting a little competitive whilst supporting and encouraging their friends at the same time. Fantastic sportsmanship!

The day was a great family event. A big well done to the parents who participated in the 4x100M relay and the PN relay. We already have parents suggesting a 4x400M relay next year! We'd better all start running exercise from now!

The Sports day was concluded with the medal presentation ceremony. Everyone had won a medal. We also celebrated the birthday of our revered vice principal, Ms Lam. Sports Day ended happily and we look forward to next year's MASS Sports Day in 2018.



# Parents' Corner



## What Makes a Child Happy?

By Marguerite Lamb

(Source: <http://www.parents.com>)

We all want the same things for our kids. We want them to grow up to love and be loved, to follow their dreams, to find success. Mostly, though, we want them to be happy. But just how much control do we have over our children's happiness? "There may be a genetic propensity for depression, but our genes are malleable and can be switched on or off depending on the environment," Bob Murray, PhD, author of *Raising an Optimistic Child: A Proven Plan for Depression* says. "The research clearly shows that happy, optimistic children are the product of happy, optimistic homes, regardless of genetic makeup." Read on for seven strategies that will strengthen your child's capacity to experience joy.

### Foster Connections

The surest way to promote your child's lifelong emotional well-being is to help him feel connected -- to you, other family members, friends, neighbors, daycare providers, even to pets. "A connected childhood is the key to happiness," says Edward Hallowell, MD, child psychiatrist. "Connectedness" -- a feeling of being loved, understood, wanted, acknowledged -- emerged as by far the biggest protector against emotional distress, suicidal thoughts, and risky behaviors including smoking, drinking, and using drugs. Fortunately, we can cement our child's primary and most crucial connection -- to us -- simply by offering what Dr. Hallowell calls the crazy love that never quits. It's not enough, however, simply to possess that deep love; your child must feel it, too. Hold your baby as much as possible; respond with empathy to his cries; read aloud to him; eat, snuggle, and laugh together.

Meanwhile, provide chances for him to form loving connections with others as well, advises sociologist Christine Carter, PhD, executive director of the University of California at Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center, an organization devoted to the scientific understanding of happiness. "We know from 50 years of research that social connections are an incredibly important, if not the most important, contributor to happiness," Carter says. "And it's not just the quality, but also the quantity of the bonds: the more connections your child makes, the better."

### Don't Try to Make Your Child Happy

It sounds counterintuitive, but the best thing you can do for your child's long-term happiness may be to stop trying to keep her happy in the short-term. "If we put our kids in a bubble and grant them their every wish and desire, that is what they grow to expect, but the real world doesn't work that way," says Bonnie Harris, founder of Core Parenting. To keep from overcoddling, recognize that you are not responsible for your child's happiness, Harris urges. Parents who feel responsible for their kids' emotions have great difficulty allowing them to experience anger, sadness, or frustration. We swoop in immediately to give them whatever we think will bring a smile or to solve whatever is causing them distress. Unfortunately, Harris warns, children who never learn to deal with negative emotions are in danger of being crushed by them as adolescents and adults.

Once you accept that you can't make your child feel happiness (or any other emotion for that matter), you'll be less inclined to try to "fix" her feelings -- and more likely to step back and allow her to develop the coping skills and resilience she'll need to bounce back from life's inevitable setbacks.

### Nurture Your Happiness

While we can't control our children's happiness, we are responsible for our own. And because children absorb everything from us, our moods matter. Happy parents are likely to have happy kids, while children of depressed parents suffer twice the average rate of depression, Murray observes. Consequently, one of the best

things you can do for your child's emotional well-being is to attend to yours: carve out time for rest, relaxation, and, perhaps most important, romance. Nurture your relationship with your spouse. "If parents have a really good, committed relationship," Murray says, "the child's happiness often naturally follows."

### **Praise the Right Stuff**

Not surprisingly, studies consistently link self-esteem and happiness. Our children can't have one without the other. It's something we know intuitively, and it turns many of us into overzealous cheerleaders. Our child scribbles and we declare him a Picasso, scores a goal and he's the next Beckham, adds 1 and 2 and he's ready for Mensa. But this sort of "achievement praise" can backfire. "The danger, if this is the only kind of praise a child hears, is that he'll think he needs to achieve to win your approval," Murray explains. "He'll become afraid that if he doesn't succeed, he'll fall off the pedestal and his parents won't love him anymore." Praising specific traits -- intelligence, prettiness, athleticism -- can also undermine children's confidence later, if they grow up believing they're valued for something that's out of their control and potentially fleeting.

The antidote, however, is not to withhold praise but rather to redirect it, Murray says. "Praise the effort rather than the result," he advises. "Praise the creativity, the hard work, the persistence, that goes into achieving, more than the achievement itself."

The goal, Carter agrees, is to foster in your child a "growth mind-set," or the belief that people achieve through hard work and practice, more than through innate talent. Studies show kids with a growth mind-set do better and enjoy their activities more because they aren't worried what people will think of them if they fail. Fortunately, Carter says, research has shown it's possible to instill a growth mind-set in children with one simple line of praise: you did really well on X; you must have worked really hard. "So we're not saying don't praise," Carter stresses. "Just focus on something within your child's control."

### **Allow for Success and Failure**

Of course, if you really want to bolster your child's self-esteem, focus less on compliments and more on providing her with ample opportunities to learn new skills. Mastery, not praise, is the real self-esteem builder, Dr. Hallowell says. Fortunately, when it comes to the under-4 crowd, nearly everything they do is a chance to attain mastery -- because it's all new to them: learning to crawl, walk, feed and dress themselves, use the potty, and ride a tricycle. Our challenge is to stand back and let our children do for themselves what they're capable of. "The great mistake good parents make is doing too much for their children," Dr. Hallowell says.

While it can be difficult to watch our kids struggle, they'll never know the thrill of mastery unless we allow them to risk failure. Few skills are perfected on a first try. It's through practice that children achieve mastery. And through repeated experiences of mastery, they develop the can-do attitude that lets them approach future challenges with the zest and optimism that are central to a happy life.

### **Give Real Responsibilities**

"Happiness depends largely on the feeling that what we do matters and is valued by others," Murray observes. "Without that feeling, we fear we might be excluded from the group. And research shows that what human beings fear more than anything is exclusion."

In other words, people have an innate need to be needed. So the more you can convey to your child that he is making a unique contribution to the family, from an early age, the greater his sense of self-worth and his ultimate happiness. Kids as young as 3 can play meaningful family roles, Murray says, whether it's refilling the cat's dry-food bowl or setting out the napkins at dinnertime. If possible, assign a role that plays to your child's strengths. For example, if your little one loves to organize things, give him the job of sorting the forks and spoons. If he's particularly nurturing, perhaps his role could be entertaining his baby sister while you get dinner on the table. So long as you acknowledge that he's making a contribution to the family, it will heighten your child's sense of connection and confidence, two prerequisites for lasting happiness.

### **Practice Habitual Gratitude**

Finally, happiness studies consistently link feelings of gratitude to emotional well-being. Research has shown that people who keep daily or weekly gratitude journals feel more optimistic, make more progress toward goals, and feel better about their lives overall. For a child, keeping a journal may be unrealistic. But one way to foster gratitude in children is to ask that each member of the family take time daily -- before or during a meal, for example -- to name aloud something he or she is thankful for, Carter suggests. The important thing is to make it a regular ritual. "This is one habit that will foster all kinds of positive emotions," she assures, "and it really can lead to lasting happiness."

# Ice Skating at Cityplaza !

(6<sup>th</sup> April 2017)



K2 and K3 had an enjoyable Ice-skating trip at Cityplaza Ice Palace. Invited by the ice skating school, our students had the opportunity to learn how to skate. Many of them have never skated before. Therefore, before the ice skating trip, teachers briefed the children on important safety precautions. At school, the children were shown some videos about ice-skating, so that they could anticipate what would happen on that day.



To begin, the children got a pair of ice skates and learnt how to tie the shoelaces on them. A lot of children found standing on the blades were easier than expected. They then entered the rink one by one with a chair for support. The lesson was led by professional ice-skating coaches. First, the children learnt how to balance, stand and how to move forward by holding onto the chair. When they were more comfortable, they then learnt to turn left and right. Eventually some of the students were able to skate on the ice without the support of a chair.



Their first lesson was challenging yet fun. The children thoroughly enjoyed ice-skating and it was equally enjoyable for the parents who watched through the glass.



Ice skating enhances muscle strength, endurance posture, balance, flexibility and co-ordination in children. It also helped build the children's confidence as they tried new movements led by their coaches. It was a unique experience for all the participating children!



# Easter Party !

(11<sup>th</sup> April 2017)



Easter was the theme for the April birthday party. The week before, children made Easter crafts, such as Easter eggs, chicks, bunny facemasks and ears. The children always surprise us with their creative costumes! We had children come in as rabbits and chicks, and some brought in some nice chocolate eggs to share.

Children were thrilled with some of the Easter themed activities we had planned for them. this included an egg and spoon race, an Easter egg hunt, and making an Easter basket!

# Kadoorie Farm Visit !

(2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017)



On the 2nd of May, K2 and K3 enjoyed an educational visit to Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden to learn about some of Hong Kong's animals and vegetation. The programme taught the children about the different species of farm animals and their own habitat. Through the visit, children also learnt the importance of appreciating and conserving the animals and nature.

To begin, we took a nice group picture and had some snacks at the plaza. After that we visited the pigsties and walked along the Woodland Loop. The children were full of energy and the hike just could not tire them out! After hiking they got to see some monkeys, snakes, frogs, reptiles, hawks, owls and roosters.

We took a good rest at lunch time. Parents have prepared healthy lunch boxes for their children. After lunch, we played games at the playground. The little adventurers also visited the flamingos, turtles and alligators. The Kadoorie Farm trip was concluded with fun art activities: log printing and knitting. What an eventful day!



# The SPIS Info Session & The SCMP Kindergartens Fair !



On behalf of the Spanish Primary School (opening September 2017) we would like to say a big thank you to the parents who supported us at The SPIS Info Session on 11th April. Parents also visited our booth at the SCMP Kindergartens Fair at the JW Marriott Hotel on the 29th April.

We would like to thank Prof Wang Lixun, our academic advisor, and Mr Alfonso Ballesteros, Secretary General of the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, as our guest speakers at the Info Session. Parents

got a better understanding on how trilingual education is being implemented at SPIS and other countries worldwide. Mr Ballesteros also gave an excellent insight on why learning Spanish is important and beneficial to our children these days. Lastly, Ms Adriana gave a full picture of the curriculum of SPIS and introduced the teaching team to the parents. We will be holding another Info Session (in Cantonese) in Tai Po on 20th May (2:30 - 4:00pm). If you are interested in attending the Info Session, please reserve a seat by emailing to [info@spis.com.hk](mailto:info@spis.com.hk). We only have 15 seats left!

## Staff Movement Notice

Due to the requirement of the US Immigration Department, Mr Silvio has unfortunately had to return to the US to complete his immigration application in early May. The application process may take some time. Therefore, Miss Kate will be the substitute teacher for K2 with the assistance of our new teacher, Miss Sara. Miss Sara has 4 years of English teaching experience in the US and Spain. We look forward to seeing Mr Silvio again soon.

It is also sad that Mr Nacho is leaving MASS for personal reasons in May. Our part-time Spanish Teacher, Ms Elizabet, will take over his position. Ms Eli has been teaching Spanish for more than 5 years.

# Tin Hau MTR Visit !

(12<sup>th</sup> May 2017)

K1, K2 and K3 visited the Tin Hau MTR station on 12 May. The friendly MTR staff greeted us and showed us the facilities in a MTR station. The children even had the opportunity to go inside the control room. The Tin Hau Station was built 32 years ago and the controller has been working there for 32 years! One of the students asked the controller if he is very old and we all had a good laugh!

At the control room, we could see every corner of the station through the monitors. The children were allowed to control the CCTV cameras to see what was going on at the platform. Afterwards, we checked out the ticketing machine. The children also learnt the rules and public transportation etiquette. For instance, eating and drinking is not allowed on MTR trains. We should give seat to someone in need no matter we are on a regular seat or priority seat.

The children had enjoyed the MTR visit and we thanked the MTR staff for arranging such an interesting tour for MASS students.



# Community Service - Flag selling for Red Cross !

(13<sup>th</sup> May 2017)



*Thank you very much for your participation in supporting humanitarian work!*



# Up and Coming Events !

## **SPIS Spanish Fair: Saturday 27th May 2017**

¡Hola! To promote Spanish language and culture, we are organising a special event, SPIS La Feria, at Tai Po Waterfront Park on 27th May 2017 between 3 and 5pm. We will have a lot of performances and fun activities, such as a circus workshop, music, story telling, art and craft, balloon twisting etc for children on that day. This is going to be a great weekend outing for children and their family! Don't miss it!

## **The 4th Graduation Ceremony: Saturday 24th June 2017**

We are looking forward to celebrating the graduation of our very first batch of K3 students. They have been growing with MASS for the past four years, from PN students to K3 graduates! We took pride in nurturing our students and being with them in this happy and challenging journey at MASS. K1, K2 and K3 students and their teachers are now preparing for their year-end performance. This will be a big day for all of us!

## **Beach Party: Wednesday 28th June 2017**

This school year will be concluded with a delightful Beach party at the Repulse Bay! All parents and students are invited to the party! We will be celebrating the birthday of June and July children. We will also have a sand castle building competition. The winning team will get a prize! Let's enjoy the sun and beach together!

## **Summer Programme: 3rd - 28th July 2017**

The early bird discount for the summer programme will be extended to 26th May. We will have English & Mandarin Summer programme and Spanish Summer Programme this year. It will be a fun-filled summer for your child!



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