

# LINK UPDATES

*A newsletter for LiINK schools, students, & families*



Play More  
Learn More

## TIPS FROM THE TOP

By Dr. Debbie Rhea

We are moving into the season of colder temperatures and the tendency to stay inside rather than go outside and enjoy nature. Unstructured play has very powerful properties that reach all aspects of self. This season of the year also brings on a tendency to overschedule ourselves and our children to get ready for holiday gatherings or keeping children busy so they don't get bored. Levitin (2021), a neuroscientist who studies the brain and fatigue, has found children should not be overly scheduled. His study supports our belief that they should have blocks of time to promote spontaneity and creativity. Without that time, kids don't have the mental space to let new ideas and ways of doing things arise. Daydreaming and playing are crucial to develop the kind of creativity many say should be a focal point of a modern education system. For adults and children, multi-tasking has been found to increase the production of the stress hormone cortisol as well as the fight or flight hormone adrenaline which overstimulates the brain and causes mental fog or scrambled thinking.

There are also metabolic costs when asking the brain to shift attention from one activity to another. The prefrontal cortex and striatum burn up oxygenated glucose which is the same fuel they need to stay on task. We literally deplete the nutrients in our brain. This leads to compromises in both cognitive and physical performance. All of these brain compromises lead to aggressive and impulsive behaviors.

Suggested strategies for the upcoming holidays and colder temperatures:

1. Get outside anyway – keep the top of your head, your necks, and wrists covered and you will enjoy the outdoors. Put on the necessary warm clothes for the type of active play you will do.
2. Keep your schedules simple as much as possible for you and your children. The more multi-tasking you do, the harder it is on your brains and your bodies.
3. Allow time to daydream and play with no goal in mind. Outdoors is the better place to do these things.

Have a happy Thanksgiving!  
- Dr. Debbie Rhea





LiiNK Schools use the Positive Action curriculum as a tool for social emotional learning. Each day, students hear lessons about things such as self-concept, empathy, and respect. To learn more about Positive Action, especially how it's helping during the COVID-19 era, [click here.](#)



## Word of the Week

**Each week, students are learning a new word. Here is the list of words your child has recently learned about:**

WEEK 11) CURIOUS: EAGER TO LEARN HOW AND WHY THINGS HAPPEN

WEEK 12) DECISION: TO THINK ABOUT THE CHOICES AND PICK THE BEST ONE

WEEK 13) TIME: WHEN SOMETHING HAPPENS; ENERGY: THE FORCE TO DO SOMETHING

WEEK 14) TALENT: A NATURAL ABILITY THAT CAN BE DEVELOPED

WEEK 15) POSSESSIONS: THINGS YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR; MONEY: COINS AND BILLS

WEEK 16) THOUGHTS: IDEAS THAT RESULT FROM THINKING

WEEK 17) ACTIONS: WHAT YOU DO OR CAUSE TO HAPPEN

WEEK 18) FEELINGS: EMOTIONS SUCH AS ANGER, FEAR, LOVE, AND WORRY

WEEK 19) FRIENDSHIP: CARING BETWEEN PEOPLE WHO CHOOSE TO BE TOGETHER

WEEK 20) LOVE: TO SHOW UNCONDITIONAL CARING



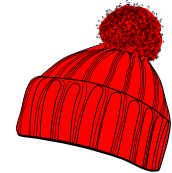
It's that time of year when the weather starts to get chilly. We always recommend that your child dresses like he or she is going to be walking to school. This will prepare your child to be comfortable during the outdoor recesses. [Click here to review our Weather Q&A in English](#), and [here to view it in Spanish](#).



**We recommend sending these with your child on cold or wet days:**



- Rain boots
- Gloves, mittens
- Warm hats



## Resource Corner

We are excited to announce a new publication by one of our very own Ph.D. candidates, Dave Farbo, M.S., and Dr. Debbie Rhea. The article examines the flaws of using the traditional method of BMI when measuring body composition. The article is titled, "[A pilot study examining body classification differences between body mass index and bioelectrical impedance analysis in children with high levels of physical activity.](#)"

***This edition's family challenge is to spend at least an hour on Thanksgiving Day outdoors!***



Stay in touch with us!

