



Peace of Mind

At Lafayette Elementary School in Washington, D.C.

5701 Broad Branch Road, NW

www.teachpeaceofmind.com

Recently In Peace...



On September 21 Lafayette joined in the International Day of Peace. This included many fun activities such as a school-wide mindful moment. All together as a school community we stopped what we were doing to think about peace. In Peace classes we read stories about peace and figured out how to say "peace" in many other languages. Luckily for us at Lafayette, every day is Peace Day!

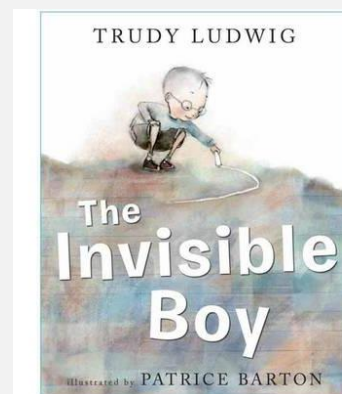
You can always read more about Peace of Mind, join our mailing list, and find out about current events at our website: www.teachpeaceofmind.com. You can also follow us on Facebook. Contact Linda at Linda.Ryden@dc.gov or Jillian at Jillian.Diesner@dc.gov

Important Events

October 25 - Peace of Mind open house

We invite you to join us for Peace Class or Peace Club. Check out [the day's schedule here](#), and plan to drop in for a few minutes at your convenience to see what Peace is all about!

Recommended Reads



Read with 3rd Grades



[Clever Ways to Teach Mindfulness to Children](#)
(Huffington Post article)



Mindfulness Practice

In Pre-K and K, we learned about shallow and deep breaths. We thought about and modeled how different animals breathe, and had lots of fun practicing snake breaths, bear breaths, bunny breaths, butterfly breaths, and more!



Having fun at Peace Club with the Hoberman Sphere

In 1st and 2nd grade we have been practicing our deep breaths by using the Breathing Ball, aka the Hoberman Sphere. Deep breathing can be a key tool to use to take care of strong feelings so this foundational practice is important and, with the Breathing Ball, lots of fun!

In the older grades we have started to practice a favorite mindfulness technique called "Popcorn". This is a practice of counting our breaths and then trying to notice when our minds have wandered away. That

moment when we notice that we are thinking instead of counting and then consciously choose to redirect our focus to our breath is a real moment of mindful awareness.



Social and Emotional Learning

In Pre-K and Kindergarten we learned about using our whole bodies to listen, even our mouths, hands, feet, hearts, brains, and shoulders. We played a fun game to help children practice this concept called "Don't Lose Your Focus!"

In first and second grades we have been practicing making kindness a habit by remembering to do kind things for our Kindness Pals.

In 3rd grade we read a wonderful book called *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig. This heartwarming story tells how Brian is ignored by his classmates to the point of feeling invisible until a new student comes to his school who really sees him.

In 4th and 5th grade we've been focusing on how we treat each other at recess. We are a school filled with kind people but we all know that sometimes competition brings out the best in us and



Ask Your Child:

For Pre-K and Kindergarten:

What is the difference between shallow and deep breaths?

How do you listen with other parts of your body besides your ears?

For 1st-2nd Grades:

How do you take deep mindful breaths?

Who is your Kindness Pal, and what can you do for that person this week?

For 3rd-5th Grades:

How do you play Popcorn?

Ask your child how we can help to insure that nobody at Lafayette feels "invisible."

How is recess? How can you be on the lookout for ways to make recess a welcome place for all of our students?

sometimes it doesn't. We've been discussing how we can make recess a welcoming place for all students. We all agreed that everyone has a right to play at recess and that "You can't say you can't play" is a good motto for our school. We talked about how it is important for kids who are very good at sports like basketball for instance to make room on the court for kids who aren't good at basketball yet or may never be good at basketball. We talked about how no child is in charge at recess and that everyone has an equal right to play and have fun. We reminded each other that while competitive games can be fun, they are not appropriate for recess time. We've seen some real changes happen since we started to have these conversations.



Creating a Kinder and More Inclusive School

In 1st-5th grades we've been talking about how we treat each other. Your child will get a new Kindness Pal each week. You can help your child strengthen their empathy muscles by asking them to tell you something they learned about their Pal and helping them brainstorm small acts of kindness that they can do for that person. Each week in Peace Class we take some time to share what we did for our Pals. It's a favorite time for all of us when we celebrate kindness.

Our Pre-K and K students have not begun to have Kindness Pals yet, but they will start this practice soon. Usually the first month or so of school is a time for settling in and feeling comfortable with the routines, but by October they are ready to be matched with a Kindness Pal during Peace Class.

