Healthy Mind & Body

Our major focuses during the Healthy Mind & Body Unit included:

- **How our bodies work** - learning about our parts of our body, skeleton, organs and our 5 senses
- **How we care for our bodies** - learning about the importance of nutrition, exercise, rest and general safety habits
- **How we care for our minds** - learning about the importance of expressing feelings appropriately and having time to be peaceful, reflective, quiet and to do things that genuinely make us feel happy
- **A reflection and appreciation for what makes us feel thankful** - One way of teaching mindfulness is to reflect and appreciate your family, friends and all the things that bring you joy.

During the month of November, the Dramatic Play center has changed each week to go along with our weekly focus. During the first week, the Dramatic Play center was divided into five sense stations. Each station was marked by a symbol for either sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste. Each day, new items were added to each station for friends to engage each of their senses in a new way. As we discussed nutrition during our second week, the dramatic play center changed into a Farmers’ Market equipped with fruits and vegetables that friends pretended to collect in their shopping carts and then purchase. While focusing on a healthy mind in the third week, the dramatic play center turned into a yoga studio. Friends practiced yoga poses, breathing techniques and played the cooperative board game, Yoga Garden. During our final week, the dramatic play center was set as a kitchen, for friends to work together to set the table and prepare a feast.
Activity Highlights

Here is a closer look at some of our favorite activities during the Healthy Mind and Body Unit.

**Anatomy Activities** - To learn about the human body, we used several books at circle time like “My Amazing Body,” “Me and My 5 Senses” and “My Body in Movement.” We also used a skeleton puzzle, did a body tracing activity and played an iPad game that helped children identify our vital organs. Our library center was filled with body books and the science center had a human body model in it for friends to take a closer look at where the organs are located.

**Creative Writing** - During this unit, we had several opportunities to engage in creative writing. First, we asked friends to dictate what they do to keep their bodies healthy. Later, we wrote about our families and why we are thankful for them. We also drew a family to go along with it.

**Food Sort** - To help friends understand the importance of a balanced diet, we played a food sort game. Each friend was given a few felt pieces of food and when it was their turn, they had to decide if their “food” was a fruit, vegetable, grain, protein, dairy item or a sweet. Friends worked together if they were not certain where a food item should go.
**My Plate** - In this activity, each friend was given a color coded, portion controlled paper found on Myplate.gov. Friends then added a paper example to each section to make it meaningful to them. For example, friends glued a picture of a bagel on the grains portion of the plate. This paper was attached to the bottom of a clear plate and then, at snack, friends had a balanced snack, putting a delicious example in each food group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Grapes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable</td>
<td>Snap Peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain</td>
<td>Bagel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>Hummus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>Cheese Cube / Milk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise** - Aside from the exercise we do at gym or on the playground each day, exercise opportunities were provided during activity time to reinforce the importance of keeping your body moving.

**Peaceful Partner Painting** - During our week of learning about caring for our minds, the discovery area was a calm space with low lighting and peaceful music. Large sheets of paper were on the easel, along with primary color paints. Friends painted together while listening to the music.
Make Shop Experiences

In November, The Make Shop was a space to explore light, color, and shadows.

Adrian, Maren, and Isaiah are adding items to the overhead projector to make different shadows.

Lillian, Maya and Aya are exploring the different translucent materials to add to the projector.

Josie, Avi and Max are dancing in the lights of the projector.

Siobhan is selecting items to add to the projector.

Conor is playing with glow in the dark putty.

Caleb is writing with a highlighter under the black light.
Birthdays and Special Guests

Mrs. Hraber joined the friends twice during the Healthy Mind & Body Unit. She focused one lesson on exercise and movement. The other was focused on songs about healthy eating.

Miss Debbie, from the Carnegie Children’s Library, joined the friends to read books about healthy habits.

Conor’s brother, Ryan visited the friends to teach them about ancient transportation.

Conor’s brother, Ryan returned with their older brother David. Ryan and David shared a lesson on where vital organs are located in our bodies.

Conor’s family joined him to celebrate his birthday.

Cans Across the Cut

The annual Cans Across the Cut food drive for the Pittsburgh Food Bank was a great success. All of the friends at the Children’s School had an opportunity to add their can or boxed food item to the long line of donated items across the cut. It served as a wonderful visual for the children to see how much food was donated to those who need it.
Healthy Mind & Body
A reflection of our month in pictures.

Alisa, Sydnee, and Maren are doing Peaceful Painting.
Chudi is water painting at the science center.
John is playing a body parts identification iPad game.

Addison is drawing a picture of those for whom she is grateful- her family.
Evren is drawing himself for his locker tag.
The friends are working together to find alphabet letters in the soapy water.

Benny is sketching some of the model’s organs.
Harris and Isaiah are eating their My Plate snack.
After his body was traced, Henry is adding details.

Colby is enjoying his My Plate snack.
Maya and Evren pour sand into the funnels at the sand table.
Connor and Colby are getting the funnels prepared for the sand.