Exploring Healthy Mind and Body

Over the past four weeks, the Extended Afternoon Program explored the mind and body. We exercised with balancing and stretching our bodies, learned the importance of caring for our eyes, discussed how we can prevent germs from spreading, and emphasized the importance of sleep and what happens while you’re resting.

The beginning of our unit, we read *Those Mean Nasty Dirty Downright Disgusting but... Invisible Germs* by Judith Rice. Five-year-old Rosa discovers the most disgusting germ on her hand while painting at school. It’s the kind of germ that can give you an earache. Rosa encounters other equally disgusting germs at school but knows that, by washing her hands with lots of soap and water and by drying well, she can help get rid of the germs that make her sick. Our activities were enacting out the story, showing how visible germs spread (AKA glitter) practicing hand washing, playing the game “Cooties” and making homemade soap. We hope we carried fewer germs home as the friends enjoyed their soap when washing hands.

**Stretch** by Doreen Cronin

Ready ...Set STRETCH! Can you stretch to the ceiling? Can you stretch to the floor? You can stretch with a whisper; you can stretch with a roar.

There’s nothing like a good stretch before you jump or wiggle or bounce or run, and the ever-energetic team of Cronin and Scott Menchin shows kids how a good stretch can be good fun. In Extended PM, we stretched on mats, used balance beams, played with hoops, and also with noodles. We stretched rubber bands on Geoboards, made dough and stretched it into pretzels. We stretched silly putty, and enjoyed blowing bubbles on the table.

**Arthur’s Eyes** by Marc Brown

Arthur’s Eyes is a tale about an aardvark named Arthur, who gets his first pair of glasses. He’s learning to be confident in wearing them, but gets lots of teasing from his classmates so he becomes embarrassed. He tries to hide his glasses, lose them, and almost breaks them. It takes the principal talking with Arthur to finally help him realize it’s pretty cool to wear glasses in school. Arthur’s friends agree, especially Francine who wears movie star glasses for the class photo. It all ends well! Some of our activities included making three -D glasses, using magnifying glasses to examine tiny items in a jar, practicing naming letters on an eye exam chart, and graphing everyone’s eye color on a chart. In the kitchen, we cooked Arthur’s favorite foods for breakfast: eggs, potatoes, turkey bacon, and cinnamon toast.
Sleep is for Everyone

Paul Showers is the author and Wendy Watson illustrates the text. This “Let’s-Read-and-Find-Out“ science book begins with illustrations and text about animals and people’s sleep. Different people of different ages need different amounts of sleep. We have three families with younger siblings. Friends recalled how much more sleep they needed than their brothers and sisters. We learned how every part of our bodies need rest and that our brains needs to rest from thinking as well. The book ends with a lovely and calming description of one child’s routine and what it might feel like while falling asleep. The activities included sewing soft fleece pillows, creating dream catchers, doing a bedtime scavenger hunt, and playing the game “Don’t Wake Daddy”. We also had the friends change into their pajamas and played several pillow games. In the kitchen, the friends sampled foods to help with sleep: warm honey milk, rice cakes, cheese, turkey and avocado. We end our month with the Blue Ribbon award winning book by William Steig entitled Doctor DeSoto.