Family Spotlight: Growing Up Bilingual

My name is Dave Guillou, and I am the father of Juliette, who attends Kindergarten at the Children’s School, and of Felix, who will attend the morning 3’s next year. My wife Corinne and I were born and raised in Brittany, in north-western France, and our children were both born in Pittsburgh. Our parents, our siblings, and the other members of our extended families live in France, and few of them speak English. Despite the separation, we want to make sure that Juliette and Felix learn the language of their grandparents and their cousins, so we speak French at home, and we visit our families at least once a year. We spent 2½ weeks in France over the holidays, even though it meant that Juliette would miss school. Needless to say, we all enjoyed our vacation in Brittany, the children spoke French non-stop, broadened their vocabulary, practiced ever-more complicated sentence structures, and absorbed the culture as well.

Growing up bilingual, or learning a second language at school at a young age, benefits children much beyond enabling them to speak the language (and strengthening family ties, as it may be). In that spirit, Corinne visits with the Kindergarten friends for a 20-minute “French class” every Friday. The children sing French songs and learn basic words and expressions related to the monthly theme. Corinne has been volunteering since Juliette joined the pre-school. She is grateful for the Children’s School teachers’ warm welcome, and she looks forward to starting anew next year with the morning 3’s. Our son Felix, who feels a bit anxious about joining “the big kids school” (as he puts it), is already looking forward to meeting his mommy for French class.

February Web Artists

3’s Friends: Jacey D., Travis K., Giovanni M., and Andrew Y.
4’s Friends: Nina C., Sebastian D., Mark H., and Simon M.
Kindergarten Friends: Charlotte B., Samuel R., and Etienne S.

Staff Cheer for AFC Champion STEELERS in Super Bowl XLV