Let’s do chili this month -

The annual fall Chili Cook-Off is a long-standing tradition at School of the Woods. It’s the Big Battle of Chili Cooks and everybody has a favorite recipe.

All people who live in Texas are required by law to be chili-heads (not really, but it seems that way). Even if you’re not one, you must admit chili is a tasty, even addictive, concoction. There will be heaps of other food items to augment the chili.

The day also provides loads of fun for our students – games, face-painting, structures to climb on and slide on – and a student talent show. For adults, chili day will include those ever-popular raffles and a chance to engage in lots of conversation with other parents. The date is Sunday, October 30, from 12 to 3 PM, on the Wirt Road campus.

A new year of book discussions begins

October 20 is the date of our first book discussion this year. It will be held at the home of teacher Bridget Tomlinson, 8841 Cedarbrake, at 7 PM.

The book title is *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk*, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish. It is a best-seller, praised worldwide, and discusses how to be effective with your children, making relationships with children of all ages less stressful and more rewarding.

The book is 286 pages, so get your copy and start reading.

It’s easy to volunteer

By being a volunteer, you will enjoy the camaraderie of our campus families while you are doing good deeds for the school.

To sign up, go to the opening screen of the school’s website [www.schoolofthewoods.org](http://www.schoolofthewoods.org) – and click on this little emblem -
Commended students in National Merit Scholarships

Emily Froming has been named a Commended Student in the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program.

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation will be recognized for their exceptional academic promise.

Commended Students placed among the top five percent of more than 1.6 million students who entered the 2017 competition by taking the 2015 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT©).

“The young men and women being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success,” commented a spokesperson for NMSC. “These students represent a valuable national resource: recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation.

We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success.”

Vintage books from Maurice Sendak

Maurice Sendak produced many more children’s books than Where the Wild Things Are, written in 1963. Some of his earlier books have been reissued in recent years. Here are four which he wrote (1) and illustrated (3). All are now considered to be classics.

*Kenny’s Window*, published in 1956; written and illustrated by Maurice Sendak. Kenny wakes up one night remembering the magical garden he’s been dreaming about. The story tells of the young boy’s quest for the garden of his dreams. It involves answering seven questions given to him by a four legged rooster in the dream. His toys and stuffed animals help him along the way. Paperback, 64 pages, ages 4-8.

*Open House for Butterflies*, by Ruth Krauss, illustrated by Maurice Sendak. This charming book exhibits droll humorous text and fanciful black and white pictures will elicit laughs and requests for repeats. The tiny people that populate this book are wonderfully detailed, and bring the words to life. Sendak captures the kindness, the independence and matter-of-factness of Krauss’s writing. First published in 1960. Hardcover, 48 pages, Paperback, 64 pages. *Ages* 4 to 8.

*I’ll Be You and You Be Me*, by Ruth Krauss, illustrated by Maurice Sendak. This is a book that an adult can share with a child on a special level. It consists of poems, little stories, collections of thoughts, plays and tales. It is filled with friendly conversation on a general theme of kindness and love and with small detailed drawings by Sendak that can be enjoyed over and over. First published in 1954. 48 pages; ages 2-6.

*The Big Green Book*, by Robert Graves, illustrated by Maurice Sendak. A little boy, Jack, discovers a big green book of magic in the attic, and learns all sorts of spells — spells to change the look of things, spells to make him old and grey, or disappear entirely. He learns how to make birds or animals do just as he liked. There were also spells for winning card games. First published in 1962. Paperback, 64 pages. *Ages* 4-8.
What Motivates Us: Autonomy -- Learning to Be Your Own Boss

by Elizabeth Stepankiw

Our “default setting” is to be autonomous and self-directed. Unfortunately, circumstances...often conspire to change that default setting and turn us from Type I [internally motivated workers] to Type X [externally motivated workers]....People need autonomy over task (what they do), time (when they do it), team (who they do it with), and technique (how they do it). Companies that offer autonomy, sometimes in radical doses, are out-performing their competitors.

. . . . Daniel Pink, Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us

In the middle of the twentieth century a few scientists began discovering that humans have a third drive (the first two are those of satisfying biological needs and response to reward and punishment in the environment). That third drive is the need to satisfy internal motivations for doing what we do.

The three essential components of a system in which we take advantage of our “default setting” in our personal lives, business, and education are: autonomy (which is the desire to direct our own lives), mastery (which is the desire to get better at doing something that matters), and purpose (which is the yearning to have a reason larger than ourselves for doing something). (Pink, Drive)

It is interesting to note that Maria Montessori described children driven by intrinsic motivations in her first Children’s House at the beginning of the twentieth century. She also noticed how much more children were capable of learning and doing when allowed to follow their own autonomous desire towards activities to build skills, and oddly, they were drawn to the very skills one needs for success in adult life!

The Montessori method of education is characterized by emphasizing self-directed activity on the part of the child:

“It was a spontaneous self-discipline coming from within. These transformed children moved about their little world in a quiet and orderly manner, each getting on with his own business.

“They selected their materials for work; settled down at their tables and got on with their affairs, without disturbing their companions; and afterwards quietly replaced the materials when finished with [them].

“Their bodily movements became more harmonious; their very expressions serene and joyful. Everything about them betokened a heightened interest in life, and with it a new form of dignity. They looked-as indeed they had become-independent personalities with power to choose and to carry out their own acts” (E.M. Standing, Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work).

Montessori students “taste” their own work. Montessori education places the seat of responsibility with the child, with all the personal rewards, the health, and the power this brings. The source of education should be the student’s will to interact with the world. The student is in charge. The student is responsible. (Eissler, Montessori Madness).

These behavioral patterns aren’t fixed traits. They are proclivities that emerge from circumstance, experience, and context. Type I (intrinsic) behavior, because it arises in part from universal human needs, does not depend on age, gender, or nationality. The science demonstrates that once people learn the fundamental practices and attitudes—and can exercise them in supportive settings—their motivation and their ultimate performance, soar” (Pink, Drive).
“Social Aggression” Plagues Most Kids’ Shows
By Dr. Lauren Hughes, ABC News Medical Unit
Posted online September 27, 2012

Children between the ages of 2 and 11 are viewing social aggression on television at rates far greater than what many parents may realize, new research indicates.

In a study published Thursday in the Journal of Communication, researchers aimed to understand the role media plays in children’s psychosocial development. They found that among the 50 most popular television shows for 2 to 11 year olds as ranked by Nielsen Media Research, 92 percent of the programs contained some social aggression, both verbal and non-verbal forms.

"Parents need to be more aware that just because shows do not contain physical aggression, it doesn't mean that there is not anti-social behavior present," said Nicole Martins, assistant professor in the Department of Telecommunications at Indiana University and lead author of the study.

"I'm not saying that parents can't use the television at all," Martins added, "but it could be a teaching opportunity to emphasize that some of those mean remarks may cause lasting emotional scars."

In total, the research team watched 150 television episodes, three of each show, making note of socially aggressive incidents aimed at damaging social status, self-esteem or both. Specific behaviors of friendship manipulation, gossiping and mean facial expressions were examined. They found that such incidents occurred at the rate of 14 times per hour, or one every four minutes.

Furthermore, Martins and her team realized that social aggression was more often committed by an attractive person, presented in a humorous context, and neither punished nor rewarded. While insults and name calling were the two most common verbal incidents witnessed, giggling and looks of disgust were the two most prevalent non-verbal behaviors.

"Of course, we cannot make firm claims about what types of effects exposure to these portrayals may have on young viewers," the study authors wrote. That would require further study.

Rahil Briggs, assistant professor of pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York and a child development specialist, recommended that young children view television shows with their parents so that they can interpret the acceptability of what is being seen rather than being passive recipients.

"Being able to talk about what you see is a key piece," Briggs said. "In society, we have become more and more aware of the importance of bullying, and it’s going to become increasingly necessary to understand the early building blocks of social aggression that may lead to this."
Martins and her co-researcher Barbara Wilson of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign identified only two other previous studies that have explored social aggression in children's programming. Collectively, this former work included a smaller number of shows studied, review of British shows that may not be applicable to U.S. audiences, and programming that focused on pre-teens and teens, rather than small children.

What sets this analysis apart is the breadth and number of shows included in the study, its attempt to understand the context in which social aggression is portrayed, and its emphasis on young children.

"Television is quite persuasive," Briggs said. "I think it's helpful [to know, especially for parents who have long been aware of and concerned of implications of physical aggression on television, that social aggression is also quite prevalent."

Dr. Eugene Beresin, director of the child and adolescent psychiatry residency program at Massachusetts General Hospital, emphasized the urgent need for additional research in the area.

"We need more research on the impact of media on kids on all ages -- violent, sexual, and socially aggressive media," Beresin said. "What are the consequences? Which kids are vulnerable?"

Beresin added, "Most kids are not going to become violent or socially inappropriate or aggressive based on media, but some percent will. But we don't know what percent will. And we don't know how young this starts."

Martins and her team made the case that parents need to be aware that perpetrators of social aggression may be potent role models for their children and that it may encourage unwanted behaviors in childhood.

Martins, however, hoped her research would increase awareness of the effects of social aggression not just for parents but also among television producers.

"Maybe this will encourage the industry to be more responsible in their portrayals," she said. "Perhaps they can make these scenes a lot less funny or associate pain or consequences with these remarks, instead of the way it is portrayed now -- because it may encourage children to be cruel to one another."

---

**The Hippopotamus**

by Arthur Guiterman

The hippopotamus is strong
And huge of head and broad of bustle;
The limbs on which he rolls along
Are big with hippopotamus.

He does not greatly care for sweets
Like ice cream, apple pie, or custard,
But takes to flavor what he eats
A little hippopotamustard.

The hippopotamus is true
To his principles, and just;
He always tries his best to do
The things one hippopotamus.

He never rides in trucks or trams,
In taxicabs or omnibuses,
And so keeps out of traffic jams
And other hippopotamusses.
“What is the difference between disciplining a child and punishing a child?” Jeff, father to a two-year-old, wrote in his email. “I don’t see any difference. Isn’t it the same thing?”

There is a difference, as I explained to Jeff. My email follows:

Jeff, let’s look at the definition of these two words from the American Heritage Dictionary.

**Punishment:** to subject someone to a penalty for a crime, fault or misbehavior. From the Latin *poenire* and the Greek *poine; poena* is money paid as a fine.

**Discipline:** training that is expected to produce specific character or patterns of behavior especially training that produces moral or mental improvement. From the Latin: *discere*, to learn.

Discipline is also listed as a synonym under punishment, stressing that with this meaning punishment as a method of training is designed to control an offender and to eliminate or reform unacceptable conduct.

In its essence, punishment is a penalty, paid with money or *poena*. The connotation is that the person being punished has funds along with knowledge of right and wrong. Does a child fit in that definition?

Discipline with its meaning rooted in learning, has a different significance altogether. Disciples follow their teacher. People, who follow a leader, choose to follow.

The misuse of words can cloud our thinking and dilute meanings so that concepts, such as punishment and discipline, appear to be interchangeable, when in fact they are not.

With a clear understanding of these two ideas, we can ask ourselves, do we want to punish or penalize our children to teach them, or do we want to teach by walking a path that our children can follow, a path down which they can lead others?

Years ago when these two terms were clarified in my mind, I realized punishment was not going to accomplish the teaching I wanted to share with my children. Punishment was not going to promote the learning or self-discipline I hoped to encourage.

The questions to myself became: How can I best teach my children with this pure idea of discipline? What direction do I want to lead, because it is one that my children will follow? The question was not, “How can I best punish my child?”

To me, Jeff, that is the difference. There is a place for punishment in our society. It is for those who willingly break established rules or laws. Punishment is for those who willfully endanger others and or their property. It is for those who have attained full rights as citizens. It is for those who are expected to have understanding of societal expectations and consequences. Punishment is designed for those who have resources to pay the penalty or poena. This is what reaching a majority age means. Children are not of majority age. Children are minors.

With minors, we are in the process of teaching these children the path they should follow. Our challenge is to lead the whole person...body, mind, heart and spirit. Our challenge is that we must model the self-discipline, the vision, the passion and the conscience that is at the heart of true learning and self-discovery for our children.

When we discipline our children, we walk a path with them of trust, helping them to understand how to live their lives, how to develop their talents, how to share their love and how to do what’s right. Corrections on our path should strive to be of loving intention to serve the needs of the child.

Jeff, I hope I’ve been able to explain the difference between punishment and discipline, so that you can choose the way you want to lead.

Best wishes and happy parenting.

Maren Schmidt
www.kidstalk.com
It’s a new season for museum visits

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1001 Bissonnet St. MFAH has five exhibits on view through January. Open now and ending January 29 is Arts of Islamic Lands, a selection of some 250 objects from the world-renowned Al-Sabah Collection, Kuwait. The works of art date from the 8th to 18th centuries from North Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, India, the Iberian Peninsula and Central Asia. Helen Levitt: In the Street presents photographs taken on New York City streets in the 1930s and 1940s. More than 40 works, including three from the permanent MFAH collection. Open now, ending January 2. Julian Onderdonk and the Texan Landscape opens October 2 and ends January 2. These paintings are landscapes in the Impressionist style and in all seasons. Degas: A New Vision. In addition to Degas’s iconic ballet dancers, this exhibit shows his full range of work – bathers, jockeys, portraits, and works in other mediums. Opens October 16 through January 8. Emperors’ Treasures: Chinese Art from the National Palace Museum, Taipei. The exhibit includes 160 works of art in many mediums from the early-12th century Song dynasty to the early-20th century Qing dynasty. It opens October 23 and ends January 22.

There are admission charges so check the website for information. At MFAH, all Thursdays (closed Thanksgiving) are free from 10 AM to 9 PM courtesy of Shell Oil Co.

John P. McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science is now known as The Health Museum. It recently opened a new permanent exhibit, the DeBakey Cell Lab, featuring seven biology-based science experiments. Visitors don a lab coat, gloves and goggles to perform experiments using real lab equipment.

Suitable for all adults and children from age 7. The Museum of located at 1515 Hermann Drive. Museum admission is $9 for ages 12-64 and $7 for children 3-11. Best bet is a Family Membership at $65 for five persons and you are set for an entire year.

The Menil Collection exhibit Picasso: The Line, was organized by the Menil and curated by Carmen Giménez. Open now through January 8, the exhibit includes drawings from his most important periods, gathering close to 100 works on paper that span a wide range of mediums from pen and pencil to charcoal and collage. The exhibit Holy Barbarians: Best Culture on the West Coast is a selection from California artists after WWII who created the new art scene - the “Beat” generation. These are works on paper from 1955-1970. Opening date is November 18, closes March 12. The Menil address is 1533 Sul Ross St., and it is always free admission. Open Wednesday-Sunday, 11-7.

Houston Museum of Natural History will open two great exhibits, but not until after January. February 19 will see Amber Secrets: Feathers from the Age of Dinosaurs. Millions of years ago, amber -- resin secreted by trees -- served as a natural sticky trap for capturing and preserving a sampling of the ecosystem: plants, fungus, vertebrates and invertebrates such as insects, spiders, scorpions, snails, millipedes and centipedes. These are preserved in fine detail in this display of 100 specimens. Then, on March 11, the exhibit Gems of the Sea: The Guido T. Poppe Collection will open (ends May 19). Guido T. Poppe of Belgium is a noted malacologist-collector and HMNS has acquired some 6250 specimens for the Museum’s collection. Gems of the Sea is a selection of 130 shells representing 60 species. Check the HMNS website for hours and prices.