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# Local Students Explore the Wonders of Nature

Submitted by Merrylee Landau



Photo provided

Thanks to dedicated teachers, Los Perales Elementary School fifth graders learned hands-on science at a recent two-night/three-day science camp as part of the NaturalBridge residential outdoor science program in Sausalito. "There is paperwork involved and

also they must get their students ready for the trip, both from an educational perspective and an emotional perspective," said Merrylee Landau. "Some students have not been away from their parents before. To see the students work both as individuals and as a group/team

was amazing. They all participated in team building/bonding activities where they could not succeed as a group unless they involved everyone - the whole team. They all succeeded." Rheem and Camino Pablo Elementary School students will also attend the camp.



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## TEEN SCENE

### Beat the Stress

By Youngjoo Ahn

These past few months have been the most stressful in my entire high school career. I thought that after the March madness of speaking tournaments, SATs, and even prom night, I'd be able to relax a little but such was not the case. With upcoming AP testing, writing term papers, and even volunteering, no breaks are on the horizon.

Stress is something that every human being will endure at different time periods throughout life. Learning to deal positively with stressors takes time, patience, and effective management.

One of the best ways to reduce stress is through exercise. Even if you aren't an athlete, physical activity is beneficial. "Swimming allows me to laugh with friends and my coaches! I can forget about college applications while focusing on a swim set or a dry land workout," Miramonte Senior Nora Ross said. "Once I go home, not only do my endorphins kick in, but I feel good from the exercise. I am then ready to sit down and get to work!"

If strenuous physical activity isn't quite the thing for you, consider yoga.

"Yoga is a really refreshing way to de-stress and relax your mind," junior Elizabeth Chenok said. "Although your first few classes might seem hard, after you get into the flow of things, it becomes super meditative! Some yoga instructors believe that stretching and yoga can release built up emotions and stress, which I think is very true."

Keeping emotions pent up inside is never a good idea. Grabbing a pen and paper can help. Free writing of thoughts and feelings offers release. Don't think about what to write — just let it happen. Write whatever comes to mind. No one else needs to read it, so don't strive for perfection in grammar or spelling. Just let your thoughts flow on paper — or on the computer screen. Once you're done, you can toss out what you wrote or save it.

If you are an extrovert, being with other people can be relaxing. Reach out to family and friends and make

social connections. Laughter is one of the best medicines. It lightens your mental load and actually causes positive physical changes in your body.

"Hanging around others is a stress reliever because it allows you take your mind off of school and have a good time," Junior Joe Li said. "You get to talk about what you enjoy in life instead of school work."

Finally, get enough sleep. When you have so much to do, sleep seems like the last thing that you should do. However, it's quite the opposite. Sleep deprivation is a vicious cycle and the only way to beat the cycle is to rest.

"Whenever I'm super exhausted from school, I take a mini nap," Miramonte sophomore Kelly Cheng said. "I usually feel recharged when I wake up and have the energy to stay up later."

Stress management is an important skill. Other strategies involve listening to music, cleaning your room or taking a long shower. While stress never goes away, the fear and anxiety that comes with it can. Instead of fretting about that test or tournament, take a run, talk to a friend, or write a journal entry. You'll be glad you did.

*Youngjoo Ahn is a junior at Miramonte High School. In her free time she hosts Express Yourself teen radio and enjoys volunteering, writing, and learning new things, including stress relief.*



Teen Scene is YOUR voice. If you have something to say or have writing skills and want to be part of our Teen Scene team, email our Teen Coach, Cynthia Brian, Cynthia@CynthiaBrian.com.

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