When the 2019-2020 school year started, no one could have predicted how it would come to a close. To say it was a little out of the ordinary is to wildly understate the remarkable steps that students, parents and teachers took each week just to finish out the school year.

Our Student Journalism Contest changed, too. In January, we asked Lancaster County teachers to review the theme, “What Does Democracy Mean to You?” with their students. We asked the students to submit essays describing their thoughts on democracy. When COVID-19 arrived in Lancaster County and schools shut down, we wanted to get the students’ perspective of how the shutdown affected their lives, so we introduced another topic that students could write about.

We assigned the topics by grade:

Kindergarten and first grade: Draw a picture to show us how you are helping others or what you are doing with your families and pets while you are at home.

Second through fifth grades: Write an essay about how you are spending your time. Do you have a new hobby? Have you read a good book, seen a funny movie? Are you able to talk with friends online or over the phone? Describe the activity that is especially important to you now, and why.

Six through eighth grades: Offer some advice to us about COVID-19. Describe what steps you and your family are taking to stay well. How do you feel about that? Are there other things we should do to help everyone’s physical, mental and emotional well-being?

High-schoolers: Tell us how social distancing has changed your life, your perspective on the people and places that matter most to you. What discoveries have you made about yourself?

Libby Mohr just completed fifth grade at Bear Creek School.

Greyson Gastinger just completed fourth grade at J.E. Fritz Elementary School.

Lincoln rose from poverty to president

Abraham Lincoln was born into poverty on Feb. 12, 1809, and was raised on the frontier of Indiana. Lincoln self-educated and became a lawyer, Whig Party leader, and served in the Illinois legislature.

In 1858, Lincoln lost the senatorial election, but thanks to his debate skills, he received the Republican nomination for president in 1860. Lincoln became the 16th president of the United States and was re-elected, only to have his second term cut short by his assassination.

While president, Lincoln was successful in transforming the Republican Party into a powerful organization, even convincing many northern Democrats to support his political agenda. However, Lincoln’s most notable accomplishment occurred in 1863 when he issued the Emancipation Proclamation ending slavery within the Confederacy. Our nation was torn in two, morally and politically, but Lincoln refused to allow us to forget that the Civil War was fought for an even greater purpose.

While dedicating the military cemetery at Gettysburg, he declared, “that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Greyson Gastinger just completed fourth grade at J.E. Fritz Elementary School.

Being connected with family and friends is very important to me. Since we are all being quarantined, we can not talk to each other in person and many of us might feel lonely. So, I have been writing letters to relatives and my teacher, telling them about what I have been doing in online school or what my family and I are doing for fun.

I call my grandparents every night to make sure they are doing OK and are staying healthy. For me, it is important to make certain everyone is safe and well. I am still in contact with my friends and often FaceTime them, but I really miss seeing them at school. Talking to people makes me feel better and I hope it helps them, too.

Life is different now, but we are all in this together. Comforting each other lets people know we are not alone. Together we are stronger than this virus. I cannot wait for the day to come when life is back to normal again.
Students design winning ads

Students who entered the Design An Ad contest were paired with an LNP/LancasterOnline business that chose to be part of this program. Entrants were tasked with designing an ad that conveys the advertiser’s mission and message to the public. Each advertiser picked its winner.

Josdin Meyers, a fifth grader at Donegal Intermediate School. Her teacher is Sarah Lawrence. Her ad for Heritage Floors is on Page B10.

Dean Schoenloss, a fourth grader at Landisville Intermediate Center. His teacher is Jessica Wise. His ad for Heritage Floors is on Page B11.

Adeline Wooters, a fifth grader at Providence Elementary. Her teacher is Lindsay Orr. Her ad for Brookswood Paving is on Page B10.

Jenna Keller, a senior at Lancaster Catholic High School. Her teacher is Christ Shunk. Her ad for Friendly’s is on Page B10.

Ruby Pipes, a second grader at Bart-Colorya Elementary. Her teacher is Jessica Matthews. Her ad for Flower Market is on Page B7.

Karli Feaster, a fifth grader at Central Manor Elementary. Her teacher is Karl Feaster. Her ad for Argires Marciot Neurosurgical is on Page B12.

Carlly Wise, a sixth grader at Central Manor Elementary. Her teacher is Karl Feaster. Her ad for Argires Marciot Neurosurgical is on Page B12.

Emma Sasso, a first grader at Landisville Primary Center. Her teacher is Leah Blank. Her ad for The Wolf Sanctuary is on Page B4.

Aria Tichen, a fifth grader at Smilemore Elementary School. Her teacher is Steve Schull. Her ad for Sylvan Learning Center is on Page B6.

Ava Tichen, a fifth grader at Smilemore Elementary School. Her teacher is Steve Schull. Her ad for Sylvan Learning Center is on Page B6.

Jordyn Gochenaur, a fourth grader at Our Lady of the Rosary School. His teacher is Emily Batt. His ad for St. George’s Episcopal is on Page B10.

Adalin Patterson, a sixth grader at Martin Meyers Middle School. Her teacher is Christine Wilig. Her ad for George J. Gove and Sons is on Page B4.

Ruben Gochez, a fifth grader at Bear Creek School. His teacher is Beth Shenk. Her ad for Friendly’s is on Page B10.

Tommy Lobo, a sixth grader at Central Manor Elementary. His teacher is Karl Feaster. His ad for Argires Marciot Neurosurgical is on Page B12.

Chloe Evans, a sixth grader at Central Manor Elementary. Her teacher is Karl Feaster. Her ad for Argires Marciot Neurosurgical is on Page B12.

Aeris Henderson, a sixth grader at Our Lady of the Rosary School. His teacher is Emily Batt. His ad for St. George’s Episcopal is on Page B10.

Madisyn Matthews, a kindergartner at Bart-Colorya Elementary. Her teacher is Ashley Sip. Her ad for Penn Cinema is on Page B3.

Jordyn Gochenaur, a fourth grader at Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Her teacher is Theron Chnls. Her ad for Julius Shiffman Periatal Surgery is on Page B3.

Adalin Patterson, a sixth grader at Martin Meyers Middle School. Her teacher is Christine Wilig. Her ad for George J. Gove and Sons is on Page B4.

Aubrey Gochez, a fifth grader at Bear Creek School. His teacher is Beth Shenk. Her ad for Friendly’s is on Page B10.

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Desenham Martin, a sixth grader at Central Manor Elementary. His teacher is Karl Feaster. His ad for Argires Marciot Neurosurgical is on Page B12.

Anne Johnson, a fifth grader at Bear Creek School. Her teacher is Al Perry. Her ad for Solly’s International Realty is on Page B4.

Emma Sasso, a first grader at Landisville Primary Center. Her teacher is Leah Blank. Her ad for The Wolf Sanctuary is on Page B4.

Aria Tichen, a fifth grader at Smilemore Elementary School. Her teacher is Steve Schull. Her ad for Sylvan Learning Center is on Page B6.

Jordyn Gochenaur, a fourth grader at Our Lady of the Rosary School. His teacher is Emily Batt. His ad for St. George’s Episcopal is on Page B10.
A symbol of freedom

DAWSON SHRECK
THE MANSFIELD REPUBLIC
LANCASTER, PA

The American flag is a symbol of those who served in the armed forces and a symbol of the freedom we enjoy. I see all the soldiers who sacrifice so much to keep us safe and I think it truly phenomenal to see what these soldiers can do when they work together.

The United States of America is a very prosperous place. Many people are hungry for freedom and equal rights. Our country was founded on these principles and without this attitude our country would not exist. It is because of the brave men and women in the armed forces that our country can function the way it does. They all help out in their own special ways and are all equally important.

That is the true meaning of the American flag.

Families sacrifice so much while their soldiers go off to battle. Every soldier leaves his or her family not knowing if they will return. They love this country and us so much that they are willing to die for us. Here at home we all need to stand up and do our duty. There are many things that can be done like donating money, clothes and food that help out these families struggling during this tough time. Many people are helping out, but even more need to pitch in. There are many places like the Salvation Army that are looking for help. If everybody helps out these families, they would not have to suffer as much when their soldier is away.

The American flag is the true symbol of sacrifice.

In conclusion, freedom is the ability to serve our country. I am thankful for the brave men and women that continually serve. I am proud to be an American, and I am happy to live in this country. It is truly a privilege to have people that are passionate about our country and are willing to sacrifice their lives for all of us each and every day. Dawson Shreck just completed eighth grade at Resurrection Catholic School.

Discover a new hobby

ALYSSA WHITELY
FELPA, NY
LANCASTER, PA

COVID-19 is not just a time to let your brain stop working. It is a time to work hard to find something that you enjoy. You should not keep stressing over all the health issues that COVID can bring. Instead you should find something to do so you can have some happy memories of this crisis.

I have come to enjoy a new hobby. That new hobby is yard work. When I say "yard work," you might think of pulling weeds, but yard work is not limited to pulling weeds. Some other types of yard work are planting flowers and veggies, mulching, weeding and fertilizing our garden. Yard work can be fun, especially if you put your heart into it.

Yard work is my new hobby. It might not be yours, but make sure to find something to do during COVID-19.

Alyssa Whitley just completed fifth grade at Sacred Heart School.

Hana Senat
LANCASTER, PA

Hana just completed kindergarten at J.E. Fritz Elementary School.

Alexa Sheckart
LANCASTER, PA

Alexa just completed first grade at Sacred Heart School.

Reid Gaetinger
LANCASTER, PA

Reid just completed first grade at J.E. Fritz Elementary School.

Reid Shreck
LANCASTER, PA

Reid just completed fifth grade at Resurrection Catholic School.

Hana Senat
LANCASTER, PA

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Alexa Sheckart
LANCASTER, PA

Alexa just completed first grade at Sacred Heart School.

Alyssa Whitley
FELPA, NY
LANCASTER, PA

Alyssa Whitley just completed fifth grade at Sacred Heart School.

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Counsel for family

There are three main elements that create the basis for criteria for presidential of the United States. The first is that the candidate must be a natural-born citizen of the U.S. for 14 years at the time of election. The second element is that the candidate must be a president of the United States for 14 years at the time of election.

Additionally, a successful campaign is an important part of a presidential election. A successful campaign involves speeches, events, and visiting to voters. Combined, these elements make an impactful campaign.

Caucuses and primaries allow people to vote for nominees in different states, now in the new era of modern politics. These elections consist of a secret ballot where voters can vote and leave. In contrast, caucuses have a higher toll than primaries but the distant glimmer of hope. Those who are members of a political party can vote and leave. In primaries, a president is selected by the most people who vote. But when people look at her, they believe she represents hope for a better life for the many immigrants. When people look at her, they believe she represents a better life for the many immigrants.

Why I like soccer

There are not a lot of fun things to do in quarantine. One of those re-creation is playing soccer. We play soccer in our front yard most nights after dinner. My family and I like playing soccer because it allows us to do something fun. Those are the reasons that I enjoy playing soccer.

Lily Cutrona

Why I like running

I like playing soccer because it gives me so much fun. I like to do it with my sister. If I have time, I like to run during my quarantine. I’m glad it’s here. I get to do fun things.

Lily Cutrona just completed seventh grade at Donegal Intermediate School.

How to become president

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Lily Cutrona just completed seventh grade at Donegal Intermediate School.
Benefits of mindfulness

I would like to share this with you today because of the recent pandemic of COVID-19. I’m in seventh grade and love to type. The basics of staying healthy during this tough time are wearing a mask, washing your hands…blah, blah, blah. Today, however, I’m going to show you how to stay healthy mentally.

Mindfulness is great for the body and mind, it helps boost positivity, happiness, the immune system, etc. A great way to do this is to meditate! Meditation helps release tension in the body, anxiety, and depression! Meditation should be done in a calm and quiet environment.

And if it’s a beautiful day outside, outside in nature would be perfect, especially if you live near a body of water like rivers or oceans, and even creeks! The sound of rushing water helps calm the body.

Eating healthy is also a good way to stay healthy and mindful. It’s good to stay mindful of the body, but also mindful of nature! Nature is great for mindfulness! It’s calm, relaxing and helps build up self-esteem. All these things are awesome for the mind and body. They help release negativity and bad hormones. Keep peace in mind. We can pull through this. :)

"Cast all of your anxiety on him because he cares for you." — 1 Peter 5:7

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts." — Psalm 28:7

Breana Pisch just completed seventh grade at Cocalico Middle School.

What freedom means to me

David Stefanow special to LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

What does freedom mean to me? To me, freedom is one of the most important things in our country because we are able to live happy and love with our family and with our friends in my opinion it means to be believers in any religion we choose. I believe that freedom should not be taken for granted.

When I come home from school every day I’m blessed to see my family and that I’m able to grow older with them as we go on in our lives together. We go to church every Sunday or

David Stefanow

Saturday but that wouldn’t be possible without the freedom of religion at my school. We are taught about our Catholic beliefs and that is very important to me and my family.

Everyone in our country has their own opinion over topics. People often have arguments over politics and topics similar to that. Although I am not old enough to vote, I still can have an opinion over debates. I am proud that we can look back and see how we gained independence, freedom from Britain, and how we grew and expanded as a country.

I believe freedom means having the opportunity to have a family, friends and my own beliefs. Freedom is something we should not take for granted.

When someone says freedom, I think of what our ancestors have done to gain freedom. That is why freedom is important to me.

David Stefanow just completed seventh grade at Resurrection Catholic School.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE STUDENTS WHO PRODUCED THE TOP 3 VOTE-GETTING VIDEOS!

Nathan Whiteley
Manheim Township Middle School
Keagan McIntyre
Manheim Township Middle School
Harper Yingst
Manheim Township Middle School

Voting has ended, but you can still watch all the incredible videos produced by Lancaster County students at LancasterOnline.com/schools/vote

Connect with us Facebook, Twitter & Instagram: LancasterOnline

THANK YOU TO THE STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE VIDEO JOURNALISM CONTEST!

You impressed us with your on-camera presence, productions skills, and your unique perspective on how COVID-19 has affected your life. Well done!

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SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE

LNP | LancasterOnline
American flag has long history

MAGGIE O’CONNOR | LANCASTER.DI

Since the coronavirus pandemic began, many families have been working from home and students have been doing schoolwork online. Even though the days seem never-ending, we all need some leisure time to stay healthy during this trying time.

My family has decided to have afternoons focused on nutrition because studies show that there is a direct relationship between your diet, physical fitness and health.

Maggie O’Connor

Physical fitness is crucially important to your mental and social well-being. I enjoy being active and participating in physically invigorating activities. Being active helps you stay healthy and it also helps you keep your immune system working. This is extremely important because we are currently in a pandemic and are living a sedentary lifestyle.

Maggie O’Connor just completed seventh grade at Sacred Heart School.

Suffering from the stress brought by the pandemic, I started learning how to juggle.

Julia Whitley just completed sixth grade at Abigail Cutrona.

During the COVID-19 crisis I have developed a new hobby. My new hobby is juggling. I am learning how to juggle with three balls.

Julia Whitley

I went one step further I kept practicing and I finally got it. Sometimes when I juggle with three balls I don’t get it, but I keep trying. Juggling is my new hobby.

Julia Whitley just completed sixth grade at Abigail Cutrona.

Today, our flag is a symbol of our democracy and freedom. It helps us recognize who have sacrificed their lives to form our country.

Maggie O’Connor

The American flag has long history. More family time in quarantine

ABIGAIL CUTRONA | LANCASTER.DI

A couple of weeks ago, I woke up to find that I was under stay-at-home orders. How would I spend my time? As we adjusted to this new routine, I found that I now spend lots of time with my family.

Abigail Cutrona

First of all, we play outside as much as possible. Every evening, with the exception of having bad weather, we either go on a walk or play football. These activities allow us to both have fun together and to get some exercise.

Abigail Cutrona

Another time we get together is when we help each other with our schoolwork. I like to help my youngest sister with her work in the morning. In return, she assists me when I do my homework.

Abigail Cutrona just completed seventh grade at Notre Dame Elementary School.

Activity has many health benefits

MAGGIE O’CONNOR | LANCASTER.DI

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Maggie O’Connor

I am currently in a pandemic and am living a sedentary lifestyle. I am taking a higher risk for chronic disease due to lack of movement and decreased immune health. A part of my advice is to stay active and don’t let the lack of socialization get you down.

Mental health is as important as physical health. Sometimes the news is very frightening and it causes me to get worried for my loved ones. I only watch the news once or twice a day, so I know what is going on in the world.

Maggie O’Connor just completed seventh grade of Sacred Heart School.

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Julia Whitley

I also juggle with three balls. It can do it six times. What I mean is I throw the balls up six times and catch them.

Julia Whitley

Juggling is my new hobby.

Julia Whitley just completed sixth grade at Abigail Cutrona.

Juggling is my new quarantine hobby

Julia Whitley just completed sixth grade at Abigail Cutrona.

The American flag is made up of 13 horizontal stripes of red alternating with white. On the upper left corner, there is a blue rectangle, having 50 small white stars. The 50 stars represent the 50 states of the United States of America. The 13 stripes represent the 13 original colonies.

The flag is so important that its history tells the story of America itself. The flag has gone through many changes before becoming the flag we all know today. The origin of the first American flag is unknown. Some believe that it was designed by Congresswoman Francis Hopkinson and sewn by Betsy Ross. Betsy Ross made the flag for the Pennsylvania Navy, but it helped the union or the canton.

Today, the flag consists of 13 horizontal stripes, seven red alternating with six white. The colors on the flag mean a few things. The red symbolizes hardiness and valor. The white symbolizes purity and innocence. The blue represents vigilance, perseverance and justice.

The American flag has long history. More family time in quarantine

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Glimmers of hope in world full of chaos

RYAN FRENCH | LANCASTER ONLINE

It’s truly crazy to think that it’s been several months since our world was shaken forever. I vividly remember that Friday in March. I went to school as normal and walked the crowded hallways, entry for the bell to ring signaling us that we could head home.

I made my daily walk down to the track, where I would get ready for that evening’s practice. After our warmup, I would get ready in the locker room, where I would get ready for that evening’s practice. After our warmup, I would head back home.

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More time to appreciate the little things

JULIANNA STEACH | LANCASTER ONLINE

I never realized how much life is made up of small interactions, from high-fiving a friend to getting a heartfelt hug from a grandparent. I attempt to fill the space made by social distancing through texts and FaceTimes, but I just end up wishing we could be with those we miss in person.

Social distancing has made me miss the small moments I usually take for granted—laughing with my closest friends so hard we fall to the floor, or the memories made with “The Edge of Seventeen” squeezed in the backseat of my mom’s car. As I sit at home scrolling through my camera roll, I am reminded of the memories I have made exploring Lancaster County, my home, a place I have not seen in months without glasses fogged from the heat. I am thinking about the top of my hiking boots, the memories of the drives we took to dance into the swing of a grandparent. I am thinking about the memories we made of exploring the normal hustle and bustle of life has been tests society’s ability to adapt and change. The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly changed the lives of many students, small business owners, workers, and families. New rules and regulations can be difficult to abide by. In some ways, it feels like the whole world has been punished for bad behavior.

Social distancing and quarantining has changed my life in ways I did not expect. As an athlete, I have found it difficult to make my own goals instead of going to one. Instead of going to practice every weeknight with my teammates, I am exercising alone in my basement.

I was devastated when school was canceled for the remainder of the year, but the opposite was true. Although, that was before I realized how long it would be until I would see my friends and classmates. What really upset me was the remainder of my season, team bonding, and practicing canceled.

Despite the challenges at first, I have gotten used to the daily routine has changed a lot, to say the least. Even though the world is holding its breath in anticipation for what comes next, it does not mean we can’t have fun. It may be hard to be separated from friends and family, but imagine how exciting it will be when we are reunited.

Ryan French just completed ninth grade at Hempfield High School.

Learning to adjust to this new normal

CAROLINE SCHWEIGERT | LANCASTER ONLINE

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly changed the lives of many students, small business owners, workers, and families. New rules and regulations can be difficult to abide by. In some ways, it feels like the whole world has been punished for bad behavior.

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Caroline Schweigert just completed ninth grade at Hempfield High School.

Gurus of hope in world full of chaos

RYAN FRENCH | LANCASTER ONLINE

Oddly, in this upheaval time a sense of connection rose up. People helping others, donating to food banks, the endless support for essential workers.

In this time of struggle I have seen an immense amount of support from neighbor to neighbor, friend to friend, and even stranger to stranger that makes me proud of our community.

I’d like to say that there’s a light at the end of this tunnel, but nothing is certain. Counties are slowly changing from red to yellow, and regulations are loosening. Despite this, it may still be a long time until our community is able to get back to normal, if we are ever able to revert 100% to our old lives.

During these times, I have gotten used to the challenges at first, I have gotten used to the daily routine has changed a lot, to say the least. Even though the world is holding its breath in anticipation for what comes next, it does not mean we can’t have fun. It may be hard to be separated from friends and family, but imagine how exciting it will be when we are reunited.

Ryan French just completed ninth grade at Hempfield High School.

Oppenent just completed ninth grade at Hempfield High School.

Caroline Schweigert just completed ninth grade at Hempfield High School.

Juliana Steach just completed ninth grade at Hermitage Central High School.
Would you like to live in a world that doesn’t believe in progress? I would not. Last thing I want is for the country, we live in doesn’t believe in stopping, either. Every time I think of freedom, it reminds me of the fact that we live in a very progressive society. Our country is our own advanced place because of opportunity, diversity and the internet. America is known for opportunity. We have arguably some of the best churches and universities in the world. You can also become anything you want, from a high school junior to a million-dollar CEO entrepreneur. Lastly, our country is known for freedom and equality. You can be anything you want to us as many races, gender or religion.

Equally as important as opportunity is diversity. America is one of the most diverse countries in the world. Our country, ethnic society is really important because it is part of who we are. We are a melting pot of different civilizations. This shows that we have advanced past the racial discrimination to become a better place. It took the world a while to get here, but finally, the internet. The internet has become essential for everyday life and we use it in a variety of ways. America is home to the people who created the Internet and some of its most famous search engines. The people that created YouTube, Facebook and even Google live in America. Unlike some countries, the United States have restrictions on our internet access. Physical activity is important to me is playing Dodgeball is also very fun to play on the tram. We also do tire swing and trampoline activities. I play on my tire swing off of my feet. Burning a lot of calories! I do not get as much wind up the chain and then I get really dizzy, which I enjoy playing with.</p>

Lyla Sullivan just completed fourth grade at J.E. Weitzel Catholic School.

Waiting to get back to normal

In quarantine, I’ve been feeling scared because I don’t know what’s going to happen. It keeps me up at night and about what could happen to my family and friends, and me. I do not get as much physical activity during a typical school day, so this is now and I am enjoying it!

Olivia Sullivan makes people feel good going on right now.

I miss all of my friends and family that live far away. I hope we can get back to our normal life soon. It’s really scary that people could get super sick and they could even pass away. I especially miss my teachers. I miss everyone so much.

Olivia Sullivan just completed fourth grade at J.E. Weitzel Catholic School.

Our national anthem: symbol of freedom

The year is 1814 and one man, Francis Scott Key, is on a British ship, writing America’s best-known song. “The Star Spangled Banner.” That, in my opinion, is the definition of our freedom, our national anthem and the history behind it.

Francis Scott Key saw our flag after a long night of British bombardment in Fort McHenry. After the long night of cannon fire, Francis Scott Key thought the British were victorious; however, when he saw the American flag fly high over the smoke and debris, he knew we had won the battle. It led him to write the famous poem. The national anthem is a key part to American history and our freedom. It was made 200 years ago, and we still sing it today. We fought long and hard to become a nation of our own, and the national anthem is a strong symbol of our freedom.

Lain Weitzel just completed seventh grade at Providence Elementary School.

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Last year, American kids were looking forward to the new school year. Instead, they had to stay home where they could be safe from the COVID-19 virus. America is known for freedom, our national anthem and the history behind it. It took the world a while to get here, but finally, the internet. The internet has become essential for everyday life and we use it in a variety of ways. America is home to the people who created the Internet and some of its most famous search engines. The people that created YouTube, Facebook and even Google live in America. Unlike some countries, the United States have restrictions on our internet access. Physical activity is important to me is playing Dodgeball is also very fun to play on the tram. We also do tire swing and trampoline activities. I play on my tire swing off of my feet. Burning a lot of calories! I do not get as much wind up the chain and then I get really dizzy, which I enjoy playing with.</p>

Lyla Sullivan just completed fourth grade at J.E. Weitzel Catholic School.
Lost swim season teaches endurance

CORNELIE DE SYON
SPECIAL TO LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

Splash. I slice the water smoothly on my dive into the cold pool. My mind is clear. I’m in race mode. It’s the first meet of the spring swim season. Everyone here is anxious but expectant, ready to finally test the hard training we have put in over the last few months.

I wish, instead of swimming, I imagined it. I imagine the thundershower of teammates and spectators; the sense of foreboding when looking at the wide, calm pool; the unspoken hopes and worries of each new and returning swimmer hanging heavy in the air. I imagine all of this so clearly that it seems impossible that it isn’t happening.

But of course it hasn’t happened. It makes sense, and all of this so clearly that it seems impossible that it isn’t happening.

For now, I read, talk, think, and returning swimmer hangs awaiting that exhilarating day when I can finally jump back in the pool.

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CORINNE DE SYON

LNP

Lily Burge just completed sixth grade at Bear Creek Elementary School.

Gabriel Warburton

Gabriel Warburton just completed sixth grade at Bear Creek Elementary School.

Gettysburg turning point in Civil War

In Pennsylvania, there is a place called Gettysburg. One of the most famous battles of the Civil War was fought there. The Battle of Gettysburg. It lasted three days, from July 1-3, 1863.

The Confederates were led by Gen. Robert E. Lee, the Union by Gen. George G. Meade. On the first day, July 1, 1863, Lee wanted to press their advantages and told Richard Dowell to attack. Dowell didn’t attack and soon more Union troops arrived so they couldn’t. More came overnight.

By day two, the Union Army had established strong positions from Culp’s Hill to Cemetery Ridge. Lee decided to attack the Union’s troops. He had Longstreet attack the left while Ewell attacked the right. It wasn’t until 4 p.m. that they fired the first shots at the Union. On the third day, Pickett’s Charge took place at 3 p.m. Union infantry opened fire on the advancing rebels.

In total there were about 51,000 deaths, 23,000 on the Union’s side, 28,000 on the Confederacy’s side.

Gabriel Warburton just completed sixth grade at Bear Creek Elementary School.

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ZAINA NEAMATALLA
SPECIAL TO LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

Since I began attending school, I have read hundreds of books. Unfortunately, I cannot play outside. A one-hour walk is a good exercise. Taking walks is also important because when you play outside you're getting fresh air and exercise, too. Also when exercising you're keeping your muscles strong, too. Getting to play outside is important. Walking is also important because you're exercising. So take a walk if you cannot play outside. A minute walk is not as much exercise but that is good enough.

Getting to play outside is important because when you play outside you're getting fresh air and you're exercising, too. Also when exercising you're keeping your muscles strong, too. Getting to play outside is important. Walking is also important because you're exercising. So take a walk if you cannot play outside. A minute walk is not as much exercise but that is good enough.

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How to get kids to keep their distance

6 ways to encourage wearing masks and avoiding germs

ALEX WILLIAMS
NEW YORK TIMES

It’s hard enough for adults to maintain social distancing — you’ve seen those photos of crowded beaches and parks — but for young children? That’s a whole other challenge.

Here are some tips for getting your kids (especially those under 5) to care about wearing masks and steering six feet away from strangers.

Be honest (to a point)

Children have vivid imaginations, and keeping them in the dark can cause them to dream up their own dire scenarios, according to Jacqueline Sperling, a clinical psychologist at Harvard Medical School. Too much detail, however, can lead to anxiety.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends explaining to children that COVID-19 is a new virus that has made a lot of people sick, but doctors think that most people will be OK, especially children. For kid-friendly explanations from Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch, watch “The ABCs of COVID-19,” a town hall hosted by Sesame Street and CNN. It also covers basics like hand-washing.

Tell stories

Stories grab children’s attention and make difficult concepts easier to grasp. To explain why social distancing is important, one mother in Los Angeles compared it to pulling to the side of the road to let an ambulance pass. If you’d rather outsource the storytelling duties, download “My Hero is You,” a free children’s book developed by the United Nations and other agencies about a girl named Sara who rides a winged creature named Ario to educate other children about social distancing and COVID-19 prevention.

Make it a game

Children are more apt to practice social distancing if it also somehow feels fun. That’s the thinking behind the video game “Can You Save the World?” Designed in part by a British psychology professor, the game has children learn to dodge people on crowded sidewalks, collect masks and avoid sneezes to earn points.

Play dress-up

The CDC recommends that children over 2 wear a cloth face covering in public, but getting them to keep the face covering on is hard. Borrow a page from Halloween and make them fun. Buy a cool superhero, cat or dinosaur mask from Etsy. Or make one: YouTube has lots of how-to videos. It’s a craft project that protects your child and kills time during endless days at home.

Motivate, don’t bribe

Debates about using rewards to motivate children are endless, but parents trade favors for obedience all the time. Even the CDC signs off on rewarding good behavior (say, wearing a mask outside without fussing) with praise, a board game or an extra book at bedtime. For older children, a little money might help, at least in the short term, according to Emily Edlynn, a child psychologist and parenting columnist. And it’s really only bribery if you hand out the reward before the effort. Afterward? It’s reinforcement.

Use (gentle) discipline

No one likes threats. Child psychology experts say that threats hurt motivation and undermine parent-child relationships. But you can still take away privileges for not following the rules (like wandering too close to strangers without a mask). Just make sure you explain the consequences beforehand and make the punishment fit the fraction. Psychologists say it’s likely that your child is getting plenty of iPad time in quarantine as it is. Losing 15 minutes so bad?

Appeal to their better nature

It’s easy for children to get wrapped up in their own frustrations during quarantine. Try shifting the focus from their own needs to the needs of others. Psychologists encourage parents to model empathy with their children, widening their “circle of concern.” It’s easier for children to keep their distance if they’re really just a favor to their friends, because it helps keep them and their families healthy. The point is to drive in a deeper point about sacrifice: You’re not alone here; we are all in this together.
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