

April / May 2009

BERRY ELEMENTARY JAGUARS

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to April and Soon, May

We are happy to announce that the MSA testing has been completed and that your Berry Jaguars did an outstanding job! We were so proud to see how intense and efficient the students worked on the test. We are very proud of their perseverance and look forward to the results which should be made public sometime this summer.

Now is the time that we truly begin to prepare your students for the next grade. We have a great deal of teaching and learning to accomplish between now and the last day of school. It is important that you encourage your child to stay on top of completing their assignments and making sure that they are turned in on time. Hearing this message from you about the importance of keeping up with assignments lets your child know that school is serious and that you want nothing but the very best from them. They can do it!

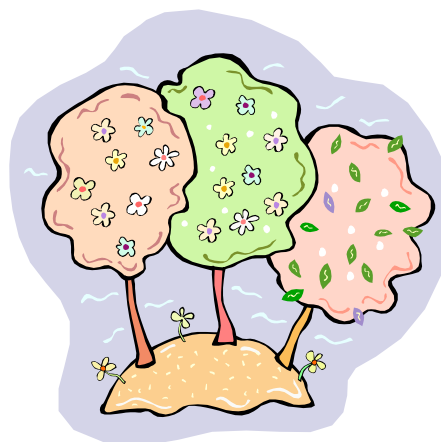
Mrs. Doris Shelton, who is a citizen of Charles County and not a Berry parent, donated \$500 to our school. We will use this money to help pay for lunch account balances, lost books, and Love Fund requests. We are extremely lucky to have citizens who care.

Finally, we would like to remind all parents that as the weather breaks and we are seeing warmer days, to keep in mind the dress code. Students should not wear shorts, skorts, or skirts that are above the

finger tips when their arms are by their sides. Students should not wear tank top shirts that are less than two fingers in width. Boys should not wear sport tank tops unless they have a short sleeve shirt under it. If students come to school dressed inappropriately, we will contact you to bring a change of clothes or we will outfit them with clothes from the nurse's office. For further information about the student dress code, please refer to the student agenda book or contact an administrator.

Our last newsletter will go home with students on the last day of school.

Mr. Evans, Principal
Mrs. Courtney, Vice Principal



GIFTED NEWS

Gifted Services Identification meetings are still going on at the school. All students who were nominated in grades 2 – 5 for possible gifted services will be sent a letter with a decision on their nomination by the end of May. Students who were identified last year as needing gifted services will not get another letter. They will continue to receive those services unless otherwise contacted. Please visit the “updated” Charles County Gifted Website for more gifted information, gifted links and upcoming Gifted Education events at: www.ccboe.com/gifted. Please call or email if you have any gifted questions or concerns. jperriello@ccboe.com

Joe Perriello



**RELAY FOR LIFE
JUNE 12, 2009
REGENCY FURNITURE STADIUM
OPENING CEREMONY BEGINS
AT 6:00 PM**

Thank you for supporting our baseball fundraiser. We exceeded our goal--\$150.00 was collected. Thank you so much. The baseballs are displayed in the entrance to Berry. Here at Berry so far this school year we have raised \$2,527.64 for Relay for Life. We have two teams—an adult team (Berry Bench Warmers) and a Children’s Team (Berry Jaguars Tracking Down A Cure). Mrs. Green is Captain of the Adult Team and Mrs. Nancy Murphy and Mrs. McGuire are Captains of the Children’s Team. If you are interested in having your child be on the Children’s Team,

registration instructions are below. We would love to have your children join us! The children walk for one hour. This year the walk will be a part of the opening ceremonies starting at 6:00 pm. The children will wear Berry Spirit Wear T-Shirts for the walk. New this year is that in order to receive a Relay For Life T-shirt the participant must raise \$100.00. If you have any questions you can call or e-mail Mrs. Nancy nmurphy@ccboe.com or 301-638-2330.

To register:

1. Log onto www.RelayForLife.org/charlesco
2. Click on Sign Up
3. Click on Join an existing team (under join up
4. Click on search for a team
5. Find Berry Jaguars Tracking Down A Cure Children’s Team—click on join
6. On page select a participation type, scroll down to Early Bird Participation registration, check it and then continue answering all the questions.

Thank you.





Coin Drive For Relay For Life

Dates: April 27th to May 1st

Why: To raise money to help find a cure for cancer

How: Your child can bring in pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters during this one week period. A collection bucket will be in every classroom.

No donation is too small.

Thank you for your support.

Relay for Life June 12 & 13, 2009
Regency Furniture Stadium

www.RelayForLife.org/charlesco



Nursing Station

What is autism?

Autism is one of a group of disorders known as autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). ASDs are [developmental disabilities](#) that cause substantial impairments in social interaction and communication and the presence of unusual behaviors and interests. Many people with ASDs also have unusual ways of learning, paying attention, and reacting to different sensations. The thinking and learning abilities of people with ASDs can vary—

from gifted to severely challenged. An ASD begins before the age of 3 and lasts throughout a person's life.

ASDs include [autistic disorder](#), [pervasive developmental disorder - not otherwise specified \(PDD-NOS](#), including atypical autism), and [Asperger syndrome](#). These conditions all have some of the same symptoms, but they differ in terms of when the symptoms start, how severe they are, and the exact nature of the symptoms. The three conditions, along with [Rett syndrome](#) and [childhood disintegrative disorder](#), make up the broad diagnosis category of pervasive developmental disorders.

Who is affected?

ASDs occur in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups and are four times more likely to occur in boys than in girls. CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring ([ADDM](#)) Network released data in 2007 that found about 1 in 150 8-year-old children in multiple areas of the United States had an ASD.

When can autism spectrum disorders be detected?

ASDs can often be detected as early as 18 months. While all children should be watched to make sure they are reaching developmental milestones on time, children in high-risk groups—such as children who have a parent or brother or sister with an ASD—should be watched extra closely. A child with any of the [warning signs of ASDs](#) should be checked by a health care professional.

Research shows that early intervention can greatly improve a child's development. CDC is working with national partners on a public awareness campaign to educate parents about how important it is to track their child's development in the first few years of life. The campaign, "[Learn the Signs. Act](#)

Early,” teaches parents, health care professionals, and child care providers about early childhood development, including early warning signs of autism and other developmental disabilities.

Is autism a new disorder?

Autism may seem like a modern disorder, but it’s not. People have probably lived with what we know today as autism spectrum disorders throughout history. Some of the earliest published descriptions of behavior that sounds like autism date back to the 18th century. But the disorder did not have a name until the middle of the 20th century.

Autism was first identified as a specific disorder in 1943 by child psychiatrist Dr. Leo Kanner. Based on a study of 11 children, Dr. Kanner published the first description of what he called “autistic disturbances of affective contact.”¹ At about the same time, German scientist Dr. Hans Asperger, based on his study of 400 children, described another form of autism that became known as Asperger syndrome. The criteria used to diagnose ASDs have changed many times since Kanner’s original description.

What causes autism?

We have learned a lot about the symptoms of ASDs and have improved efforts to track the disorders, but we still don’t know a lot about the causes of ASDs. Scientists think that both genes and the environment play a role, and there might be many causes that lead to ASDs.

Family studies have been most helpful in understanding how genes contribute to autism. Studies have shown that among identical twins, if one child has autism, then the other will be affected about 75% of the time. In non-identical twins, if one child has autism, then the other has it about 3% of the time. Also, parents who have a child

with an ASD have a 2%–8% chance of having a second child who is also affected.

For most people with ASDs, the cause is not known. But ASDs tend to occur more often than expected among people who have certain other medical conditions, including [Fragile X syndrome](#), [tuberous sclerosis](#), [congenital rubella syndrome](#), and untreated [phenylketonuria \(PKU\)](#). Some harmful drugs taken during pregnancy also have been linked with a higher risk of autism, specifically, the prescription drug [thalidomide](#).

[CDC’s Centers for Autism and Developmental Disabilities Surveillance and Epidemiology \(CADDRE\)](#) are working together on a large, population-based study to better understand the possible risk factors for and causes of autism. Called the Study to Explore Early Development ([SEED](#)), this project will help answer the many questions needed to find the causes of autism and—if possible—come up with strategies to prevent this complex disorder.

**For more information go to:
www.cdc.gov**

April Health Observances

Alcohol Awareness Month
Cancer Control Month
National Autism Awareness Month
National Child Abuse Prevention Month
National Minority Health Awareness Month