

## PS 11'S HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

**Spring has sprung and our garden science residency program for our pre-k and kindergarten students is back in session.**

PS 11 welcomes Farmer Kayra Vieczas our new instructor for the Garden Science Program. This program offers a great opportunity for our youngest learners to get outside and get their hands dirty. The goal is to provide students with hands-on exploration, inquiry, observation and learning about the life cycles that take place in the garden. During our garden science program students will learn about:

- The basic parts of a plant and it's function
- The seasonality plants in connection to their climate
- Explore and examine the diverse world of seeds
- The importance of food, water, and shelter
- The role of earth worms
- Compost building
- Planting and harvesting food

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

In spite of a global pandemic and weekly changes to the education schedule we remained PS 11 strong this past year. We re-imagined how we did things and thus your children have learned new things and our teachers have grown mastered new media for teaching. As parents you have adapted your schedules and had to be nimble during this trying time in the history of education. While we had to pause certain programs other aspects of our school such as our school garden actually thrived. We cannot thank you enough for getting our garden not only back into shape after the shut down but the most bountiful shape it has ever been in. It truly takes a village.

### A Bit about Farmer Kayra:

Farmer Kayra is from Santa Fe, New Mexico and attended a liberal arts college. During her years at college, she became environmentally



conscious and an activist who focused on the preservation of natural resources. Farmer Kayra enjoys activities like rock climbing and gardening. She hopes to bring her sense of adventure and awareness to the school community.

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# WHAT'S GROWING

# OUR SECRET GARDEN

## Compost Drop - Off

When: Tuesday, Friday  
Mornings & Garden  
Green-up days

Help us to sustain our school's soil health!



# PS11 BRÖKLYN

### DO COMPOST

- FRUIT & VEGETABLE SCRAPS
- FLOWERS
- COFFEE GROUNDS AND FILTERS
- LAWN CLIPPINGS
- DRY LEAVES
- EGG SHELLS
- SHREDDED PAPER
- TEA BAGS
- SAWDUST
- ASH

### DO NOT COMPOST

- BONES
- BREAD
- DAIRY PRODUCTS
- RICE
- CAT LITTER
- CHICKEN
- DIAPERS
- DISEASED OR INVASIVE PLANTS
- MEAT
- OILS & FATS
- PEANUT BUTTER

Our pest free compost bins are now ready to receive your families food scraps. The super rich compost will go right back into our garden helping to produce delicious fruits, vegetables and beautiful flowers (featured below).

While it may seem like a hidden secret PS 11's Hydroponics lab is alive and well. Led by 1st grade teacher Ms. Desirae Freeman the agriculture and life science curriculum for Grades 1 thru 3 was sadly put on pause for the 2020-2021 academic school year, as her skills were needed as a classroom rather than specialty teacher.

We are looking forward to its return in the 2021-2022 school year. For now enjoy pictures of the recent harvest of healthy greens that were shared with staff and sent home.



# WHOLE SCHOOL WHOLE CHILD WHOLE COMMUNITY

PS 11's School Wellness Council was formed in the spring of 2018. After several months of evaluating the whole school community it developed a set of recommendations in five focus areas that we should strive for. They remain as follows:

- 1) To offer healthy non-food rewards and promote healthy celebrations that limit high sugar, high sodium & high fat foods served in the classroom.
- 2) To promote STEM based educational experiences that empowers students to make informed decisions regarding behaviors that impact their health.
- 3) To ensure that all students participate in physical education for a minimum of 120 minutes per week via a comprehensive school physical activity program, supplemented by extracurricular events and activities.
- 4) To ensure that PS 11 shall at all times provide an equitable, safe, inclusive and positive school environment for all students, families, and staff.
- 5) To promote wellness in an environment that motivates each employee to improve their own health, as well as model healthy behaviors for our students.

## COVID VACCINES. HAVE YOU BEEN VACCINATED YET?

### ***Why should you get vaccinated?***

All of the available vaccines are effective at preventing serious illness and death from COVID 19, as well as reducing the spread of the virus from one person to another. As people get vaccinated the virus can no longer spread as easily from person to person. This is why cases are going down in NYC. Getting vaccinated is how our schools, neighborhoods and city will get back to normal.

### ***What about side effects?***

Most people may have some side effects when they get the vaccine. These may range from a sore arm at the injection site to flu-like symptoms that can last up to 36 hours. These are expected symptoms and they are a sign of a strong immune response which means your body is recognizing and learning how to fight off the virus. In spite of the recent very rare reports of blood clots in young women who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine it is still safer to get vaccinated than it is to get COVID. The city is able to offer you the vaccine of your choice so choose the one you are most comfortable with receiving.

### ***Can children less than 16 years of age get the vaccine?***

Not yet but trials in children for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are ongoing. So far the data suggests that the Pfizer vaccine is very effective in children as young as 12 years old. We are still waiting for information on children younger than 12. While children can't get the vaccine yet getting adults who are around them vaccinated is the best way to protect them.

*Courtesy of Dr Rachael Bedard PS 11 Parent*

# GARDEN GREEN UP

# CALENDAR

The School Wellness Council would like to thank the dozen of families who volunteered their time and talents to the school garden this past year.

## MAY 10TH

5:00 - 6 PM School Wellness Council Meeting via zoom. Join the call and learn how to have fun being a parent champion.

## MAY 22

Last Saturday Garden Green up of the School Year 11 am - 2 pm.



Farmer Kayra

