



Riverside School  
Princeton, NJ

Spring 2013  
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# Riverside School Counseling Newsletter

## What's New?

I hope everyone had a wonderful spring break! It's amazing that there are just a dozen weeks remaining in the school year. There is still so much left for us to accomplish!

NJASK testing is approaching quickly for our third, fourth and fifth grade students. Our fifth graders will take the test from May 6-9, while third and fourth graders test from May 13 – 16. Fourth grade has an extra day of testing on May 17 to take the science portion of the exam.

This can be a stressful time for some students (not to mention for parents as well). If you feel like your child could use some extra help managing stress or anxiety leading up to testing, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Additionally, I am always available to work one-on-one with students on a variety of issues. If your child is having trouble socially, emotionally or academically in school, you can still reach out to me. It's not too late!

Just during this past school year I have worked with students on numerous topics such as: organization, stress management, anger and coping strategies, separation anxiety, friendship building, respect, decision-making, responsibility, cooperation, and more. These short-term sessions usually occur weekly and could last anywhere from a few weeks to a few months depending on the situation. If you think your child would benefit from some one-on-one or group work, I would love to hear from you!

I hope you all have a great rest of the school year!!

Sincerely,

Ben Samara  
Riverside School Counselor

## Tip to Develop Your Child's Organizational Skills

Excerpts taken from the article "12 Ways to Develop Your Child's Organizational Skills," available at Scholastic.com.

Keep a family calendar. Track everyone's activities on a prominent and accessible calendar, encouraging your child to write her own entries and reference the calendar when making plans. You also might consider checking schedules and updating the calendar as a family over Sunday breakfast.

Introduce checklists. Whether it's as simple as "3 Things To Do Before Bed" or "What To Take On Vacation," creating and referring to lists together will develop your child's ability to strategize tasks and organize his time.

Get ready the night before. This one's always tough — for both of you — but it does work if you can get in the habit.

Buy your child a planner. Ask him to help you pick it out or choose one that will appeal to him so he'll be excited about using it. Having his own planner will show him you consider his time valuable and encourage him to create a schedule. Be sure to routinely coordinate the information with your family calendar to avoid conflicts.

Organize schoolwork. Make sure your child's keeping notes, homework, handouts, and graded assignments in separate folders in a binder. Try to check her backpack nightly and set an time aside each week to go through her binder and get things sorted.

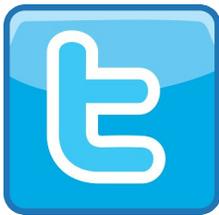
Establish a homework routine. Help your child make a "study hour" schedule and set up a comfortable workspace -- whether her room or the kitchen table. Encourage her to stick to the schedule even when she doesn't have homework (She can read, review notes, or even do a crossword puzzle.)

Create a homework supply box. Fill a box with office supplies and encourage your child to store pens, paper, measurement tools, and a calculator in it so he'll have what he needs on hand.

## Mr. Samara is on Twitter!

As part of an ongoing effort to provide parents with multiple sources of valuable information, you can now follow me on Twitter @BenSamaraRS.

From this account, I will post and retweet helpful articles and tips related to parenting and child social-emotional development.

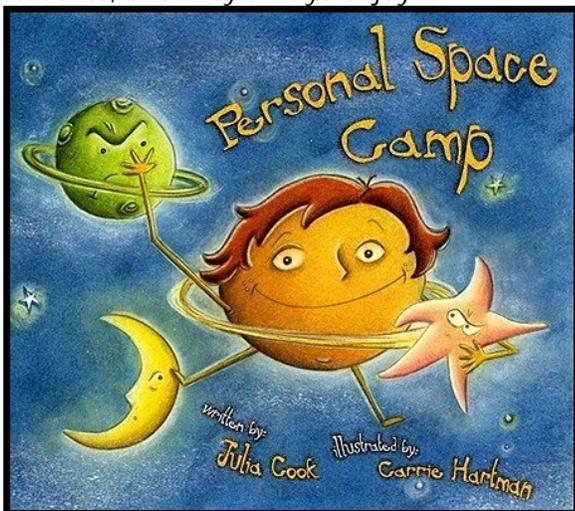


## Book of the Month

Personal Space Camp  
by Julia Cook

"Louis, a self-taught space expert, is delighted to learn that his teacher has sent him to the principal's office to attend personal space camp. Eager to learn more about lunar landings, space suits, and other cosmic concepts, Louis soon discovers that he has much to learn about personal space right here on Earth."

This is a great book to teach young children about personal space. I have read this book with our Kindergarteners and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade students, and they always enjoy it!



## Helpful Websites

### Funology

<http://www.funology.com>

A cool, kid-friendly website with jokes, boredom busters, wacky facts, magic tricks.

### Seussville

<http://www.seussville.com>

The complete world of Dr. Seuss online. On this interactive site, kids can explore classic Seuss books and also view informative videos.

### All for the Boys

<http://www.allfortheboys.com>

This helpful site for parents features craft and do-it-yourself activities to keep those boisterous boys entertained when they start to get bored.

## Important Dates

May 6-9 (Gr. 5) & May 13-17 (Gr. 3/4)

NJASK Testing

May 27

Memorial Day

June 19

5<sup>th</sup> Grade Moving On Ceremony

June 20

Last Day of School for Students!

## About Mr. Samara

Ben Samara is Riverside's School Counselor. He is available to answer any question you may have about your child's academic, emotional or social progress.

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