

# Anxiety in the time of Elections

In education one gets to work with a lot of children (which is the best part), as Principal you get to work with many when they are distressed (one of the more unfortunate parts). Anyone in this kind of role has a window into human behavior when experiencing stress. What is likely is that they, like me, come to understand how similar we all are in terms of our needs, our vulnerabilities and our predilection to misinterpretation of other's intentions. (I must admit that this has not led me to any great insight as to how to avoid this, just recognize it and observe the similarities and patterns.) One unusual pattern I have observed corresponds to the period we are currently engaged - presidential elections. It seems that in the period preceding presidential elections there is a spike of anxiety among young children. Due to their age it is not likely they are actually interested in politics, and yet the pattern of this spike in anxiety suggests they seem to be effected by it.

Children love predictability. It is why routines are so important to them and transitions can be so challenging. Therefore, logically, a lack of predictability — namely uncertainty — would tend to elevate anxiety. Life has always had degrees of “background noise” however ubiquitous presence of media in all its different forms has steadily increased the volume of that background noise. While young children are not likely waking up on Sunday morning to watch “Face the Nation”, the noise of political discourse does filter into their lives. During the election period the number of occasions that apocalyptic or catastrophic statements are made increases dramatically. It seems that this is the dominant political strategy: “The world is broken and, unless I am elected, it will be the end of the world as we know it”. As adults we can put this in context and, as it comes from the mouth of a politician, we know it is likely false (sorry, got political there). Also during this period, the likelihood of witnessing vehement and emotionally sensational disagreement also increases, and, while the child may not understand the substance of that disagreement, they do understand the emotion behind it- and are affected by it. A child may be repeatedly presented with this dilemma: This person, that so many adults are paying attention to, is saying that the world is dangerous or somehow headed to a bad place (which they should be afraid of).

Understandably, a child may feel an increased sense of uncertainty as a result --which may then translate to anxiety. Whether conscious or unconscious, this anxiety can manifest itself in a variety of behaviors from increased difficulty with transitions, separation anxiety, distractibility, loss of sleep, nightmares, fear of unfamiliar situations, and increased emotional sensitivity.

If there is a correlation between this cycle in our democracy and anxiety in our children, understanding this as a possible source, can help us help them.

- Limit what a child is exposed to (social media especially) .
- Provide context and reassurance to the statements a child may hear, (“No, Honey, we aren't really going to move to Canada if [Name] is elected”).
- Model calm rational reactions to inflammatory statements.

Children quite often gauge their level of concern based on how they see the adults respond. The most important thing we can do is demonstrate patience and reassurance. You know your child better than anyone, so you know how effective talking about or acknowledging the emotions they are feeling or witnessing would be. Reassuring them that even though that person on tv (radio etc) is upset, that does not mean they need to be. This is also something as adults we should remind ourselves: **We will be all right.** It is the role of elections to provoke us and fear is a tool to this end, but it is not a certainty. Our children are watching and learning from us and gauging from our reactions how uncertain their world should feel to them, and, until they are old enough to do something about it, it is our job to make sure it is a less uncertain place.

## If you were President what would you do first?



President Lili had some ideas, the first of which was to establish a Cabinet of advisors (below). On her first day: 1) Establish strong respectful relationships with other countries, 2) Make colleges affordable and encourage graduates to become teachers. 3) Equal pay for women, and 4) get a Great Dane.

Reflective of Lili's ability to “cross the aisle” and “build bridges”, she appointed her older brother as VP (now THAT is a peaceful house) . On Tag's first day he would establish a Fossil Fuel Tax to fund efforts to combat Climate Change .



Nick was appointed as Secretary of State. His platform is to establish Free Taco Day where both soft taco and hard taco lovers could unite and see that they are not all that different. Peace through understanding Tacos.



(They have my vote!)





**FREE** Junior Squash Clinic for any and all 6-17 year olds @ the Dartmouth Squash courts on **Monday March 28 or Wednesday March 30 from 6-7.30pm.**

**EMPOWER LACROSSE CLUB** has a few more spots open for our 2020/21 tournament teams (June 26 and July 16&17).

Please e-mail Marianne Bocock Doyle: [bocockdoyle@me.com](mailto:bocockdoyle@me.com)  
Register by April 1, 2016 at [www.empowerlacrosseclub.com](http://www.empowerlacrosseclub.com).

Fun warm ups, **quality squash instruction with a 4:1 student to coach ratio or better**, skills, drills and mini tournaments. All required equipment except indoor shoes is supplied.



**Menus**

Week of 3/21 to 3/25 • Week of 3/28 to 4/1



- Learn and understand the basic rules, tactics and squash shots.
- Learn the basic techniques of hitting a squash ball.
- Learn more about the junior squash program at Dartmouth!



Al a carte Fruit and Milk are available everyday



Please e-mail [theo.h.woodward@dartmouth.edu](mailto:theo.h.woodward@dartmouth.edu) if you would like to register your child/children.

**We will be offering a regular clinic beginning Monday April 4 running through to Wednesday May 18.**



**Robotics summer camps in Hanover**

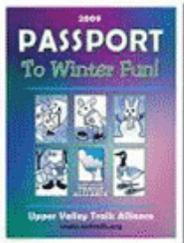
After two years of providing after school extracurricular robotics, STEM

Robotix is now offering several full day camps, including one in early summer. There will be two (2) camps for new students (or as a refresher) and up to three (3) camps for returning and/or experienced students. Camps are generally appropriate for students entering Grades 4 - 8.

- EV3 Level 1 (June 20 -24)
  - Tank Bots (July 11 - 15)
  - Walking Robots (July 11 - 15)
  - EV3 Level 1 (July 25 - 29)
  - FLL Focus (August 8 -12)
- Robot Game competition design, strategy & practice

Detailed information about the camps (hours, content, cost, extended hours supervision, etc.) is available on the STEM Robotix website, link below. Please contact us if you have any questions. <http://www.stem-robotix.com> or call (603) 653-0060

<b>Monday</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Chicken Sliders, WG Bun Roasted Fries Mixed Vegetables Fruit  Option: <b>BYO Salad</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Chili con Carne (Local Beef) Brown Rice Corn Bread Fresh Fruit  Option: <b>BYO Salad</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Local Beef Burger, WG Bun w/Cheese Option Oven Roasted Potatoes Green Beans Fruit  Option: <b>BYO Salad</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Chicken Stew & WG Biscuits Brown Rice Pilaf Fruit & Juice  Option: <b>BYO Salad</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Cheese or Chef's Choice Pizza Salad Bar Peas & Carrots Fresh Fruit  Sandwich Option: Egg Salad	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Cheese or Chef's Choice Pizza Baked Beans Salad Bar Fruit Salad  Sandwich Option: Egg Salad
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> All Beef Hot Dogs Potato Salad Homemade Baked Beans Watermelon  Option: <b>BYO Salad</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Penne Pasta with Bolognese WG Roll Corn on the Cob Fresh Fruit  Option: <b>BYO Salad</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>HOT LUNCH:</b> Popcorn Chicken Roasted Potatoes Green Beans Salad Bar Fresh Fruit  Sandwich Option: Tuna Salad	<b>NO SCHOOL</b>



**Passports Due Friday  
Please turn them in at  
the main office!**



Contact me at: [JValence@LymeSchool.org](mailto:JValence@LymeSchool.org) Phone: 795-2125 or just stop by.  
You may print color copies of the Newsletters at: [www.LymeSchool.org](http://www.LymeSchool.org)

