



# NEWSLETTER

## What Happened to You? Seeing Through the Trauma Lens

When we see a student acting out, being defiant, or behaving in ways that seem strange or unpredictable, our first instinct is often to ask, “What’s wrong with you?” But what if we changed the question to, “What happened to you?” This simple shift in perspective is at the heart of what educators and psychologists call the trauma lens. It invites us to see not just a child’s behavior, but the story behind it. The seminar I recently attended, “Putting on Your Trauma Lens,” reminded me that every child’s behavior has meaning. Much of the anger, withdrawal, or emotional instability we see in children—or even in adults—often comes from early experiences of pain, fear, or neglect that shaped how their brains learned to survive.

Unlike most animals, human beings are born with brains still under construction. In early childhood, billions of neural connections form, shaping how children experience love, safety, and trust. But when trauma enters their world before the brain is fully developed, that trauma can literally change the brain’s wiring. Studies by neuroscientists such as Bruce Perry and Bessel van der Kolk show that early trauma can disrupt emotional regulation, learning, and social connection.

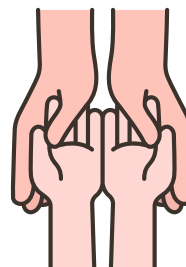
A powerful example comes from the island of Kauai in Hawaii. Developmental psychologist Dr. Emmy Werner led a remarkable 40-year study of every child born there in 1955—nearly 700 children. Many grew up in poverty, in homes marked by conflict or abuse. Yet about one-third of them became healthy, capable, and caring adults. Dr. Werner coined the term “resilience” to describe their ability to recover and grow despite adversity. What made the difference was simple but profound: every resilient child had at least one caring, stable adult in their life—someone who believed in them, accepted them, and loved them unconditionally.

Other research, like the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study by Felitti and Anda (1998), confirms this truth: early trauma can have lifelong effects on health and behavior, but nurturing relationships can heal the wounds that trauma leaves behind. What’s striking is that most childhood abuse and neglect do not come from strangers—they come from within the family. And yet, it is often within the family, or through the compassionate care of teachers and mentors, that healing begins. We may not be perfect parents or educators, but every moment of love, forgiveness, and patience helps a child’s brain—and heart—recover.

So when we face a difficult student, let us pause before reacting. Instead of asking, “What’s wrong with you?” let’s ask, “What happened to you?” Let’s look through the trauma lens—to see pain instead of defiance, to see a wounded child instead of a “problem child.” Because when children are seen, understood, and loved, they begin to heal—and when healing begins, resilience grows.



**Yeon Ho Song**  
Principal

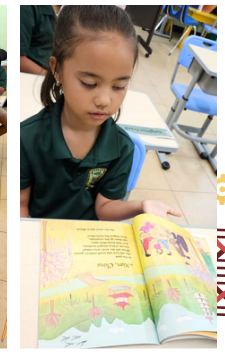




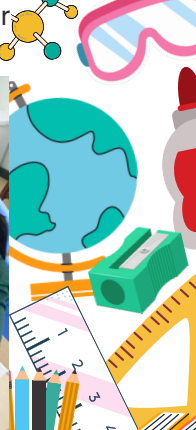
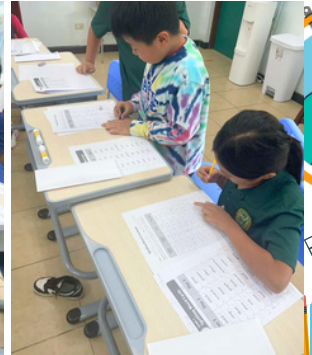
**Kindergarten** - Left to right: Students learning measurement by measuring individual's foot, learning what objects sink or float, and working together to complete a puzzle.



**1st Grade** - Left to right: Counting SDA coins after earning a 100% on Science test, using linking cubes to solve math problems, and growing their mental Math skills.



**2nd Grade** - Left to right: Working on their writing, growing their mental Math skills, and reading in their downtime in class.



**3rd and 4th grade** - Left to right: Using technology for research and vocabulary art, creating vocabulary flash cards, and using spelling words to learn about fractions.



**5th & 6th Grade** - Left to right: Practicing songs for the Christmas program and drawing portraits during Art class.

# LOVE ONE ANOTHER *as* I HAVE LOVED YOU

JOHN 13:34

## October Birthdays

Rhea Lei Raymond	6
Jebon Jinna	10
Rowan Sakisat	12
Deighton Muña	22
Owen Li	26
Alan Yu	27
Castiel Albert	27



7th & 8th Grade - Left to right: Students working on reading comprehension and racing to answer questions about vascular and nonvascular plants!

## Physical Education



## Friday Chapel



# Dates to Know

(Schedule Changed from Oct. 28 to Oct. 22)

## Wednesday, October 22

Pre-Kinder Parent Teacher Conference

(Schedule Changed from Oct. 20 to Oct. 23)

## Thursday, October 23

Elementary Parent Teacher Conference

(Early pick up 12:30 pm. No After School.)

## October 27 to 31

Spiritual Emphasis Week

## Wednesday, October 29

Preschool Parent Teacher Conference

## Thursday, October 30

Toddler Parent Teacher Conference

# Child Development Center



**Toddlers** – Left to right: Exploring alphabet learning by painting and using letter stamps, while also enjoying some pumpkin coloring!



**Preschool** – Left to right: Investigating the number 7 as they grasp the ideas of heavy and light. They sort different object pictures by cutting them out and gluing them into one of two boxes—one for heavy items, the other for light ones.

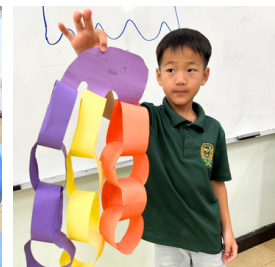


**Pre-Kinder** – Left to right: Practicing to recognize and write their names in fun, creative ways! They used colorful gel bags for letter formation, painted their names, and made vibrant name collages—building fine motor skills and name recognition along the way.

## After School Academy

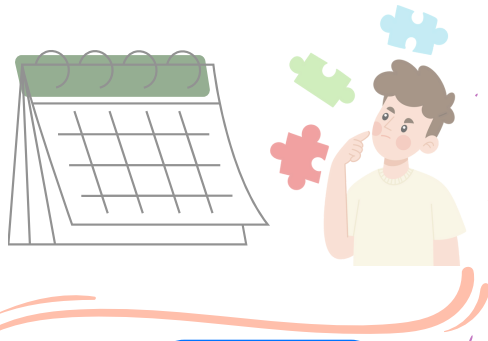


### Indoor Play



### Sports

### Art Class



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