



Between Us...

... a monthly communication newsletter with and for our parents.

October 25, 2013 Vol. 32, No. 02

Dates Of Special Interest

November

- 1 staff work day
- 3 Students return PM
- 8 Student departure day
- 10 Students return PM
- 15 Student departure day
- 17 Students return PM
- 22 Student departure day
- 24 Students return PM
- 27 Weds Student departure day**
- 28-29 Thanksgiving break**



December

- 1 Students return PM
- 6 Student departure day
- 8 Students return PM
- 13 Student departure day
- 15 Students return
- 20 Student departure day
- 23-Jan 3 Winter break



January

- 5 Students return PM

Message from the Superintendent



Alex H. Slappey

Osmosis Unconscious Learning

Some of my earliest memories involve sitting on the living room floor and playing with my cereal box cars while listening to my father discuss something or the other with a friend. Often the subject was how to repair or build something. My dad was quite handy with tools and neighbors often came to him for handyman advice.

Of course, once I started to lose my hearing I no longer benefited from those little gems. It wasn't until I was much older that I realized how much I had missed out because of my hearing loss.

“Children are like wet cement.
Whatever falls on them
makes an impression.”

Dr. Haim Ginott

Learning by osmosis is a vital aspect of a child's development, one that many folks don't think about. Osmosis is an unconscious process. It's not the deliberate learning you find in a classroom, but rather the subtle acquisition of information without even realizing you're learning.

We all learn by osmosis, but most of us don't realize just how important it is to the development of a child. When educators talk about “immersion” in a language, they are talking about learning language via osmosis. It's the same thing for cultural immersion.

Message from Director cont.

Language isn't the only thing learned by osmosis. Pretty much anything can be learned this way. Social mores, cultural mores are all learned via osmosis as well. In fact some research has cited osmosis for up to 70% of the information children acquire.

Throughout my elementary and secondary school days I was considered a bit naïve, rather socially inept. Back in the days I just thought I was a doofus, just not very bright.

When I arrived at Gallaudet I noticed that the kids from residential schools were more savvy, more socially aware than I was. I didn't think anything of it until I learned about osmosis in graduate school.

This is one of the reasons I believe a good residential school is so important to those deaf and hard of hearing children who use sign language. At WSD the students and staff all use ASL in their communications. Not only do our students receive their formal education directly in an accessible communication mode, but they are exposed to the rich and varied language models of the various staff and students around them.

“Language is the blood of the soul
into which thoughts run
and out of which they grow.”
Oliver Wendell Holmes

Schools like WSD have a crucial core of students and staff who are already fluent in ASL. This, combined with a 24/5 ASL environment, provides that essential element that is so vital to language acquisition as well as a wide range of other knowledge.

This allows our students to acquire a rich and deep foundation in not only language, but cultural and social competencies as well. In turn these lead to a well rounded successful individual.

“I have been a believer
in the magic of language since,
at a very early age, I discovered that some words got
me into trouble and others got me out.”
Katherine Dunn

WSD Birthdays



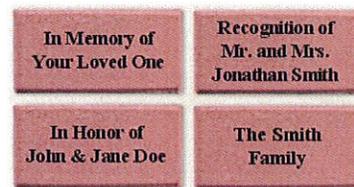
November

- 6 Jordan Gatch
- 8 Caitlyn Pocza
- 9 Wyatt Keller
- 18 Jesus Romero
- 22 Kadedra Jackson
- 23 Michael Schultz
- 26 Veronica Duran
Donovan Sullivan

December

- 2 Damon Hopp
- 8 Alexander Kronforst
- 12 Kathleen Laurent
Lena Henningfield
- 22 Tania Rooker
- 25 Calvin Cuppy
- 28 Roberto Gonzalez
- 29 Briana Robertson

Commemorative Brick Sales



You may order a commemorative brick to be placed in the courtyard of Chesebro Hall.

See enclosed order form for more information.



Talking around the kids: 5 ways to prevent problems

Provided By: myjoyonline

Think your kids are too young to understand your grown-up conversations? Think again.

"In my practice, parents are constantly shocked by what kids have overheard," says Brad Sachs, PhD, a family psychologist in Columbia, MD and author of *The Good Enough Child* and *The Good Enough Teen*.

"But as soon as children can talk, they're listening to what you say," he says.

Kids can be upset and confused by overheard adult conversations. But they may not tell you what they heard -- and you won't even know they're worried.

Before your kid repeats something mortifying in front of your mother-in-law -- or worse -- it's time to start speaking more carefully.

Talking Around the Kids: 6 Things to Avoid

What shouldn't you discuss when little ears could hear?

Fraught topics: Be careful talking with your spouse about big issues -- like financial problems or a family crisis. Your kids are listening. Kids are magnetically drawn toward arguments and emotional discussions, says Eileen Kennedy-Moore, PhD, a psychologist in Princeton, N.J., and coauthor of *Smart Parenting for Smart Kids: Nurturing Your Child's True Potential*. However, they may not really understand what's going on. Their interpretations may be scarier than what's actually happening.

What to do instead: "If something big is going on in your household, trying to hide it from your kids won't work," says Kennedy-Moore. "Give them the basic facts." The most important detail is how these changes will affect your child.

Trash talk: Are you always criticizing about your child's teacher, your mother, or your ex-husband?

What to do instead: Stop. You're modeling bad behavior for your kids. You may also say something mean about a person your kids care about -- and that can be deeply unsettling for them.

Criticism of your kids: Do you tend to vent about the frustrations of parenthood on the phone? Be careful. "It can be really hurtful if your kids overhear you criticizing them or talking about some mistake they made," says Kennedy-Moore. "They're likely to feel ashamed and then angry."

What you should do instead: Don't get in the habit of complaining about your kids. "Be discreet about your kids' indiscretions," says Kennedy-Moore. Try not to repeat them to others.

Complaining: Adults tend to complain a lot -- especially about their jobs. What's the problem? You're modeling a bad attitude that your kids could apply to school -- or later in life when they have jobs.

What you should do instead: Talk about the positive aspects of your work. "If you worked on an interesting project recently, make sure to mention that," says Kennedy-Moore.

Upsetting world events: "For kids, the world is a small place," says Kennedy-Moore. "They may overhear you talking about the news and assume that burglars are going to be coming to their house, or a tsunami may hit their town."

What you should do instead: You shouldn't shield your kid completely from world events. Just help them put the news in context and reassure them, Kennedy-Moore says.

Swearing: Many adults swear in front of their kids on occasion. Don't overreact when your kids imitate you -- that will just make the words more exciting.

What you should do instead: Try hard not to swear in front of your kids -- and never swear at them, says Kennedy-Moore. If you can't seem to control your profane outbursts, Kennedy-Moore has a suggestion. "Tell your kids to collect a quarter from you every time you swear," she tells WebMD. "They'll like doing that a lot."

Even if you're careful, your kids will wind up overhearing things that they shouldn't. Here are tips on how to handle that when it happens -- as well as suggestions for making it less likely.

Ask what they heard: If you suspect your kids have overheard something, ask them. Tell them that they won't get in trouble if they tell the truth. They probably know that eavesdropping is wrong, so they may not want to reveal it.

Reassure them: Help your kids put what they heard in perspective. If they're upset about an argument you had with your spouse, explain that adults sometimes disagree but that you'll work it out -- and that arguments do not mean you're getting a divorce.

Be proactive: Don't think you can hide something big from your kids -- like losing a job or the illness of a close relative. "Trying to keep kids in the dark about things like that just doesn't work," says Sachs. Instead, level with them in an age-appropriate and reassuring way. You'll spare them a lot of confusion and anxiety later.

Get privacy when you need it: Have something sensitive you need to discuss? Do it somewhere else. Go for a walk. Close the bedroom door for a few minutes. Don't try to whisper or talk in code and hope your kids won't notice.

Allow selective eavesdropping: There is one real benefit to a child's tendency to listen in.

"One of the best ways to praise the child is indirectly," says Kennedy-Moore. "If your child overhears you talking to grandma about how hard she is working in math class, that can really boost the child's self-esteem." Kids are more likely to believe your praise when you're not saying it to them.

WISCONSIN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF Firebirds



This fall, the WSD Firebirds boys' football and girls' volleyball have produced a successful season. The boys' football record is 6-1. They have one more game remaining. The girls' volleyball record is 18-7 with 4 games remaining. The middle school volleyball team wraps-up with one of the most improved seasons.

The Lady Firebirds girls' volleyball team won the Central States Schools for the Deaf (CSSD) Volleyball tournament hosted at the Ohio School for the Deaf. **Kori Koss** and **Ka Youa Xiong** were named on the All-Tournament team. The girls' team also went to the Great Plains School for the Deaf (GPSD) Volleyball Tournament hosted at the Arkansas School for the Deaf where they finished in 3rd place! **Anna Dorst**, **Kori Koss**, and **Ka Youa Xiong** were named on the All-Tournament team. Congratulations to the girls!



On October 5th, the Homecoming court began just before the Football game. The weather was rainy but this did not stop us from making the announcement of the King and Queen of the Homecoming court for 2013. We had over 400 fans and alumnus come for the WSD homecoming weekend. Homecoming also included the open house of the new high school building Chesebro Hall. Finally we had a Sports Hall of Fame banquet that evening to recognize five champions' teams from 1974-1977 Football and Wrestling teams. The weekend concluded with both the football and volleyball teams defeating the Iowa Bobcats!

It was great to have a COED WSD flag football team for five to seven years olds. It was very exciting to see cute kids run for touchdowns. It is what our flag football team did all the season. Compared to first few practices where kids had to learn how to play football, it was a pleasant improvement. The coaches had to teach them from the scratch. Kids had to learn what wide receiver, center, guards, and running back means. At first, they would just run in circles or even the opposite way. All the kids thought it was fun to chase their friends while the coaches were waving their hands, trying to get them to run for touchdown. Then they started playing games and started to catch on as to how football should be played. No scores or records of wins/losses were kept but we thought our team did a great job. We ran for touchdowns and had fun." From the Coaches Justin Vollmar & Kevin Healy



The Firebird Athletic Department has announced the four recipients (one male, one female from high school and middle school) of the Firebirds' Student-Athlete of the Month, **Tao Yi Page** and **Anna Dorst** for the female and **Julian Ortiz** and **Tanner Evans** for the male for the month of September. Congratulations to each of these individuals.

Some of you have asked me about the addresses of away games; They are posted on the school website www.wsd.k12.wi.us . You can find the athletics link, in the left column you will see School Addresses and then click on it.

Please be sure to FOLLOW US on Twitter and Instagram for the latest scores, news and information at #WSDeafAthletics. Also LIKE on our Wisconsin School for the Deaf Facebook page! If you already did, thank you for your support!

WSD SPIRIT STORE
Get Geared Up For The School Year

Dozens of New Items!



WSD offers a merchandise store on the schools website, www.wsdfirebirds.com, you can purchase many excellent items online. SUPPORT OUR FIREBIRDS TEAMS!

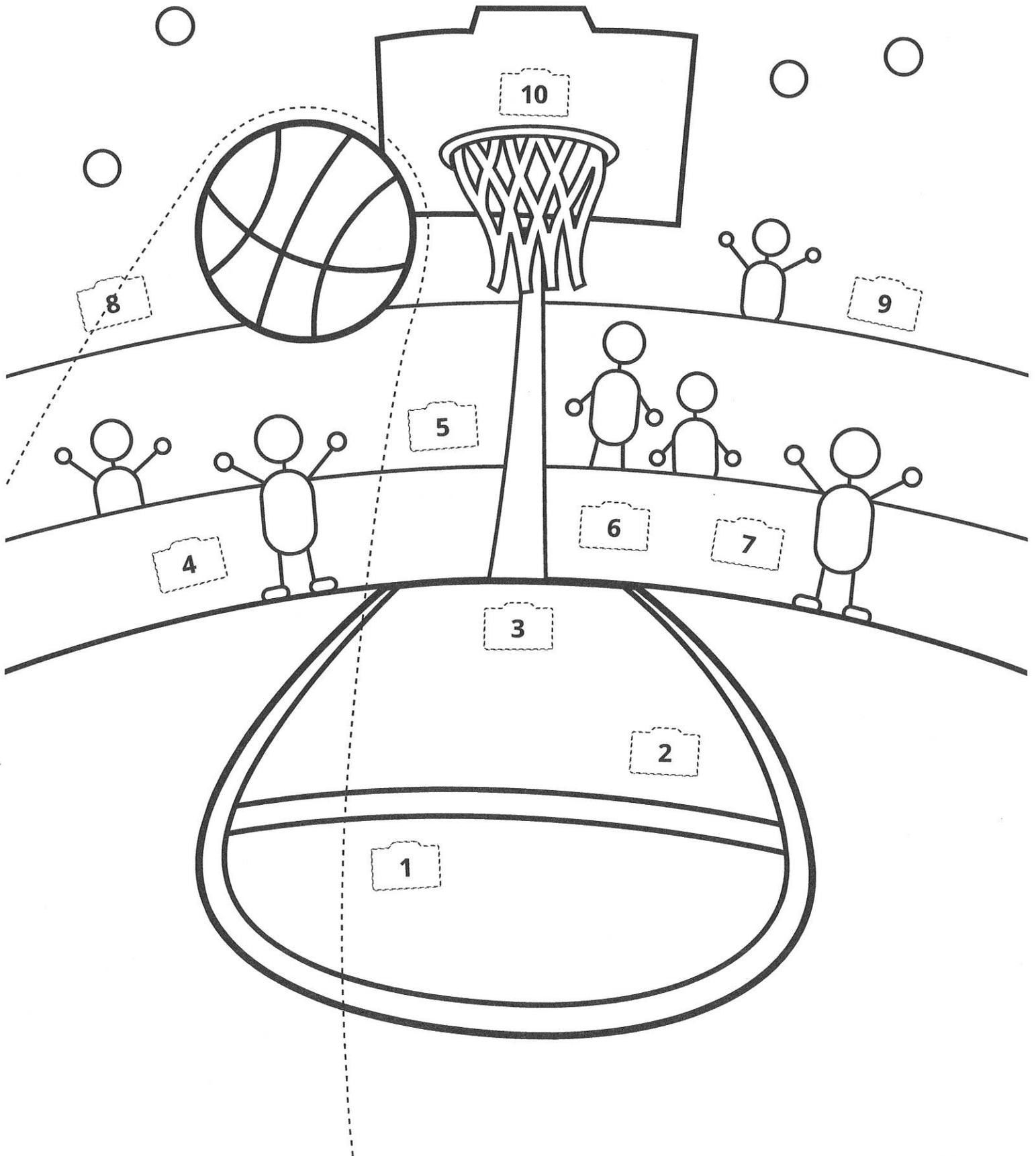
Best regards,

Matthew Eby, Athletic Director



SCORE ONE FOR YOUR SCHOOL!

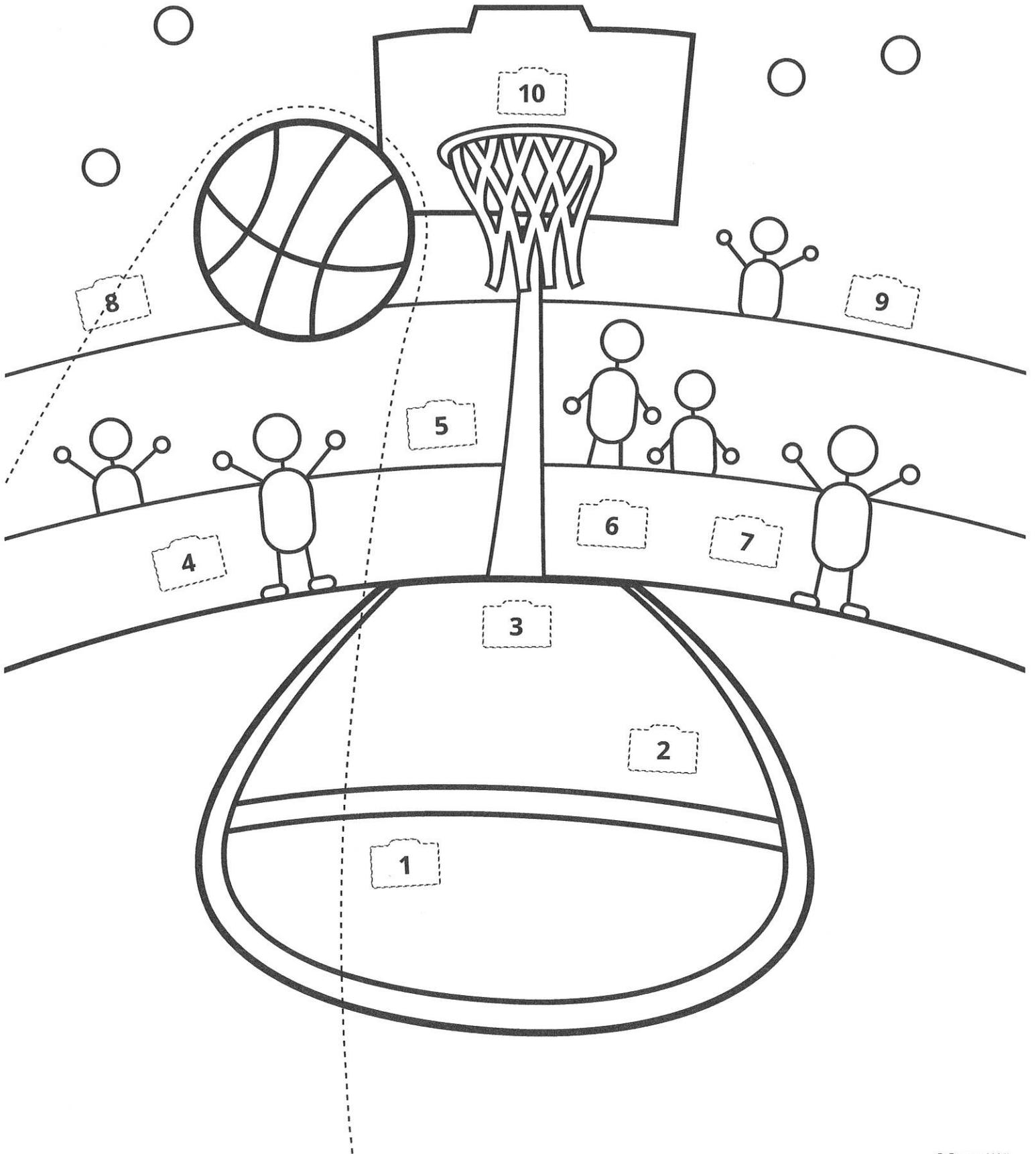
Thank you for helping! Every Box Top you collect is worth 10¢ for your school. To see more ways to earn cash for your school, go to btfe.com!





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