

# Body Flow classes motivate students to ‘build’ bodies, brain cells

**By Jessica Marsala**

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Remove your socks and shoes.

That directive is the first indication that middle school students at Holy Angels Catholic School, Mother Seton Academy and the Sisters Academy of Baltimore are expected to leave their comfort zones during fitness classes offered through a partnership coordinated by a local outreach and a chain of health and fitness clubs.

The Baltimore chapter of Christ Child Society began partnering with Brick Bodies this school year with the encouragement of Cathleen White, a parishioner of St. Pius X in Rodgers Forge.

White trains at Brick Bodies’ Belvedere Square facility, and proposed that [Lynne Brick](#), founder and president of the chain, teach a couple of Body Flow classes to supplement the children’s physical education classes, as well as the wellness program of Christ Child Society, which also has tutoring and book donation programs.

Brick contends that there is a “big gap” in students’ knowledge of how to live healthy lifestyles, a view supported by data recently released by the Centers for Disease Control, in its 2012 combined National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey and National Youth Fitness Survey.

According to the surveys, only one in four 12- to-15 year olds participate in the recommended 60 minutes of moderate or more intense exercise daily.

“Their whole world is so full of hustle and bustle,” said Brick, of adolescents’ lives, particularly those living in cities. “They were lacking in health and wellness.”

A former nurse at the Maryland Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore and a graduate of Towson University, Brick consented to White’s suggestion, citing a personal

philosophy of helping others.

Brick, who worships at Church of the Nativity in Timonium, said the fitness venture she began with her husband, Victor, in the 1980s, is a “Christian-based organization. “Our core values are loyalty, integrity and service, the whole concept of serving others as Christ wanted us to serve others,” she said.

She said the Body Flow discipline is “inviting” because it involves “a little bit” of yoga, tai chi, Pilates, stretching and meditation, and it “levels the whole playing field for kids of all ages, fitness levels, abilities and disabilities.”

Classes - which both White and the schools’ administrators hope will recur monthly, pending availability of funding - have received positive feedback.

Holy Angels Assistant Principal Meghan Cosgrove, who also teaches science and moderates a cooking club at the pre-K through eighth grade institution, said that her students, who have physical education once weekly, “thoroughly enjoyed” learning from Brick and her instructors.

“She (Brick) kind of put it more on their level,” Cosgrove said. “She was showing them exactly what to do: She would walk around and move their hands or feet.”

Principal Laura Minakowski said that Mother Seton Academy, which had its first session of Body Flow Jan. 10, views the classes as a way to enhance the grade 6-8 institution’s holistic education.

She said her students have already been introduced to tai chi as part of their prayer and meditation classes. The switch to a more healthful meal provider about two years ago supplemented Mother Seton Academy’s wellness efforts.

Brick suggested that fitness classes such as Body Flow benefit more than just the students’ physical well-being.

“Kids moving more,” she said, “helps to build brain cells, creates new neural pathways.”

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