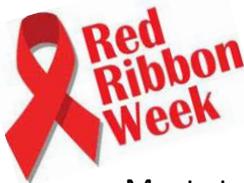


Guidance News - November, 2018

During the month of October, we discussed what it looks like to be responsible and respectful to others. We talked about how to use good manners in a variety of situations, the Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship), and how to be a good listener. In addition, we talked about how to show respect when students are online, not just when they are talking to someone in person.



We also talked about healthy choices for Red Ribbon week in some of the classes. Kindergarten students did an activity where they were asked to identify healthy vs. unhealthy foods. Students in third and fourth grades had the opportunity to practice tools that they can use to move between the zones.

Most strategies were focused on calming their bodies if they were in the yellow or red zone, which included focusing on their breathing and practicing yoga poses. They also did some active exercises like sit-ups and jumping jacks to get their bodies moving and get rid of extra energy. Ask your student which tools work well for them when they are trying to calm their body down.

In November we will be discussing bullying and how to be an upstander. Some classes will also be discussing cyberbullying. This continues to be an issue with students and several have already experienced it at this age, so we want to make sure we give them tools so they can learn what to do if they experience it. This month's parent tip sheet talks about the subtleties of cyberbullying, what to do about it, and when to get offline and talk things through in person. Cyberbullying comes in all different forms, and it's good to be able to recognize different ways students can experience cyberbullying and address it right away.

Finally, I will be available during conferences on Wednesday, November 14th if you would like to set up a time to talk. I will be at Winkler until about 4pm, and then at Lyons Center from about 4:15-7pm. Please feel free to visit me at either school based on what time works best for you. I will also be available by phone if you are not able to attend in person. I look forward to talking with you!

Jean Freund
School Counselor

Digital Drama

When it comes to discussing social media, it's important that adults and kids speak the same language. What grown-ups think of "cyberbullying" might be explained away by kids as "digital drama." But it's not trivial. Digital drama brews in the offline world and simmers online when kids feel emboldened to say or do things that they wouldn't face-to-face. Checking in with kids and observing them as they interact with technology can ensure your conversations are productive and helpful.

- **Ask how they are ... then ask again.**

It may seem simple, but ask your kids how they are doing on a daily basis. Also, watch for telltale signs that they are suffering from digital drama — a change in mood or behavior — as your kids interact with their phone and other devices. They may be absorbing subtle social messages in not-so-healthy ways. Ask lots of questions to determine how your kids view media and interact with technology. What are their favorite tools? Why do they value technology? What are some benefits as well as pitfalls of our 24/7 world?

- **Hit the pause button.**

If your child is on the receiving end of someone else's hurtful online behavior, encourage him to "take it offline." It may be tempting to continue the conversation online; however, face-to-face can be more constructive. The lack of body language, facial expressions, and tone with online communication easily can lead to misunderstandings. Encourage kids to "walk in another's shoes" to make sure that they are considering all perspectives. At the very least, "taking it offline" will give your child time to process how to act — rather than just react.

- **Read between the lines.**

With the popularity of photo sharing, kids often receive evidence that they were not included ... which then leads to feelings of exclusion. Imagine your child seeing a photo of friends at dinner and realizing that she was not invited. While it is true that no one is included in everything, it is a hard rite of passage for kids to learn — and often they just need a sympathetic ear or an alternative social activity. Unfortunately, some kids use online photos to intentionally tag the kids who weren't invited — a not-so-subtle message of exclusion. In these cases, let your children know that they are supported, and talk about strategies to mend a riff or dispel a fight.