Guidance News – May, 2019

It feels like spring has finally arrived! As we gear up for the last few weeks of the school year, I wanted to send out my last newsletter to fill you in on what students were doing in April and what is to come in May. During the month of April, most of the classes focused on diversity and accepting differences in others. We discussed how differences between people are not good or bad, just different. We are all created uniquely and that is something to be celebrated! We read a number of different books, had lots of activities, and talked about what made each student unique. Students enjoyed learning new things about their classmates!

Students in fourth grade reviewed the Zones of Regulation and discussed the signals our bodies give us when we are in the different zones. We talked about how this can be helpful knowledge and what we might look like when we are in the different zones by our facial expressions and body language. We also discussed different scenarios and idioms (words or phrases that are not taken literally) and which zone we might be in during those times.

During the month of May we will be discussing friendship and what makes a good friend. We will also be doing a few transition activities to help the students wrap up the year. As the Fourth grade students get ready to move on to Dyer, we will do some activities in class, as well as go to Dyer for a few hours to visit, check out the school, and give students a chance to ask questions.

At the end of May, the Kindergarten students will be receiving their BERKL books that they have been working so hard on all year long! They are getting excited and have been doing such a good job each week working on another page for their book. I'm sure you'll love seeing the books when they come home with the students.

Finally, this month's Common Sense Media tip sheet is about "Effective Email Communication". Students enjoy communicating with others, and it is helpful to make sure they know how to do that respectfully. Sometimes they may use shortcuts for words (ppl for people, for example) and teaching them the guidelines of how to send an effective email is a great skill to learn. They can practice by sending emails to family and friends this summer!

It has been a joy working with all the students this year. As always, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns that I can help with!

Jean Freund
School Counselor

Common Sense on Effective Email Communication

What's the Issue?

Misspellings, slang, and never-ending ideas are often toleraated in text messages and informal emails. But what happens when kids need to write a formal message? Will they know how to change their writing style to match their audience? Knowing your audience and making your words match are important skills for students to learn. Teaching our kids to evaluate their audience and create messages accordingly will help them gain respect and win better responses in any formal setting.

common sense says

Encourage your children to consider the audience and purpose of their email. Using a more formal tone with people they have never met is the safest and most respectful way to communicate.

Prompt kids to get right to the point. Most people have a lot of email to sift through. Keeping formal messages as short as possible is ideal.

Stress the importance of writing only what they would say to a person's face. Anything kids would say over email should be something they are able to say to someone's face.

Suggest to children that they use uppercase type only on rare occasions. Uppercase letters indicate that you are shouting. Kids should use them only if they really want to make a STRONG POINT.

Remind kids to proofread. They should check their spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting before sending an email.

Coach kids to use emoticons sparingly. Using smiley faces or exclamation points on occasion can help others understand their meaning in the absence of visual and vocal cues. However, they are usually inappropriate with more formal emails. :)

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