

COUNSELING CORNER WITH MARCIA WEILL

RESPECT: Theme for Classroom Lessons this Year

Did you know that, thanks to the Carl Sundahl Foundation and Site Council financial support, students at Sundahl are the only students in the District to receive regular classroom lessons from a school psychologist? Some of the topics of these lessons include understanding of feelings, communicating appropriately when upset, having empathy for others, doing the right thing in case of a bully, taking responsibility for mistakes, and being an optimist even when there are problems.

Many people believe that the best thing for kids to have is happiness. Ads on television reinforce this belief—this new toy, this certain vacation, this pill...will solve all our problems. As the educational team (parents and educators together) we want more for our children than just happiness. We want them to have good values, compassionate hearts, work ethic, respect for others and responsibility for their actions. We hope that happiness and satisfaction will be the students' reward.

This year the classroom lessons will focus on the theme of RESPECT. In the first lesson, students will learn about heroes, Why heroes? Research has shown that students who can choose and internalize positive role models are more self-confident, have better academic achievement, and (we hope and teach) do the right thing, even if no one is looking. What can you do at home to help? Please talk about grandparents, people in the news, characters in books and televisions shows who are just regular people, choosing to do the right thing for others, without considering themselves first. I will be asking students to talk and write about their heroes, along with why they admire these people.

The second lesson will be about respecting others, practicing effective communication while trying to understand the other person's point of view. The third lesson will be about respecting ourselves, taking care of our bodies and our brains, and taking responsibility for our own learning. I will be posting an article each trimester to tell you more about these lessons.

I would be happy to hear from you about ideas to include in these lessons or to help with referrals for counseling or give ideas for sorting out learning or behavior problems at home. I am here at Sundahl this year on Tuesdays.

