



February



Counseling Newsletter

Our theme for the month of February is, teaching *empathy*. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. Empathy is an important part of child development. It helps them to build a sense of security and stronger relationships with other children and educators, positioning them well for learning. It encourages tolerance and acceptance of others. It promotes good mental health. It promotes social harmony and can reduce the likelihood of bullying.

When we practice empathy, we quite literally put ourselves “in someone else’s shoes”. This means we acknowledge others’ situations, perceptions, and feelings from their point of view and to be able to communicate that understanding back to the opposite person.

Empathy is not something that we are both with. Rather it is a skill that we can work upon. It can help children work together as a team to overcome life’s challenges and connect one another.

Activities of the Month

Taking a walk in someone else shoes

Grade 1- Grade 5: Together, students will read the story, *Stand in my Shoes* by Bob Sornson. The story teaches about empathy and has students think about how they would feel in a situation. After the story, students will be shown 6 different shoe boxes. Each box contains a different pair of shoes and a message that goes along with it. Students must think, in this example, how would I show empathy towards this person.

PreK3 and 4, Kindergarten, and Middle School: Students will work with their panther pals. Together, along with guidance from teachers we will review fundamental building blocks taught in elementary grades. We will discuss manners, kindness, and treating others the way they want to be treated. Middle schooler will role model behavior for younger students. After working with their buddies, middle schoolers will discuss why these values and teachings get lost as we get older. How can we reconnect with our younger selves and be kinder to one another?



What can be done at home?

Jesus taught us to love others as he loved us. At home you can teach your child...

- ♥ Empathize with your child and model empathy for others.
- ♥ Make caring for others a priority and set high ethical expectations.
- ♥ Provide opportunities for children to practice empathy.
- ♥ Expand your child's circle of concern.
- ♥ Help children develop self-control and manage feelings effectively.

Contact me!

If you have questions about any of the information you read or concerns regarding your student, please contact me at dabrosca@seseton.org or calling 239-455-2262