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THEME OF THE WEEK: The Power of Words-In person and Online

Dear Students and Families,

Have you heard of the saying: “Sticks and stones will break my bones but words will never hurt me.”

I disagree that words don’t hurt. Actually, sometimes words hurt the most. I often speak with students and families about the power of positive thinking. This week's tip is all about the power of words and how it affects how others feel about themselves. What other people hear about themselves becomes their inner voice. October is Bullying Prevention Month. Last week, we reviewed the idea of empathy. Remember, empathy is understanding how another person may be feeling by trying to “walk in their shoes”.

Have you heard the science experiments where over a month, one plant was spoken to over and over again in a kind, uplifting way such as “I like you”, “You matter”, and “You are kind.” and the other plant was spoken to in an unkind way with mean words such as “You are ugly”, “Slowpoke”, and “You will never do it”. The first plant that was spoken to in a kind way with kind words grew stronger and bigger than the plant that was spoken to in an unkind way with unkind words. Click on this link to watch the experiment with students: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yx6UgfQreYY>

Have you noticed that for some reason people seem to say more unkind things online such as on TikTik, chat rooms, discord, and chats to a post? Why is that? Some people say it is because the person does not see the other person’s face and does not realize the impact that words may have on how a person feels about themselves and how hurtful words are. Click on this link to watch a video on the power of words online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rOnMl26dR8>

Next week, I will be talking about Stop, Walk, Talk when you experience physical, emotional, and/or verbal bullying and the S.T.O.P. method if you experience cyber or on-line bullying. It is so important that you know how to deal with these situations in life as we all will experience them. I still experience these situations in life sometimes, and I try my best to tell the person to please stop being unkind, walk away, and then talk to a friend or someone I trust. We will learn about this more next week.

I want you to really think about the power of words. For ten seconds, sit and think about a time someone called you a hurtful name or said something hurtful to you. It could have been a friend or a family member, we all do it sometimes. How did it make you feel? For me, I tend to feel sad and then angry. I try really hard to tell the person



Speak kindly <3

how it made me feel with an “I Statement”. Such as, “I felt sad when you said I was weird.” or “I didn’t like it when you called me that because it hurt my feelings.” I know it is hard to say but I promise it really does help and I have seen relationships change for the better when people were able to share their feelings.

Now, take ten seconds to think about the time someone said something kind and uplifting, how did you feel? I know I feel good and happy and better about myself. Focus on that good feeling and try to spread that good feeling to others. Remember the book, “Have You Filled a Bucket Today?” By saying kind words we fill someone's bucket and help them feel better about themselves.

I find that most people in the world are kind. So please remember to be kind and be mindful of the power of your words. I am not saying it is easy and I am still learning each day myself. Try to focus on being kind and lifting others up. Stand up for yourself in a kind but firm way if you feel someone is saying something hurtful. Walk away for the moment and then talk to them when you are calm and can express yourself with an I Statement. These skills are important not only for students but grown-ups too. Grown-ups, our students look up to you as their role models. I am still learning the skills of empathy, kindness, and compassion and also how to speak up for myself when I feel hurt. And if I asked other grown-ups, I bet almost 100% of them would say that they are still learning too. We all need reminders and help!



Remember, we are all in this together and trying our best! Be kind and mindful of the power of words. Together we rise!

With respect,

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