



THE COMMUNITY CHRONICLE

Dear Parents,

This newsletter will update you about community building activities that have been happening in your child's classroom. It will give a brief overview, share tips and offer resources on various mental health and social emotional issues.

~Wu Chen, School Psychologist

Classroom Community

Through readings, discussions, and games, students have developed an awareness on what does it mean to be People Smart and how important this intelligence is in all the different areas of their life. They have learned that being People Smart can help them get along with others, make friends, solve conflicts, and use it to lead people. Although it is important for kids to get good grades and test scores in school, it may be equally important to develop their confidence, compassion, and personality. One of the most



important People Smart abilities is understanding others. Kids from all grade levels have enjoyed playing games on reading people! We have also done role plays on what it means to be a "Just Me" versus "Think of Others" person and discussed how our behaviors influence others' thoughts and feelings. We will continue to do activities that build People Smart skills throughout this school year.

We are also using the concepts from the Zones of Regulation curriculum to help students understand and manage their feelings. Students are learning to identify and categorize their feelings and levels of alertness into four different zones, and we are also exploring strategies that help us to stay calm, focused, and ready

to learn. Students are building awareness and practicing the following strategies:

- **Deep Breathing** exercises can help calm the body and mind.
- Think about the **Problem Size** and match the **size of your reaction to the size of the problem!** Students should think about how big do others see the problem? How big should their reaction be?
- **Inner Coach** helps us use positive self-talk to keep going or give us the strength to get through stressful situations.
- **Flexible Thinking**, or changing our thinking pattern, can help us regulate into a more calm state.

As the year goes on, we will continue to practice and add regulation strategies to our toolbox.



Resources:

These books may be helpful in understanding concepts studied in class.

- **You're Smarter Than You Think: A Kid's Guide to Multiple Intelligences* by Thomas Armstrong
- **Think Social: A Social Thinking Curriculum for School-Age Students* by Michelle Garcia Winner
- **The Zones of Regulation* by Leah M. Kuypers

Helpful Hints

Tips to boost People Smart skills and use them to make new friends (Thomas Armstrong, 2003):

***Smile!** It's a simple thing, but when your children smile at people, they are letting others know that they like them and are interested in them. People are more likely to respond positively when they smile.

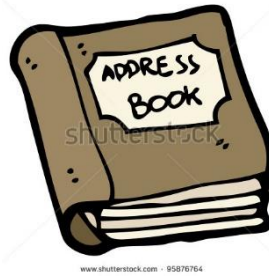
***Listen.** Give friends plenty of time to talk. Practice active listening, which means paying close attention to what someone is saying, and letting the person know by smiling, nodding, saying "uh-huh," or asking questions and adding comments.

***Be yourself.** If your kids are shy or don't feel comfortable talking a lot, they can still show their People Smarts. If they ask good questions and pay attention to answers, they are already opening the door to friendship.

***Show interest in others.** It's important to think and ask questions about others.

***Develop a new interest.** Practice asking what people like to do for fun and choose something new that other people do and give it a try.

***Put the odds in your favor.** Go where there are people who share your kids' interests. If your kids like soccer, join the soccer team. If they love to read, join a book club.



***Have your children start their own address book.** Keep a list of their friends and their phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses. Use this information to stay in touch.

***Tutor someone.** Offer to teach or tutor another student at school or to serve as a "buddy" to a younger child. Your children will feel good about helping someone, and they can brush up on their people skills.

***Look everywhere for learning opportunities.** Every person you meet knows things you don't know yet, and has had experiences you've never had. Think about how much you can learn from that person! Reach out to new people and ask them lots of questions.

***Explore being a leader.** Check if the school, Scouts or a community club have programs to help develop leadership skills.



'In-sties'

Here are some websites that are a great resource. Take a peek!

- It's My Life: www.pbskids.org/itsmylife
- Kids Health: www.kidshealth.org
- Do Something: www.dosomething.org
- Zones of Regulation: www.zonesofregulation.com