

The Advocate

HCPSS Elementary School Counseling Monthly Newsletter



IN OUR WORLD

While holiday celebrations and winter holidays may vary among cultures, families, and individuals, there seems to be one common thread that presents itself- the significance and symbolism of light! Consider the great benefits of human connection and understanding through education and check out [the article below](#). It provides some suggestions and considerations for teaching “various celebrations of light through literature, movement, and art, focusing on traditions, food, symbols, processions and parades” ([Exploring Holidays in the Classroom with the Connecting Thread of “Light”](#)).



IN OUR COUNTY

Now that first quarter report cards have been nestled in the hands of families for a few weeks, you have likely seen the latest report card template reflecting the following learning behaviors:

- Demonstrates Interpersonal Skills
- Demonstrates Responsibility
- Demonstrates Perseverance
- Demonstrates Collaboration
- Demonstrates Initiative

Consider having ongoing conversations with your child(ren) to make connections with learning behaviors across environments. This process can support a higher level of understanding, application, and long-term transfer of the behaviors. For instance, discuss the meaning of responsibility and how it applies to the child’s role on the sports team (*arriving on-time to practices and games, being dependable, putting forth best efforts, encouraging teammates, etc.*). Allow your child(ren) to explain how perseverance and collaboration may also play a role in extracurricular activities. Consider fostering ongoing and occasional connections with questions like the following:

- How did our family show collaboration during our Thanksgiving visit?
- I notice that you took the initiative to put your dirty dishes into the sink after dinner without being asked to do so. I appreciate that! Has there been another time today that you have noticed either you or someone else taking initiative to do something?

- You are saying that you are bored right now. How could you take the initiative to solve that problem. Would interpersonal skills help you solve this problem? If so, how?
- Cleaning a very dirty room can be a difficult task! What learning behaviors and skills are you showing when you clean your room? What if you do it without being asked?



IN OUR SCHOOL

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Has your child shared any of the Monday Mindful Moments with you? Have you heard about the weekly Social Skill of the Week? In case you missed it, here are a few that have been highlighted and shared with students and staff! Classrooms are also reinforcing skills during Community Circles. Ask your child to teach you a mindful moment and practice together! Also, reinforce social skills with your child at home, in the community, with peers, at sports activities, etc.

Mindful Moments - Candle Breathing, Imagine You're a Tree, Rainy Day,
Wake Up Your Face
Social Skills - Respecting Others, Giving and Receiving Compliments,
Cooperation, and Empathy



IN OUR HOMES

While reading a book with your child, consider furthering connections with the learning behaviors discussed in the "In Our County" section of this newsletter. How did this character utilize interpersonal skills? How could this character have shown more responsibility? What do you think this character needs to do in order to persevere through this problem? If this character came to you for advice, how would you encourage him/her to be more collaborative? What would be different in this book if the character had taken initiative to address the issue earlier in the book?



Book List

Check out these kid-friendly books pertaining to a variety of holidays and cultural celebrations throughout the fall and winter months!

- [Christmas](#) (December 25, 2019)
- [Chanukah/Hanukkah](#) (December 22-30, 2019)
- [Dia de los Muertos](#) (October 31-November 2, 2019)
- [Diwali](#) (October 27, 2019)
- [Kwanzaa](#) (December 26, 2019- January 1, 2020)

As always, please ensure you pre-read these materials to ensure you are comfortable with the materials before sharing with your child(ren). Feel free to check out these titles at the public library or even on YouTube for videoed story times!



Fun Fact!

Elementary school counselors meet with students regarding feelings and behaviors that may impede learning, development, and overall health and wellness. Some of these topics may include, *but are not limited to*, the following:

- Grief (*Loss of a family member, relationship, pet*)
- Friendship struggles
- Changing Families (*Divorce, separation, difficult relationships, moving*)
- Improving strategies for self-control
- Managing anger and frustration
- Developing age-appropriate social skills
- Building confidence and self-esteem
- Navigating disappointments and difficult experiences