

Stonybrook Counseling Corner

June 2010

The end of the year is upon us! Here's a brief summary of some of the things that went on and continue in and around the Counseling Office.

Guidance Lessons this year focused on:

- what a school counselor does and ways I can assist them (3rd only)
- the difference between bullying and conflict, recognizing assertive, aggressive and passive (strong, mean & ignore) behaviors
- using I-statements
- positive by-stander strategies and the importance of reporting (telling versus tattling)
- positive ways to handle peer-pressure (4th and 5th only)

Some classrooms may have had additional lessons including stereotypes and gossip if the classroom teacher thought they would be beneficial.

The C.I.A. began for the first time at Stonybrook School. **C.I.A. stands for "Children's Indoor Activities"**. After getting feedback from many children that they are often looking for something to do during recess, Stonybrook's Core Team of teachers thought of giving children another option. Mrs. McClain invited several 5th graders to participate on a committee to start this initiative. They decided to call themselves the "CIA". The CIA met many weeks during their lunch time to create and organize a system where teachers can submit "Help Wanted Job" forms which 5th graders can then apply for. 5th graders that wished to participate filled out applications stating their job preferences. Jobs and assignment slips were matched and delivered by CIA members. would then report to the "hiring" staff members during their lunch times to complete their jobs. This was extremely popular, and I received such positive feedback from the teachers who used 5th grade workers. They continually commented about how responsible and conscientious the "workers" were. I hope that somehow this program will be able to continue next year.

Rachel Lerner from the Pequannock Health Department went to each **4th grade** class to teach about the dangers using **tobacco**. Peer Leader Advocates, **7th and 8th grade students from PRM**, came to present information on tobacco to all **5th graders**. The PRM Peer Leaders are coming back to **5th graders** early this month to present information on the growing problems surrounding **cyber-bullying**. If you have any questions about these, or any other lessons, please feel free to contact me.

My **3rd Grade Activity Period Cycle** is currently with Mrs. Steenstra's class. The purpose of these 4 week guidance lessons is to discuss how to handle everyday conflicts. The goal of these classes is to give students good conflict resolution skills including: listening, identifying feelings, using problem solving steps to resolve conflicts without fighting and bad feelings, and avoiding misunderstandings. The ideals of Full Value Contract—Being Safe, Being Here, Playing Fair—from Project Adventure are also being included in these lessons.

My **5th grade Band Cycle Class** is currently focusing on building on our school-wide goal our of implementing a Full Value Contract throughout the school. Students participate in a variety of activities, and reflect on their experiences using problem solving skills and character education values established in the contracts.

I held my last **5th grade Girls' Lunch Bunch** Meeting the end of May. We discussed friendships, conflict solving, feelings about ourselves, going into middle school, and any other girl issues that come up. The group met mainly throughout the winter, but wrapped up last month after a hiatus during much of April and May.

My **3rd and 4th grade Girls' Friendship Groups** will have their last meetings this month. In our meetings together, we discussed current situations, played games that reinforced various friendship skills, and acted out conflict solving situations. The girls seemed to enjoy coming to group, and I loved having them here!

My **Changing Families** group will have their last meeting in June—which is also our End-Of-Year Group Party. I hope you've gotten as positive of a response to these groups at home, as I do here. The children come faithfully to group. I look forward to seeing them each month.

I am here to help your child succeed academically, emotionally, and socially. No concern is too small, no call is too soon. Please call me at (973) 838-1881 x342 or email me at mclclaint@kinnelon.org to set up a conference. Please check out my "Guidance Goodies" section on-line for additional resources. Enjoy the spring!

Tara McClain

Guidance Counselor

