



Stonybrook Counseling Corner

January 2010

Happy New Year! Here's what going on in and around the Counseling Office.

This month's **Character Education** theme is **TRUSTWORTHINESS**. Students have continued to share their ideas about the Character Education theme over the loud speaker during morning announcements. This is a job they really enjoy!

Guidance Lessons this month in 3rd grade are focusing on using **I-statements** to communicate feelings to each other. Students are learning and practicing I-statements in order to share how they are feeling and what behavior they would like the person to do instead. 4th and 5th graders are reviewing the roles of **by-standers**, and how they can positively impact a school and other individuals. We are also discussing how being a caring by-standers goes with being trustworthy. Students practiced the different ways by-standers can show their support for other children being teased, excluded or bullied. Ask your children about my visits in their classrooms, and see if they can tell you what they learned.

My **3rd Grade Activity Period Cycle** is currently with Ms. Fitzgerald's class. The purpose of these 5 week guidance lessons is to discuss how to handle everyday conflicts in creative ways. The goal of these classes is to give students good conflict resolution skills including: listening, identifying their feelings, thinking about others' points of views, and using problem solving steps to resolve conflicts without fighting and bad feelings. 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 last month's theme of **ACCEPTANCE** through the use of a play. Students will be practicing and performing the play during cycle class time. The next time I meet with this cycle group in April, we'll be discussing study skills and how to handle test-taking stress.

The end of this month I'll be starting my **5th grade Girls' Lunch Bunch**. This group is a more informal group that will meet twice a month throughout the winter. We will be discussing friendships, conflict solving, feelings about ourselves, along with any other girl issues that come up. If you'd like more information about this group, I'd be happy to answer any questions.

I will also be starting my **3rd grade Boys' Friendship Group** in February. If you think your son would benefit from this group, or you would like more information, please let me know. Permission slips will be going home this month.

My **Changing Families** groups are meeting on a monthly basis now. If your child has gone through family changes in the last 3 years (divorce, separation, new step parent/sibling, and/or death of a parent or sibling) please contact me to get more information about this group or click the link to print out a general permission slip.

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 mclclain@kinnelon.org to set up a conference. Stay warm!

Tara McClain

Guidance Counselor