

Happy



Counseling Corner

MRS. MARANO (908)851-4432

Washington School Counseling Newsletter



What's Happening Around Our School

This past holiday season we donated over 600lbs. of food to the *Students Change Hunger* food drive in Hillside, NJ. Students also donated close to 100 new pajamas to *The Scholastic Pajama Drive*. We celebrated *World Kindness Day* on

November 13th by wearing blue and completing simple random acts of kindness. Also in November, all of our students wrote *Thank You* cards to our veterans. Students in grades K through 4 who completed the Random Acts of Kindness December Calendar received

recognition during our morning announcements and a Barnes & Noble gift card from me. The 1st floor bulletin board, "Help the Grinch Grow His Heart" displayed random acts of kindness witnessed by our students and staff throughout the building.

January/February Important Dates:

- January 21: Martin Luther King Day Observed (No School)
- January 22-25: No Name Calling Week
- January 23: Character Education/Anti-Bullying Assembly
- January 31: 2nd Marking Period Ends
- February 11-16: Random Acts of Kindness Week

Welcome 2019!!

As we begin 2019, it is important that we encourage our children to start the New Year in a positive way. The New Year historically is a time where we look to set goals for things we want to change. Our children may be looking at the new year as an opportunity for renewal, a time to assess their life and consider how they might want to improve it. Goal setting is beneficial for children in many ways. It is a life skill necessary for success and happiness. It teaches children to be responsible for their own successes and failures; to prioritize and manage their time; improves their self-esteem and confidence; and helps children identify their strengths and abilities. One way that never fails is by engaging them in play and fun activities that promote learning.

Here are some activities to help your child learn to set and reach their goal.

1. **Draw out goals.** This is a great way to visualize goals and dreams. Ask questions like, "Where do you see yourself in 10 years" or "What do you think you will doing in 5 years?" Have your child draw out the vision for the future. Write the items in the drawing on a list, and put the drawing where its visible and prominent.
2. **Saving money.** Ask your child what they want to buy or experience. Encourage your child to save up what they achieve to aim for. Discuss how much needs to be saved, by when, and how to save.
3. **Keep a journal.** Have your child write their thoughts, feelings, dreams, achievements, ideas, and anything else they can think of.

4. **Create a vision board.** Ask your child to find photos that represent each of their goals. When they reach a goal, they can glue it to the board. When they attained all their goals, display the collage with their successes.
5. **Goal ladders.** This metaphoric ladder is another visual tool to help structure steps for success.

All of these activities can be displayed in a prominent area of the house for everyone to see everyday. This will boost self-confidence and help make your child's dreams turn into realities. You will also empower them to achieve wonderful things in every area of their life.



How Do I Stand In Your Shoes

Understanding how another person feels or "standing in their shoes" is an important social skill for children to learn. The ability to have empathy for others will help them interact and respond to others appropriately. Two ways for a child to understand how another person feels are to:

- * Think of a time when they had the same experience and remember how they felt.
- * Imagine how they might feel in the same situation.

It is important for children to remember that not everyone will feel the same way in the same situation and that nonverbal cues can help us understand how a person might be feeling. You can encourage your child to build empathy skills by:

- * **Model how to value feelings.** Children are watching others to learn appropriate ways of behaving and interacting, and are known to be influenced by the behaviors they see around them. You can be a good role model by acknowledging and valuing others' feelings, and showing understanding and sympathy when someone is sad, upset, distressed, frustrated or in need of help.
- * **Setting an example.** Acts of kindness and charity are an excellent way to teach your child empathy. Consider regularly engaging in community service or model other ways of contributing to a community. Even better, consider doing this with your child. Express interest in those from various backgrounds facing many different types of challenges.
- * **Connect feelings, thoughts and behaviors.** When talking about feelings, connect behaviors with the feelings for children so that they understand cause and effect. For example: "Max is feeling sad because Oliver took his toy. What might help Max feel better?" Teaching kids about cause and effect can also be done through stories, play-acting or reading books. Talk to children about the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of the characters. What might the characters do next? Connect these scenarios with the child's own experiences. For example, if the character is sad because she misses her parents, connect that feeling to a time the child also expressed sadness for something similar. This helps the child more clearly understand the connection between feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. For older children (aged five and up), ask them to step into the mind, or take the perspective, of another child or adult: "How do you think they are feeling? Why might they be upset? What could we do to help?"

