



Salem Drive School

Counselor's Corner: October 2020

Character Education Theme of the Month is:

RESPECT



If we educate children about differences, teach them about other cultures and provide them with opportunities to meet people from many walks of life - we set our children up to be compassionate, kind adults.

How can we teach children to respect differences and avoid making judgements?

Humans have an innate tendency to justify our actions based on situational demands, but we aren't always so tolerant of others. This mix-up in our thinking has a name and has been studied extensively in social and cognitive psychology. It's called the **Fundamental Attribution Error***. It is defined as attributing a bad act to the other person ("he forgot my birthday, therefore he is a bad man") rather than to the person's circumstances. Applied to oneself, it works in reverse. We tend to attribute our own bad acts to the particular circumstances, not to our personalities: "I forgot your birthday, but I'm not a forgetful person, it was just that it was Monday and I was busy at the office and I had a headache". People make this error in a very consistent way.

Here are some quick tips to help your child respect differences!

1. Expose your children to people from different walks of life. If we allow children to meet people from different backgrounds, we are building on their empathy, compassion and understanding of differences.

2. Educate your kids about differences and celebrate differences. From a very young age, children know that people look or speak differently to them. Take the time to tell children that it is OK to be different and talk about the differences they have observed. It is not OK to judge that person for being overweight or being a different race. Talk to your children about different religions, cultures, appearances, illnesses and how other people live their lives. There are also many children's books that can serve as great discussion starters!

3. Tell the truth, not opinion. No matter your views and opinions, if you can tell the truth around differences, our children will have the chance to form their own ideas.

4. Use non-judgmental language. Children will take our lead from the language we use. If we use judgmental language, they will too. Our children will soon pick up if we are biased or judging others and they will mirror that. Being mindful of the language we use will give children the right words to use around others to show kindness and compassion.

*****Please read more about encouraging respect and discouraging judgements in the articles linked below!***

Week Of Respect and Red Ribbon Week!

The Week of Respect is a week during which the students take part in fun and educational activities that focus on encouraging respectful behaviors. We hope that these activities help to motivate the students to continue their efforts in making SDS a safe, healthy, welcoming and fun school climate. Details about the activities will be coming home soon.

Red Ribbon Week is a nation-wide initiative put in place to advocate for a Drug-Free America. At the elementary level we simply encourage students to make healthy choices! During Red Ribbon Week we ask the students to dress up for spirit days and encourage students to participate in different activities, such as our 4th Grade Folder Contest. Please stay tuned for more information regarding Red Ribbon Week activities and spirit days. This year's theme is "Be Happy. Be Brave. Be Drug Free!"

Did you know? Kids who understand that there is more than one way to do or think about something will be better problem-solvers in all aspects of their life. Encourage open-mindedness!

October Highlights/Events

- **October 5-9: Week of Respect**
- **October 7: Back to School Night**
- **October 12: No School/Teacher Inservice**
- **October 26-30: Red Ribbon Week**

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****Visit the links below for more information and tips about teaching children to be non-judgmental and respectful of differences.**

**<https://morrispsych.com/why-cant-we-all-just-get-along-tips-on-judging-less-and-understanding-more-by-dr-ashley-gorman-ph-d-abpp/>
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-to-raise-nonjudgmenta_b_7741172**