

Ms. Wert's Presentation to Parent Volunteers

December 14, 2021

- Important to use consistent language and routines that students are using at school
- Kelso's choices (looks like a big wheel with cartoon frogs on it, see handout)
 - Posters in every classroom, in cafeteria, next to recess doors
 - Strategies emphasized in K-2 but used in all grades
 - Is this a small problem or a big problem?
 - If a student has a small problem, use Kelso's choices
 - Try 3 choices, if that's still not working, then an adult will help
 - Big problems require adult intervention
 - Consistent, happening every day (bullying vs. being rude vs. being mean; see below)
 - *Physical incidents must always be reported to the office*
 - Inappropriate language
 - Some students may come to you more often, they may need more guidance with what to say
 - Ask them what they have tried so far. Do you want more ideas? Do you want me to help? Did you just want to let me know?
 - If a student chooses to talk it out, supposed to use "I" sentences, but may not know the exact words, so you can offer examples
 - Maybe have child bring the other student over and you can facilitate
 - Ignore- some kids will say they are ignoring, but are still in the group. Hard to really ignore if you don't separate yourself
 - Tell them to stop- don't just yell STOP, but tell them what you want them to stop- "Please stop following me around"
 - If you want someone to stop following you, running and laughing is not a good way to show them that you don't want them to follow
- Parent questions
 - What do you do when a child doesn't want to play with a specific classmate?
 - That's ok, not everyone wants to play with everyone everyday. You can still be friends with someone but not play together every day. "I'm still your friend but I just want to play this instead." Encourage them to invite others to play too.
 - When are kids allowed to run?
 - Running at lunch is determined by staff at each lunch period, may vary. Talk to the staff to find out. If too inconsistent, staff may need to have a meeting to decide on a plan for all grades.
 - Kids hitting each other?
 - Hitting is never allowed. Sometimes it's a game- if you notice they're all laughing, casually walk by and say "Remember we need to keep our hands to ourselves. I know we play fight at home, but at school, we keep our hands to ourselves."

- If a kid tells you that they are being bullied, tell a staff member. School's definition of being bullied is that it's happening by the same person, consistently. That person is seeking the child out to hurt them repeatedly. Have them tell their teacher or send Ms. Wert a message.
- Conflict about balls/playground equipment
 - Use Kelso's choices
 - Set a timer so groups can take turns, but end goal is to encourage them to solve problems on their own
- This is the moment to teach them- to give them the strategies and words to solve problems on their own
- Hitting/pushing/shoving- always get a staff member, child gets sent to office and incident reported
 - He said/she said: get both groups together to help them solve it
 - De-escalation strategies: humor, distraction (ask them to show you what they're doing, go get some water, will you get me that ball?), physically put yourself in between (only if you're comfortable doing so)
- Kids that are feeling left out- buddy benches just inside recess doors, but planning to label some benches outside as buddy benches too
 - Sometimes kids can't find the one friend they wanted to play with, and get really sad
 - If you can't find someone to play with, sit on the buddy bench
 - Other kids: if you see someone sitting on the buddy bench, maybe invite them to join you. "Do you want to play a game with us?"
 - Will be re-emphasized during school town hall- January 10
 - If you see a kid by themselves, you can check on them. Some kids just want to be alone, which is fine. If they're looking for a friend, you can help them.
- Incidents involving your own kids
 - Try to listen to what happened first, before making any assumptions or judgements
 - Help them with words, ideas, suggestions to solve problems
- Kindergarteners need a lot of help and coaching
 - Kids are coming from a lot of different preschools and family settings
- Ms. Wert goes to each class once a month, feel free to email anytime:

[Elizabeth A Wert@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Elizabeth_A_Wert@mcpsmd.org)