



Counselor's Corner

January 2015

Listening Skills

As January begins, people set goals for their New Year's resolutions. Our character education curriculum encourages students to strive for success, just as individuals aim for success in the new year. The Social Decision Making/Social Problem Solving component of the character education curriculum teaches children valuable skills in the areas of self-control, problem solving, decision making, and getting along with others.

Students will be learning why it is important to be a good listener and how to be an active listener. Children will learn the importance of Listening Position which teaches them how to position their body when engaged in a conversation. In addition, students will be introduced to the concept of Listening Power. Listening Power highlights key steps for utilizing active listening.

You can encourage your child to use these skills outside of school to reinforce what has been learned in school. Please encourage your child to utilize Listening Position and Listening Power when engaged in conversations with others.

Listening Position:

1. Sit or stand straight.
2. Face the speaker or source of sound.
3. Look toward the speaker or source of sound.

Listening Power:

1. Use Listening Position.
2. Pay attention to what the other person is saying.
3. Repeat what the other person said.
4. Check to see if you are right.

How you can help your child:

- **Use a physical reminder.** Select an object (wand, stuffed animal, ball etc.) that will be passed to the person speaking to designate a turn to talk. Others who are not holding the object should listen carefully without interrupting. This will give your child a physical reminder of when to listen.
- **Provide positive reinforcement.** Praise your child when he/she demonstrates good listening skills. A little positive reinforcement can go a long way by reinforcing appropriate skills. Be specific when describing what your child did. For example, "It was great how you took the time to listen to everything I had to say", or "I am so proud that you listened to me and cleaned your room."
- **Minimize interruptions.** Often, children are eager to share what they have to say and will interrupt others. If you notice your child interrupting someone, tell him/her it is important to let the other person have a turn to speak and encourage that person to finish what is being said before your child talks.
- **Model.** Children will often model or imitate behaviors they observe. If you listen to your children they will likely listen to others. You may want to take a few moments to assess how you listen during conversations. Also, make sure you are modeling active listening when talking with your children. Summarize what they are saying, show empathy, and ask follow up questions.

Elias, M., & Butler, L. (2005, 2011). *Social Decision Making, Social Problem Solving: A Curriculum for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning: Grades K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8*. Champaign, Ill.: Research Press.

For further details or information, please contact your child's guidance counselor.

Mrs. Kelly Blessing-Maire

Angelo L. Tomaso School
(908) 753-5300 x 5305
kblessing-maire@warrentboe.org

Mrs. Patricia Morris

Central School
(908) 753-5300 x 5205
pmorris@warrentboe.org

Dr. Kelly Stankiewicz

Mount Horeb School
(908) 753-5300 x 5405
kellystankiewicz@warrentboe.org

Mrs. Diane Langworthy

Woodland School
(908) 753-5300 x 5505
dlangworthy@warrentboe.org

Mrs. Midge Johnson

Middle School- 8th grade
(908) 753-5300 x 5005
mjohnson@warrentboe.org

Ms. Helen Scully

Middle School - 7th grade
(908) 753-5300 x 5007
hscully@warrentboe.org

Mrs. Lauren Regal

Middle School - 6th grade
(908) 753-5300 x 5009
lregal@warrentboe.org