

Counseling Connection



ORANGE GROVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

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Cool Off and Calm Down



A very popular topic with students here at Orange Grove is anger and stress management. I always have several small groups each year with a focus on handling anger the right way. Many times parents will call me concerned about their child's anger issues. I also try to build at least one classroom lesson around anger management each year.

Practice at anger management is something everyone could use. We all get angry. It can come out as disappointment when we lose, frustration when

we can't figure something out, annoyance with another person or thing, or hurt over how someone else is treating us.

When our children get angry, there are a few things we want to make sure we do:

- 1) Don't Label - Telling someone they have anger problems can be like giving them the okay to act however they want when they get angry. That child is being told that they *can't* handle their anger and that's part of who they are. Instead they need to know that they are not different and there is nothing wrong with them. They should know that everyone gets angry and everyone has to learn to deal with that anger.
- 2) Anger Management Techniques - When something makes your child so mad that they need to cool off help them to think of something they can do to calm down. We often need to stop and calm down when we're extremely angry. Then, when we can handle it, try to deal with whatever or whoever has made us angry.
- 3) Be Mad, Not Mean - Using self-control means that it is okay to be mad. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. And people differ on what makes them angry and how angry they get over certain things. However, kids need to know that while anger is normal, it's not okay to be mean or hurtful to yourself, others, or property.

Character Trait - Self-Control

In April, the character word we've been focusing on is Self-Control. This means managing your emotions and choosing acceptable behavior.

In each grade, we first discussed choosing acceptable behaviors. To use self-control, you think about where you are and the kind of behavior that is expected at that time. How you act at the park or at a sleepover is differ-

ent from how you would act in a library or at a restaurant.

Most of the lessons were built around using self-control when we're angry. In Kindergarten and 1st grade, we read a book about things that might make us angry and ideas for dealing with that anger. Then we played a game where each student shared with a partner something that makes them

angry, how they can cool down, and a time when they were angry and used self-control.

In 2nd -5th grade, we discussed what makes us angry, how our body reacts when we're angry, and handling anger with self-control and without self-control. We also practiced several anger management techniques that I mention in this newsletter.

Inside this Issue

BUGS	2
Honesty	2
Upcoming "Days" of the Month	2
Ways To Handle Anger	3
Author Spotlight	3
Character Quotes	3
Ways to Handle Anger (continued)	4

Upcoming Events

Field Day	May 8
Last Day of School	June 2

Counseling Connection



BUGs - Bring Up Grades

On March, we had our second BUGs (Bring Up Grades) celebration of the year. Students who didn't make Honor Roll/Principal's List in the second grading period had the chance to be part of our BUGs program. They signed a contract, set a goal (bring up at least one grade and not let others drop), and made plans to reach the goal.

For the second grading period, the following students met their goal.

3rd Grade - *Luden Martinez, Kailey Barrucci, John Morea, Jett Howell, Natealia Ryskamp*

5th Grade - *Jeff Howerton, Logan Durbin*

Congratulations to these students. They all worked hard to meet the goal for BUGs and

we're proud of each one of them.

If your child didn't make Honor Roll/Principal's List on this past report card they should have received a BUGs letter and contract earlier this month. Please encourage them to return these forms and work towards the goal of bringing up their grades.



Honesty

The character word for March is honesty - using truthful speech and behavior. Honesty is one of our school-wide expectations and therefore a foundation of the behaviors on which we want our school built.

When I mention honesty to our students, they often refer to telling the truth to others and not telling lies. This addresses the truthful speech part of our defi-

nition, but not the truthful behavior.

Students often forget that their actions need to be honest along with their words. We talk about playing fair and not cheating. We also discuss not stealing or taking things that don't belong to us.

Additionally, students need to make sure that their actions

match their words. They need to show that if they say they're going to do something, they do it. This builds trust. As students grow older and want more independence, this trust helps teachers, parents, and other adults know that they don't have to doubt what's being told to them.



Upcoming "Days" of the Month

There are days set aside to recognize just about everything and everybody. For example, in April, we have Barbershop Quartet Day (4/11), Walk on Your Wild Side Day (4/12), and Be Nice to a Lawyer Day (4/14).

In May, if you're looking for something to celebrate, you

could take part in any of these special days

- Firefighter's Day - 5/4 - Celebrate the dedication and sacrifice of firefighters and the brave jobs they do.
- Star Wars Day - 5/4 - We're months away from a

new Star Wars movie.

Have a mini-marathon on May 4th (as in May the 4th be with you)

- Visit Your Relatives Day - 5/18 - Families are so important. Take time with yours to reminisce, catch up, and enjoy each other.

Volume 5, Issue 4

Ideas for Handling Anger

Anger is a normal feeling that everyone has. It isn't good or bad. When I talk to students about anger, I like for them to imagine a thermometer. Sometimes when we're angry, the mercury isn't very high in our thermometer. We aren't too angry. Other times we get really angry, the mercury rises. These are times that we need to take some steps to calm down. Here are some things you can do when you start to feel your anger rise:

- 1) **Deep Breathing** - This is a slow, gentle, quiet breath. Slowly breathe in through your nose for a count of five. Then you hold your breath in for a count of five. Next, breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of five. Take these slow, deep breaths until you feel calm enough to handle your anger.
- 2) **Write/Draw** - Write in a journal about what's mak-

ing you upset. Write a letter (you don't have to send it) to the person that has made angry. This is a good way to think about and deal with the feelings you're having. If you enjoy drawing, draw a picture. You could draw a picture of what happened, you handling your anger, or anything you enjoy drawing that helps you feel better.



Author Spotlight - Julia Cook

Julia Cook is the author of over forty-seven children's books that address different character issues. These books are great for parents, teachers, and counselors to read with kids as a way of teaching important life lessons. If you're interested in her books, you can visit www.juliacookonline.com to see the selection. Here are a few of the books she's written:

- 1) **Bully B.E.A.N.S.** - Empowers those who witness bullying to become proactive
- 2) **But It's Not My Fault** - Accepting responsibility
- 3) **Cliques Just Don't Make Cents** - Cliques and exclusion are hurtful to others
- 4) **I Can't Believe You Said That** - We can't say every-

thing that comes to mind

Other titles include: [I Just Don't Like the Word No](#), [Lying Up a Storm](#), [Teamwork Isn't My Thing and I Don't Like to Share](#), [Peer Pressure Gauge](#), [Tease Monster](#), and [Wilma Jean the Worry Machine](#). There are even more on the website. If you have a character trait you want to talk about with your child, these books might help you.

"FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS MIGHT NOT BE FUN, BUT WHEN I DO IT CORRECTLY, I CAN GET A LOT DONE."
- [THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE EVER](#)

Character Quotes - Talk about what these quotes mean to you

"You have power over your mind - not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength."

- Marcus Aurelius

"To handle yourself, use your head. To handle others, use your heart."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

"There is always a way to be honest without being brutal."

- Arthur Dobrin

"Discipline (self-control) weighs ounces. Regret weighs tons."

- Author Unknown

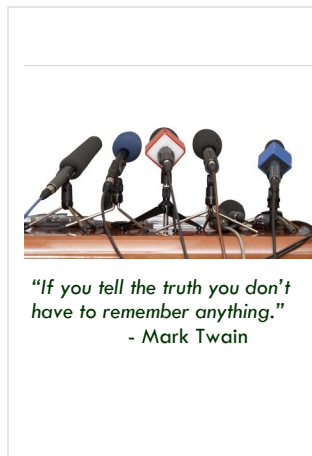
"Always think twice before responding in anger. Words and written communication cannot

be taken back. Chances are you'll feel differently tomorrow."

- Buky Ojelabi

"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else. You are the one who gets burned."

- Author Unknown



Orange Grove Elementary—Pick of the Crop!

PCS

Orange Grove Elementary
10300 65th Avenue North
Seminole, FL 33772

Phone: 727-547-7845

Fax: 727-547-7505

E-mail: whitesta@pcsb.org

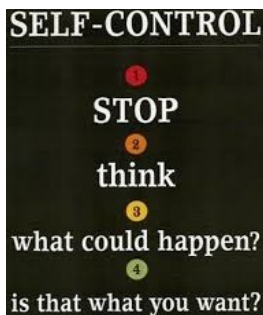
Pinellas County School Counselors Vision

The vision of Pinellas County counselors is for all students to graduate empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve academic, personal/social, and career success, and be inspired to reach their full potential as respectful, responsible citizens.

Pinellas County School Counselors Mission Statement

As student advocates, Professional School Counselors provide a comprehensive program that promotes student success through a focus on academic achievement, social/personal/emotional and career development.

Ideas for Handling Anger (continued)



Remember these steps for self-control.

- 3) Take a Break - Take time for yourself. Lie down, relax, and take deep breaths. Or go for a walk and collect your thoughts. These things can help you to calm down, decrease your anger, and help you choose the right solution.
- 4) Exercise - When we get angry, our muscles have extra, angry energy. Get up and run around, play sports, ride your bike, or something else active. This can help you to get rid of some of that energy and calm down.
- 5) Talk to Someone/Talk to Yourself - Find someone who can listen to you about what's making you mad. If you aren't calm enough to talk to the person you're mad at without being hurtful, talk to someone else. If you're angry and have no one to talk to, talk to yourself. Give yourself a positive message to help yourself calm down. It could be "I can stay calm," or "I'm angry, but I don't have to be mean." Say this to yourself a few times until you've calmed down.
- 6) Music - Music is a great for our moods and emotions. You can:
 - Lie down and relax as you listen to soothing music to calm your thoughts
 - Dance around to fun, fast music to get our angry energy
 - Be creative and make your own music