

The PATHS Monthly April 2013

A NOTE FROM YOUR COACHES: We hope everyone had a nice spring break and that you all were able to relax for a few days before we enter the final stretch of the school year. It has amazed us how much students have grown from back in September to now with their use of PATHS language and skills. This always comes back to your dedication and commitment to teaching the curriculum. K-2 grade teachers, we look forward to spending some more time with you during the month of April. For those of you administering the PSSAs this month, we urge you to remind students of techniques for dealing with stressful situations such as taking that deep breath or using positive self-talk. We have tried to avoid scheduling visits in those grade levels this month, but if we can help alleviate any hassle in other ways please let us know.

Is Your Classroom a PATHS Environment?

In our last newsletter we discussed some tips for generalizing PATHS skills throughout the school day. Your classroom plays a crucial role in how students learn how to use and apply these strategies. Here is a quick checklist for you to use to check if you have created an effective PATHS environment.



- ◆ Do I have a Feelings Chart hanging in a visible location in my classroom?
- ◆ Do I express my own feelings and model this for students?
- ◆ Do I recognize and label students' emotions as they occur throughout the school day?
- ◆ Do I remind students to label their feeling as a part of stopping and calming down?
- ◆ Do I create an environment in my classroom where it is safe for students to discuss their emotions?
- ◆ Do I point out the emotional impact that my students' behavior has on others?

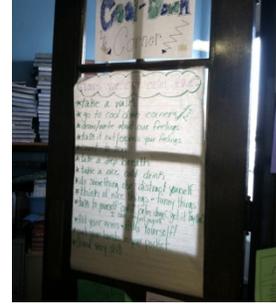
PATHS Positives

"My kids always talk about the golden rule since we did that PATHS lesson. They made strong connections with it, and with some students I see them use it in their everyday life" -3rd Grade Teacher, Allentown School District

"Students are actively working towards managing anger and I have noticed them complimenting others frequently during the day, rather than using negative comments towards one another" -4th Grade Teacher, Allentown School District

Cool Down Corner

Create an area in the classroom where students can go when they are having an uncomfortable feeling. Post the Control Signals Poster and the breathing techniques to help them calm down and to give purpose to this area. Giving students an outlet will allow them to develop their own internal self-control.



Grade Level Ideas

Pre-K: For lesson 34, about "Love" use a paper flower and have Twiggle do a "she loves me, she loves me not" skit for students to introduce this new feeling.

Kindergarten: A gross motor activity for lessons 30 and 31 is to have students act out feeling excited (jumping, waving arms, etc.) and tired (stretching, yawning, rubbing eyes) and compare the differences between these movements.

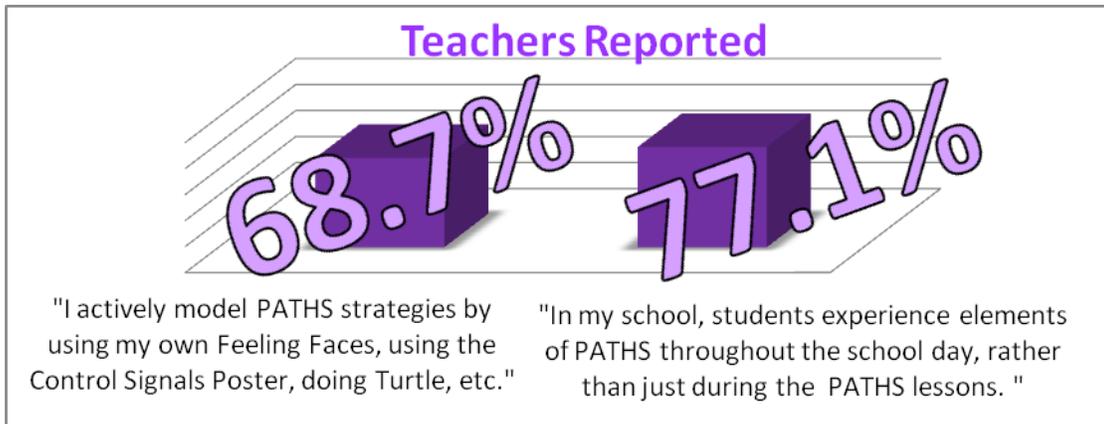
First Grade: For lesson 38, "Feelings Review," create a Feelings Memory Game. This can be done with the whole class, or as an extra center. Use two decks of the Feelings Cards currently introduced and lay them out face down like Memory. Have students take turns finding pairs. After a match is found have students describe a time they had that feeling.

Second Grade: During lesson 33 give students a chance to write a letter to Baxter about ways to keep friends. This can be easily incorporated as a supplement in a reading/writing center.

Third Grade: Some teachers spent a lot of time on lesson 26, "We Are All Unique." This is a great time to give students a chance to think about what traits they like about themselves and why it is important that we are all different. Give students a chance to create a list of 5-10 things that are unique about themselves. It's a nice reflection for students to help boost self-esteem, and remind them that we all have special traits.

Fourth Grade: As a supplement to the novel study lessons for In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson use the picture book The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco. Extend the activity by having each student design a portion of the quilt about their own culture. Discuss how cultures differ even within the classroom and how we need to respect individual cultures.

Fifth Grade: When reading Hatchet during novel study lessons, have students pretend they are on the trip with Brian. Allow students to use their writing journal to describe how they would feel as you read through the book and what they would do if they were in these situations. This allows students to think about extreme feelings that they might not be able to relate to on a regular basis.



Twiggle's Top School

Twiggle's Top School for the month of March is Lehigh Parkway Elementary School. Congratulations Lehigh Parkway teachers and staff for implementing PATHS in an extraordinary way! The staff at Lehigh Parkway has gone above and beyond by working diligently to keep lessons enjoyable and creative for the students. Lehigh Parkway has also been very accommodating to the PATHS coach. Great job Lehigh Parkway, keep up the excellent work!