

Welcome to Learning From Each Other!

Grades 3-5

Dear Parent, Guardian, or Caretaker,

We are beginning the Learning From Each Other unit of Harmony SEL, our social and emotional learning program. In this unit, students will learn different approaches to resolving conflict with others and practice a step-by-step approach to conflict resolution. Learning to resolve conflict in an intentional way deepens students' understanding of their own perspective and the perspective of others. Important ideas from each lesson include:

Understanding Conflict

- Conflict is a necessary part of life. It is important to understand why conflicts occur in order to suggest different ways to resolve conflict.
- There are three different approaches to resolving conflict: Conflict Avoider (like a turtle), Conflict Controller (like a shark) and Solution Finder (like an owl).

Identifying and Talking About Conflict

- The first two steps in the STEP It Up! conflict resolution process are (1) Stop, Think, and Cool Off and (2) Talk It Out.
- Cooling off and becoming calm first allows you to think about your perspective and other's perspective in conflict. .
- Clear It Up statements or "I messages" allow you to share your thoughts and feelings about conflict. They include a Feeling Statement, or how you feel; and a Request Statement, what you would like to see happen.

Resolving Conflicts Together

- The last steps in the STEP It Up! conflict resolution process are (3) Evaluate Possible Solutions and (4) Pick a Realistic Solution and Try It.
- Collaborate with others to choose and try possible solutions to conflict that will work for everyone. If it does not work, you can choose another solution.

Working Things Out

- Compromise and respect for others helps resolve conflict.
- Think about possible consequences when choosing a solution.

Correcting Our Mistakes When We Hurt Someone

- Taking responsibility for our actions involves being honest about how our actions influence others.
- Offering sincere apologies and forgiving others moves relationships forward.

An important part of *Harmony SEL* is for students to talk about and practice concepts outside the classroom. See the Home-to-School Connections: Home Activities (on next page) for ways to practice conflict resolution skills at home.

Thank you for your continued support of *Harmony SEL*. Please contact me if you have any questions about the program. You are welcome to review all materials in the Harmony Online Learning Portal. You can register at no cost at online.harmonysel.org.



Sincerely,

Home-to-School Connections: Home Activities

Your child is learning about how to learn from and solve conflicts with others. These activities provide fun ways to practice these skills at home. The ideas below will reinforce what we are learning in school –there are activities to play, topics to discuss, and behaviors to reinforce. These are all designed to fit into your daily routine and provide opportunities to further connect with your child.

- Discuss differing perspectives with your child. For example, choose a conflict to discuss from a book, a movie, television, the newspaper, or something more personal. Analyze the different perspectives and feelings of the participants and how to resolve the differences. Encourage your child to suggest how the conflict could be avoided or resolved.
- Ask your child to explain the turtle, shark, and owl approaches to resolving conflict. When watching TV or movies with your child, discuss the different conflict strategies illustrated. Ask your child if the approach was successful, and why or why not.
- Ask your child to explain a Clear It Up statement or “I messages” and to provide examples. Role-play a conflict, such as disagreeing about bedtime or doing chores. Have each person provide Clear It Up statements to discuss how “I” feel, what “I” think the problem is, and what “I” would like to see happen.” Discuss how these statements help clarify and define the problem.
- Discuss the approach that different family members have used to resolve conflict, and when each approach may be helpful or unhelpful.
- Ask your child to explain the STEP It Up! approach to conflict resolution. When problems or conflicts occur at home, help your child practice using the STEP It Up! approach.
 - Stop, Think, and Cool Off
Take a break and regulate your emotions before you try to resolve the conflict.
 - Talk It Out
Engage in respectful dialogue and put both sides of the story out on the table.
 - Evaluate Solutions
Brainstorm solutions that are fair to everyone involved.
 - Pick a Solution and Try It Out
Pick the solution that is best for everyone and try it out!
- Take opportunities when reading stories or watching television that involve conflict or difference of opinion, to draw your child’s attention to how characters take responsibility for their actions or apologize when they are wrong.
- Role-play with your child various conflict scenarios they might encounter. Practice how they might take responsibility and apologize sincerely for their part in the conflict.
- Use unit SEL vocabulary when speaking with your child. Two vocabulary words you might use from this unit are *perspective* (how we see, understand, or think about an action or situation) and *consequence* (something that happens as the result of an action or behavior).