



AUSTIN CREEK BULLETIN



Michael Kellison, Principal

October 27, 2011

Dear Austin Creek Families,

It is hard to believe that the first trimester of the school year is coming to a close. With that in mind, I wanted to take time to reflect upon the first three months of the 2011-2012 school year.

We kicked the year off with our annual class list posting party. Always a blast! The first day of school was filled with excitement over the prospects of another wonderful year at Austin Creek. Back to School Night was informative and set the tone for the year with the teachers and parents. Our sixth grade students attended their four day, three night outdoor education camp. We held our first ever Safety Week. Lastly, we held our second annual school Walkathon. Sprinkled in there was some very effective teaching and learning. Needless to say, we are off to a great start and look to continue to do amazing things here at Austin Creek throughout the rest of the year.

This year we are implementing a social-emotional curriculum called, “**The Toolbox.**” Your children should have informed you by now that we have learned three tools so far, with nine more still to come. So far we have learned the *Breathing Tool*, the *Quiet/Safe Place Tool*, and most recently the *Listening Tool*. Attached to this newsletter is a letter from the founder of Toolbox with a description of the *Listening Tool*. Please take time to review this letter and talk with your child about the tools that they have learned this year.

Lastly, I invite you to attend our next Austin Creek Parent’s Club meeting on Thursday, November 3rd beginning at 6:30 pm in the multi-purpose room. We will be discussing the results of the Walkathon. Following that meeting, a representative from **The Toolbox** will be here to present an overview of the program to parents. His presentation will begin at 7:00 and conclude at 8:15. It is my hope that you can attend so that you have a better understanding of **The Toolbox** curriculum and how you can incorporate it into your interactions with your own children.

Yours truly,

Michael Kellison
Go Hawks!

The Listening Tool

I listen with my eyes, ears, and heart.

Dear Parents,

We listen to get information about others, to learn, and for enjoyment. But how much do we really hear? Do we really hear and understand others? How often do we really listen to ourselves and our own wants or needs?

The Listening Tool highlights the importance of accurately reading the signals and words of others, and paying attention to the information within us (what's going on within me right now?). We listen "with our ears, our eyes, and our hearts." With eyes on the speaker, body language may help us pick up what is unspoken. Remembering to use our heart allows us to notice what the other person is feeling and to empathize with what we would feel if we stood in someone else's shoes.

Listening actively means we are committed to really understanding what our child is trying to communicate — beneath the presenting words, tone of voice, volume, or behavior. When people are in conflict, one of the most common statements made is that they don't feel heard. When the Listening Tool is practiced, good will is fostered and understanding becomes easier.

Here are some suggestions for bringing the Listening Tool home:

- Remind family members to listen with their eyes, ears and heart.
- Ask your children to explain the Listening Tool tag line, "I listen with my eyes, ears, and heart" and the hand gesture. Help your children remember to use the tag line and gesture along with their Listening Tools.
- Work with your children to name the feelings beneath what they are saying. We can say, "I see that you are angry, are you also feeling hurt?"
- Complete the Toolbox HomeConnection activity sheet with your child, or as a family.

You are your children's most important teacher. By practicing the Toolbox tools at home together, you help them become stronger and you help us create a happier, healthier school community. Thank you!

With appreciation and gratitude,



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La Herramienta de Escuchar

Escucho con mis ojos, oídos y corazón.

Estimados Padres de Familia:

Nosotros escuchamos para obtener información acerca de otras personas, para aprender y por placer. ¿Pero realmente cuánto escuchamos? ¿Realmente escuchamos y entendemos a otros? ¿Qué tan seguido nos escuchamos a nosotros mismos, a nuestros deseos o necesidades?

La Herramienta de Escuchar destaca la importancia de interpretar exactamente los gestos y palabras de otras personas y de prestar atención a la información dentro de nosotros (¿qué es lo que me está pasando ahora mismo?). Escuchamos «con nuestros ojos, oídos, y corazones.» Viendo a la persona que habla, aunque no lo exprese, podemos obtener información por medio de su lenguaje corporal. Al recordar usar nuestro corazón, nos permite notar lo que la otra persona está sintiendo y comprenderlos al ponernos en su lugar.

Escuchar activamente significa que estamos dedicados a realmente comprender que es lo que nuestro hijo(a) está tratando de comunicar—detrás de sus palabras, tono de voz, volumen o comportamiento. Cuando hay conflicto entre personas, una de las quejas más comunes es que sienten que no son escuchados. Cuando la Herramienta de Escuchar se practica, se fomenta la buena voluntad y se hace más fácil comprender.

Aquí hay algunas sugerencias para el uso de la Herramienta para Escuchar en su hogar:

- Recuérdale a los miembros de su familia que escuchen con sus ojos, oídos y corazón.
- Pídale a sus hijos que expliquen el lema de la Herramienta de Escuchar: «Escucho con mis ojos, oídos y corazón» y el gesto de mano. Ayude a sus hijos a recordar de usar el lema y el gesto junto a la Herramienta de Escuchar.
- Trabaje con sus hijos para nombrar los sentimientos detrás de lo que están diciendo. Podemos decir: «Veo que estás enojado, ¿te sientes herido también?»
- Llene la hoja de actividades de Toolbox HomeConnection (Conexión en el Hogar) con su hijo o háganlo juntos en familia.

Usted es el profesor más importante de sus hijos. Al practicar el uso de las herramientas de Toolbox (Caja de Herramientas) juntos en su hogar, les ayuda a que sean más fuertes y nos ayuda a crear una comunidad escolar más feliz y saludable. ¡Gracias!

Con aprecio y gratitud,



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