



Counselor's Corner

October

Counseling Lesson

This month Drew students learned about our first character trait (i.e., responsibility) from the Six Pillars of Character, core ethical values of [Character Counts](#). This lesson dovetailed with Drew's school wide character program and PBIS expectations. Responsibility is:

- doing what you are supposed to do;
- planning ahead;
- being diligent;
- persevering;
- doing your best;
- using self-control;
- being self-disciplined;
- thinking before you act;
- being accountable for your words, actions, and attitudes;
- setting a good example for others.



Specifically, Drew students learned about the importance of rules and our responsibility to follow rules. Students also learned about privileges and freedoms and how they are tied with responsibility. Please ask your child about our time together.

Red Ribbon Week

[Red Ribbon Week](#) was a great week for students to make promises to make healthy choices for their bodies. These events occurred October 23-31, Drew ES students showed their involvement by wearing their spirit wears and making healthy choices for their bodies.

- **Day 1.** Students wore orange to school to symbolize the start of Unity Day and ate orange foods like oranges and carrots to help keep their eyes and bones healthy.
- **Day 2.** Students wore red to school to symbolize the start of Red Ribbon Week and ate red foods like apples and tomatoes to help keep their hearts healthy.
- **Day 3.** Students wore red/crazy socks to “sock it to drugs by staying away from drugs”, participated in mindful minute, and learned about healthy ways to relieve stress (e.g., talk with a trusted adult, spending time with friends, joining after-school activities, getting plenty of sleep, eating healthy foods, doing breathing exercises, leaving time for fun stuff, listening to music/playing music/singing, and drawing/coloring/writing).
- **Day 4.** Students wore caps/hats to school to “put a cap on drugs” and drank plenty of water to help with digestion and proper blood circulation. Students were encouraged to drink water when they are thirsty and after playing outside.
- **Day 5.** Students wore their favorite team jersey to school to “team u against drugs” and participated in several physical activities within the classroom. Students also enjoyed a scooter race between Ms. Casper and myself and learned a valuable lesson that “it doesn’t matter whether you win or lose the race, the only thing that matters is that you never give up and finish the race.”

- **Day 6.** Students wore neon to school to show that their “future is bright, say no to drugs” and they learned that medicines can help us when we are sick but they only work if they take them properly and if our doctor or parents have told us it is safe.
- **Day 7.** Students were asked to “bring it all back” by remembering all the healthy choices they made and wearing all the items they wore since the start of Red Ribbon Week.

Bully Prevention Month and Unity Day

October was Bully Prevention Month, Drew ES students learned what is bullying and what to do when they see bullying or are bullied. Students were given examples of what bullying is and is not. For example, accidentally running into someone and apologizing is not bullying, while purposefully running into someone to make them fall down is bullying. It is important for children and parents alike to understand the importance of being “upstanders”. Many times, we think of bullying as a bully and a victim. But, much of the power lays within the bystanders, the third group that witnesses the bully. The choices that the bystanders make will directly impact the victim. At some time, every kid becomes a bystander—someone who witnesses bullying but doesn't get involved. We encourage Drew ES students to be “upstanders” instead—the person who knows what's happening is wrong and does something to make things right. It takes courage to speak up on someone's behalf.

At Drew ES we want to encourage students to:

- **SPEAK UP** when they see bullying,
- **REACH OUT** to others who are bullied, and
- **BE A FRIEND** whenever they see bullying.
- **USE “BULLY BUSTER SKILLS”** to prevent bullying.
 - **B**-Be A Friend
 - **U**-Use a Distraction
 - **S**-Speak Out and Stand Up!
 - **T**-Tell
 - **E**-Exit
 - **R** – Review why it’s wrong

Likewise, Unity Day was on October 23. The purpose of Unity Day was to demonstrate that we stand together against bullying. We are united for kindness, acceptance and inclusion of all student. Drew ES students showed their involvement by:

- Wearing orange and eating orange foods such as oranges and carrots to help keeps their eyes and bones healthy;
- Writing positive messages about what they can do to make Drew ES a safer school to learn;
- Exploring the interactive Spookley Storybook Trail;
- Watching the movie Spookley the Square Pumpkin; and
- Singing and dancing to the song “Bully Buster”.

Montgomery County Public Schools offers many supports and services to help prevent bullying, including Student Services staff (school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and pupil personnel workers) who assist in the development of individual, group, or school-wide approaches to bullying prevention. Here are some ways you can help us continue this conversation:

- Read: [Parents play a key role in preventing and responding to bullying.](#)
- Watch: [The Juice Box Bully: A Read Aloud for Kids.](#)
- Read: [The best way to stop bullying: Get the cool kids to stick up for the victims \(Washington Post\).](#)
- [Report Bullying](#) with the Bullying Incidence Form.

MCPS Mental Health and Awareness Month

October was MCPS Mental Health and Awareness Month. Mental health and physical, social, and psychological well-being are the foundations of academic achievement, followed by college, career, and community success. Students heard Tips of the Day and received information about mental health as the month unfolded.

November

Counseling Lesson

This month I will facilitate the first of the Personal Body Safety Lessons for students as mandated by Montgomery County Public Schools. MCPS has adopted this policy to help students learn how to protect themselves, identify trusted adults with whom they feel safe talking to, and open the lines of communication between students and parents. Please look for a note coming home to explain more about these lessons. This Lesson was mentioned in October's Newsletter. Here is a copy of the note from the newsletter:

Personal Body Safety

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is taking an active role in the prevention of child abuse and neglect through early prevention and intervention education.

During the month of November, our school counselor and classroom teachers will be presenting lessons on the topic of child abuse and neglect. The lessons are known as Personal Body Safety Lessons and their purpose is to help students to:

- Develop knowledge, decision making skills, and behaviors which promote safe living in the home, school, and community;
- Learn skills for self-protection and identifying child abuse and neglect;
- Learn skills for asking for help for self and others and practice reporting to a trusted adult; and
- Engage in positive and appropriate interactions with peers and adults.

If you have any questions or concerns about the topics that will be covered, please contact me, your child's classroom teacher, or the school counselor.

College Week

It is during the Elementary through Middle School years that sharing information and building awareness about higher education and career readiness opportunities - is essential. For many students, the idea of college is not discussed in the home. Providing younger students with an opportunity to build a foundation of awareness about postsecondary education is critical. Building enthusiasm for educational attainment and an individual's lifelong responsibility for career readiness can never start soon enough. At Drew ES, students are given the opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding of higher education through college exploration activities such as listening to interactive college presentations, touring a college campus (in-person or virtually), and sharing information about academic offerings and campus life. These activities promote opportunities for younger students to dream big about their futures as teachers share information.