

The Wildcat Word

A Newsletter from the Guidance Department of Nottingham West Elementary School

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Sticks and Stones

Teasing is a sad fact of life for many kids as they grow up. And certain kids do seem to get more than their fair share. We adults tell our children to just “ignore it” and “not take it so seriously,” but that’s easier said than done.

Despite the old adage that “names can never hurt me”, name calling does hurt!

Through our school-wide and classroom guidance and behavior programs at Nottingham West, we teach students important skills such as showing respect for others and taking responsibility for one's behavior. Although we can't always stop kids from saying mean things to each other, we can do things to empower our children to handle the problem. One of the best things we can do is teach them how to respond in a way that discourages future teasing. Learning verbal strategies to respond to teasing can enable your children to feel safe and in control.

Remember, what works for one child may not be effective for everyone. One kid may be comfortable confronting a teaser directly; another may be more successful ignoring name calling. Here are some ideas for verbal comebacks to teach and practice with your child:

Question it. “Why would you say that?” “Why did you tell me I am dumb and try to hurt my feelings?”

Send a Strong “I Want” message. “I want you to leave me alone” or “I want you to stop teasing me.” The trick is to say the message firmly so that it doesn't sound wimpy.

Agree. “You've got that right. My shirt is pretty ugly.” “People always say that, I really am as tall as a giraffe.”

Say “So?” “So?...Whatever.” “So?...Who cares.” If your child likes this

strategy, be sure to read the children's book, The Meanest Thing to Say, by Bill Cosby.

Ignore it. Walk away without even a look at the teaser, pretend the teaser is invisible, look completely uninterested or pretend you don't hear it. This one works best if your child is nervous about responding in words. It works best in places where your child can move away from a teaser such as on a park or playground.

Be amazed. "Really? I didn't know that." Sounding like you are really surprised is the trick.

These verbal comebacks can be very effective in reducing teasing. When your child stays calm, uses a strong, firm voice to respond to the teaser and then walks away, he/she takes away the "audience" that a teaser is looking for.

If your child comes home from school with hurt feelings because of name calling, your care and support can make a big difference. Consider whether or not your child is ready to learn some verbal comebacks and practice with you. Or you may want to call the Guidance Counselor if you feel the problem cannot be resolved without adult help.

Sticks and stones are not the only things that can hurt a child. But we can work hard to be sure that mean teasing and name calling are not a painful part of every child's life. Together, we can teach them the skills to respond to the challenges of teasing with confidence.

NO NAME CALLING WEEK 2010

January 26-30


NO STICKS. NO STONES.
NO DISSING

NO NAME-CALLING WEEK
[www.nonamecallingweek.org]

Teasing Prevention/Intervention **at Nottingham West**

Classroom Guidance Curriculum

No Name-Calling Week: January 26-30, 2010

PAWS School Rules: Clear and consistent expectations for classroom, bus and recess behavior. The rules are Positive Attitude, Act Responsibly, Work and Play Safely, and Show Respect.

Project Wisdom Character Education Program

Guidance Groups for Social Skills

Student Support Center: The Student Support Center provides an opportunity to learn how to make better choices when students need help managing their behavior at school.