

January 3, 2017

Dear Parents and/or Guardians,

During the month of January, your child's homeroom teacher and I will be teaching the district's Personal Safety Curriculum. The curriculum focuses on giving students the skills to recognize and react to unsafe situations in a manner that protects their personal body safety. The curriculum includes two lessons per grade level to be taught by the homeroom teacher and the counselor. All lessons, kindergarten through sixth grade, are developmentally appropriate and are designed to educate children about a variety of influences that might otherwise compromise their safety. When confronted with a potentially unsafe situation, the students at each level will be taught the following five rules:

1. Say "No" or "Stop That!"
2. Get away to a safer place
3. Tell an adult you trust
4. Keep telling until someone helps you
5. Remember, even if you make a mistake, it's not your fault

Kindergarten: A storyboard lesson introduces the main concepts about personal safety and the five safety rules. Red Touches/Green Touches (Unsafe/Safe Touches) are developed through various role-play scenarios. In the second lesson, the safety rules are reviewed and the book, Your Body Belongs to You is shared.

First Grade: Students review the safety rules introduced in kindergarten and view the video, "Too Smart for Strangers with Winnie the Pooh" to learn and practice basic stranger safety. During the second lesson, stranger safety is reinforced as the students listen to and discuss the book, The Berenstain Bears Learn About Strangers.

Second Grade: In a continuation of the topic introduced in first grade, the second grade students play a Family Feud type game to reinforce the concepts of stranger safety. The second lesson includes a video, "It's Your Body: You're in Charge" and discussion to help students recognize and advocate for their personal body space.

Third Grade: To illustrate the importance of making safe choices in uncomfortable situations, students view the video, "What Tadoo with Secrets" and then affirm their personal safety network through a discussion of their family and community support system. Basic safety rules are further reviewed through a short video clip, "The ABC's of Safety".

Fourth Grade: Students view the video, "Dealing with Abuse: If It Happens to You," an empowering description of how children are able to get help with abusive situations by taking action and continuing to do so until the situation is addressed. The second lesson reinforces the message of the video utilizing activities and prompts to help students apply the learning to their own lives.

Fifth Grade: Personal Safety can be compromised through bullying. Students focus on the effects and prevention of bullying through watching the video, "When You See Bullying Happen: What a Bystander Can Do" and interacting with one another in a board game, *Positively Peer*, designed to strengthen peer relationships.

Sixth Grade: Building on understandings gained in 5th grade, students participate in discussions and Internet activities designed to recognize and prevent cyber-bullying. Parents and students are asked to discuss safe Internet use in their households.

Throughout the Personal Safety Curriculum, parents will be referenced and reinforced as the primary 'go-to person' and an important part of students' safety network. Please use this month as another opportunity to discuss your family's safety rules, empowering your children to learn and grow with safety in the forefront.

Sincerely,

Keith Cavanagh
Elementary Counselor