

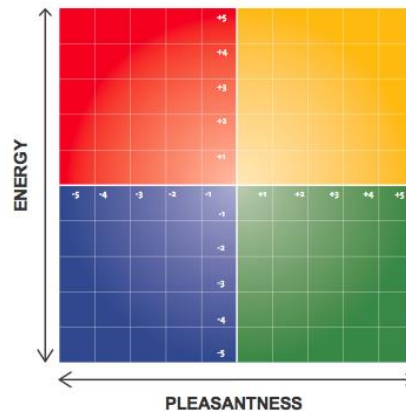
November 18, 2014

Dear Families,

Your child has been learning how to use a few tools to develop emotional intelligence; to understand and manage their feelings effectively, to make better decisions, build healthy relationships, and be top learners in their classroom.

The Mood Meter is our tool for teaching children and adults how to recognize and regulate their emotions effectively. The Mood Meter is divided into 4 quadrants – red, blue, green, and yellow – each represents a different set of feelings. Different feelings are grouped together on the Mood Meter based on their pleasantness and energy level.

- RED feelings: high in energy and low in pleasantness (e.g., angry, scared, and anxious);
- BLUE feelings: low in energy and low in pleasantness (e.g., sad, disappointed, and lonely);
- GREEN feelings: low in energy and high in pleasantness (e.g., calm, tranquil, and relaxed);
- YELLOW feelings: high in energy and high in pleasantness (e.g., happy, excited, and curious).



This Mood Meter has already become indispensable to our staff. Ask your child to explain more about how the Mood Meter works, and consider incorporating Mood Meter check-ins into your daily routines at home.

Last year our school goal was focused on helping our students and staff become aware of their own emotional state and using strategies to move to the state that is most helpful for the situation. This year our goal is to develop and extend vocabulary to more accurately label emotions – we want to move beyond the simple “I feel bad, sad, mad, glad...” so that our students have better tools to share their feelings. We will be using photographs, literature and personal experiences to explore this vocabulary – any support or reinforcement you can provide at home will be helpful! For example, you can discuss with your child the meanings of words like *frustrated, disappointed, thrilled, lonely, worried, peaceful, content, satisfied, delighted, nervous, dread, joyful, irritated, annoyed, jealous....* and find examples of those feelings in your life, on TV or at the movies.

The mood meter is one of the tools of the RULER program, which comes to us from Dr. Mark Brackett at Yale University. The following charts show the skills we are developing (currently we are focusing on Labeling Emotions) with the ultimate goal of being self-regulated.

RULER skills

R	Recognizing emotions	Using cues to understand what we are feeling and what others are feeling
U	Understanding emotions	Understanding the causes and consequences of an emotion
L	Labeling emotions	Giving emotions a name
E	Expressing emotions	How we show and express our emotions and how we show our emotions in socially appropriate ways
R	Regulating emotions	What we think about or do to feel more or less of an emotion or to keep feeling the same amount of an emotion

Practicing RULER at Home:

R	Pay attention to your emotions and the emotions of your children. Point out and discuss the facial expressions, vocal changes, and body language that reflect different emotions.
U	Discuss with your children what leads them to feel a range of emotions. Share how your feelings have affected your thoughts and behavior.
L	Use a wide range of emotion words with your children. Encourage your children to find the best word to describe their feelings.
E	Talk about what your body looks like when you are angry, excited, sad, or calm. Help children evaluate the best time and place to express their feelings.
R	Model many different effective strategies for your children when you manage your own feelings. Help your children find useful and successful strategies for managing the range of emotions they experience.

Sally Maidens, Principal