

September 7, 2010

Dear Third Grade Parents,

The children and I have been talking a lot during these first weeks of school about our hopes and dreams for the year and about our classroom rules. Each child thought about his/her hopes and dreams and shared them with the class. Then the class figured out the kinds of rules we'll need if all of us are to reach our hopes and dreams. Here are the rules we came up with:

- Move your body in a safe way.
- Always show that you're listening to your classmates and teachers.
- Take care of the classroom and materials.
- Be honest and kind to others.
- Always do your best.

We recognize that no one can be expected to follow the rules 100% of the time. When children make mistakes in following the rules, I'll help them solve the problems caused by their mistakes through the use of "logical consequences." Logical consequences are not punishments. They are ways to help children see the effects of their actions, repair the situation, and learn to do better next time.

There are three kinds of logical consequences:

Take a Break: If a child is being disruptive, s/he goes to a designated spot in the classroom, our "Vacation Table," to pull back together. The time-out is short. The child comes back as soon as s/he has regained control. Children may go voluntary to the Vacation Table.

Loss of Privilege: If a child misuses a material or acts out during an activity, that child will be told to stop using the material or stop doing the activity for a short period of time. The privilege will be restored when the child and teacher have talked about how to prevent a similar problem in the future.

“You break it, you fix it”: If a child damages something or hurts someone’s feelings, s/he will try to fix the damage. In the case of hurting someone’s feelings, the child might offer an “apology of action” by writing a card, helping with an activity, making an illustration, or taking some other action beyond verbally saying, “sorry.”

My goal is to help children believe in their ability to create a caring learning environment. Learning to live by the rules they’ve created is an important step.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or comments. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Danielle Brown