



## 🌻 May Counseling Update 🌻

Hello TES families!

May is officially upon us and it is beginning to feel like summertime, here in beautiful Templeton 🌻 Time seems to be flying by, as we near the end of the school year. And while this year has been anything but "normal", our students continue to remind us of their ability to find the good in ALL of life's challenges. Their resilience and adaptability never ceases to amaze me! Thank you for sharing your incredible little humans with us 💖

### **BIG Feelings**

As counselors, we talk about feelings A LOT. And while talking about feelings might seem pretty straightforward to adults, it does not always come as naturally to kids. Just like adults, children need to develop strategies for managing their emotions, so that they can build social-emotional skills. When children are more socially and emotionally aware and skilled, they can more effectively navigate relationships, calm down and problem solve when challenges arise. Experts agree that *Children who learn how to understand emotions in themselves and others are better able to regulate their own responses to strong emotions.* This means that when children are able to identify what emotions they are experiencing, they are better equipped to handle those "BIG feelings"

### **Paying attention to your body**

I often ask students to think about how their bodies feel when they are *angry, sad, nervous, etc.* For younger students, I will have them draw pictures to show where they feel worry or anger in their body. For example, their head might hurt. Their tummy might feel funny. Or their face might get hot. This helps them notice the connection between their emotions and their bodies. This also helps them recognize the signs of certain emotions, before they become TOO big to control.

### **All Feelings Are Okay**

When talking about feelings with students, it is important to remind them that **ALL feelings are Okay!** I like to reassure students that experiencing and expressing BIG feelings, like Anger, is okay. It is important to remind them that everyone experiences these feelings and they are not alone. The second thing we work on is what to do with those feelings. Yes, it's okay to be angry, but it's not okay to hurt someone because we're angry. We talk about expressing feelings in safe and appropriate ways. This is a good time to introduce calming strategies to manage those big emotions. I like to give examples of "Good choices" and "Bummer choices" and let the students discuss which strategies they think are *helpful and healthy* ways to handle their feelings.

### **Feelings are not forever**

When kids experience BIG feelings, they sometimes feel like those feelings are going to last forever. It can be difficult for students to look past the present moment. When this happens, it is helpful to talk about other times when they have felt "angry" or "frustrated". Ask them how long those feelings lasted, how did they work through it? What helped them to feel calm again? These questions will not only help students understand that their feelings are not permanent but that they are also capable of working through those feelings.

It is important for children to be in-tune with their emotions and aware of how they are connected to their thoughts and choices.

And lastly, as caregivers, it is helpful for us to model our feelings and reactions. It is okay for children to see you experience frustration, disappointment and sadness.. They will learn that it is a normal part of life to have these feelings. This is an opportunity for you to talk about your "BIG feelings" and model healthy coping strategies.

Read Aloud Books for Discussing Feelings

[My Incredible Talking Body](#)

[The Way I Feel](#)

[The Boy with Big, Big Feelings](#)

-Mrs.Clark-School Counselor 