

CORNERSTONE CORNER

Project Cornerstone, a YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

What is Project Cornerstone?

Project Cornerstone seeks to empower youth, parents, and school staff to improve school climate, reduce bullying, and create vibrant, caring communities of learners. Every month, a dedicated group of parent volunteers receives training to be ABC (Asset Building Champions) readers in our classrooms. Our readers share stories, lead discussions, and plan activities to help all kids feel valued, respected, & known at school.

UPSTANDER PLEDGE

I am an UPSTANDER.

I have the power to influence my peers.

I SAY something or DO something when you need help.

I am there for you.

I will help you get the help you need.

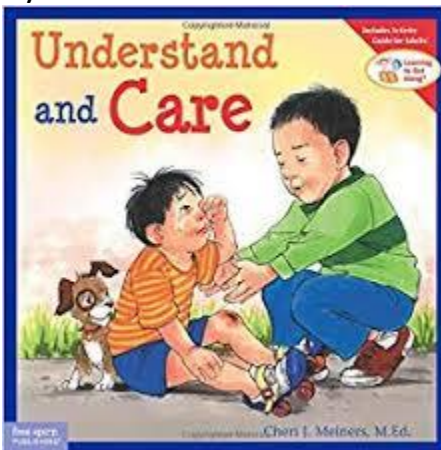
You are not alone.

I have your back.

This Month's Book:

Understand and Care

By Cheri J. Meiners



Today in your child's classroom I read the book *Understand and Care* by Cheri J. Meiners. This book helps children identify feelings, identify how someone is feeling and express empathy. We defined empathy as a sincere *understanding and caring* of how another person feels. In order to feel empathy, children must first understand and name their own feelings.

During our class discussion, we talked about feelings. Help your child continue to label and acknowledge how they feel and how others might be feeling in the moment.

- When you see your child feeling sad, say: Your mouth is showing me that you might be sad.
- Label your feelings for your child to hear, "Mommy is excited to be going to the zoo with you!"
- Play a guessing game where you act out a feeling and your child needs to guess what it is.
- When you read books, look at the pictures and talk about how the person is feeling.
- Focus on a different emotion every week. Post a picture on your fridge of a person showing an emotion. Discuss what it is and write the name of that emotion. Talk about when you or your child might have felt the same emotion or seen the same expression in someone else.

Please reinforce the lesson at home by practicing these skills:

1. Watch and listen to the person.
2. Remember when you have felt the same way.
3. Imagine how you might feel.
4. Ask what the person is feeling.
5. Show you care.

You can also reinforce the lesson when there are teachable moments or you notice them practicing one of the skills listed below. For example, if they ask you or a family member, "Are you happy/sad/excited/etc.?" they are using step 4. Or if they notice you are upset, and offer to give you a hug to make you feel better, that would be step 5.

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