CVUSD
ACADEMICS • ACTIVITIES • SAFETY
CONEJO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

COUNSELING GAZETTE

Volume II

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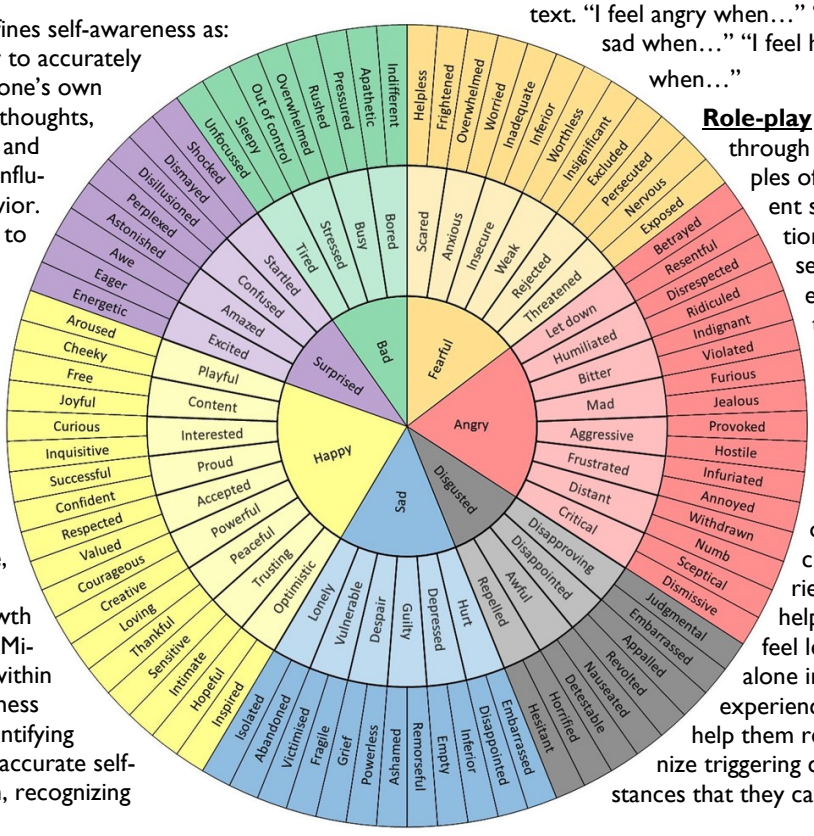
Learning About Self-Awareness

Hello CVUSD parents! We hope the first few weeks of the school year have been a positive learning experience and you are settling back into a routine.

Because of the unique circumstances we are faced with this school year our district has chosen to really emphasize social emotional learning as a major part of your child's education. Elementary counselors are providing video lessons to teachers throughout the year with Sanford Harmony as our chosen curriculum. To help you better understand the framework which we use to categorize social emotional learning (SEL) we will be introducing you to a new SEL competency over the next few newsletters.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a trusted source for knowledge about high-quality, evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL). CASEL supports educators and policy leaders and enhances the experiences and outcomes for all PreK-12 students.

CASEL defines self-awareness as: "the ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a 'growth mindset.'" Micro-skills within self-awareness include identifying emotions, accurate self-perception, recognizing strengths, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.



How can I help my child develop self-awareness?

Modeling Normalize the process of dealing with difficult emotions. Talk about your own feelings. Let your child know that processing and dealing with emotions is something we all deal with and it's nothing to be ashamed about. Use relatable experiences from your own childhood to help your child through difficult challenges. Letting your child know that you are still a work in progress can help to lessen their anxiety and let your child know that you are in this together.

Emotional Literacy Teach your child that there is a vast array of emotions. There are even complex mixtures of emotions. Help your child name their emotions. Young children will often act out in physical ways when experiencing tough emotions. Verbalizing emotions is the first step toward self-control. If your child can verbalize their emotional state, you can then lead them into positive choices. Practice using sentence stems to help put feelings into context. "I feel angry when…" "I feel sad when…" "I feel happy when…"

Role-play Go through examples of different situations to see what emotions might arise from different scenarios. Social stories can help kids feel less alone in their experiences and help them recognize triggering circumstances that they can try to avoid in the future. Use examples from literature, TV, Movies, and shared experiences. Talk about non-verbal cues and encourage your child to be a detective, guessing how others are feeling in any given situation through their body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice.

Scaling Using check-ins to gauge the intensity of emotions. "On a scale of 1 to 10 I am at…"

Making a list of things to try when experiencing different difficult emotions is a great tool and leads into the next SEL competency self-management. Having a visual of calming techniques close by can be very useful.

Book Recommendations

In My Heart, by Jo Witek

The Way I Feel, by Janan Cain

When Sophie Gets Angry, by Molly Bang

Sam's Pet Temper, Sangeeta Bhardra

Wilma Jean the Worry Machine, by Julia Cook

Giraffes Can't Dance, by Giles Andreae

https://casel.org/