



THE MEHER SCHOOLS



Wednesday Messages

February 12, 2020 • Parent Resource Center: www.MeherSchoolsParents.org

No More General Store Donations at the School

For several years the White Pony Express General Store has been picking up donations of children's clothing, toys, and books outside the Office. After this week, though, they'll no longer be accepting donations here. They'll continue to welcome donations of new and like-new clothing for children and adults and children's toys and books at their Pleasant Hill workshop, which is near Best Buy. Visit the White Pony Express website at whiteponyexpress.org for their address and hours and a list of donations they can and cannot accept.

Founders Day Tickets on Sale

Ticket sales are underway for the February 29 Founders Day evening event for parents—and now you can pay for your tickets through your Curacubby account (see the *eNote* we sent on February 6). You can still buy them in the Office with cash or by check. They're \$20 per person. Space is limited!

Valentine's Day Reminders

If your child's room is observing Valentine's Day, please remember these guidelines:

- Please don't let your child bring candy or other edible treats or gifts to distribute.
- Children who wish to bring cards for other children may do so only if they bring one for every member of the class.
- Preschool parents, please don't write children's names on cards. Parents or teachers, not children, should put the cards in children's cubbies.

Do You Have the School's Numbers in Your Contacts?

Nearly three-quarters of Americans don't answer their phones when they don't recognize the caller's number. This means that when we call parents, there's a good chance those who don't have our numbers in their contact list won't answer. When we call you, it's often about a child who's sick or injured, and we need to talk to you.

This is why it's important that anyone on your emergency contact list who doesn't answer calls from unfamiliar numbers has the school's main number ((925) 938-9958) and rollover numbers (938-9959, 938-9183, 938-4841) in their contacts. We could call from any of these, depending on what lines are in use at the time.

If you have a child in elementary aftercare, please add the Room 10 number too: (925) 938-4880. That line is used between 3 and 6:30. Preschool teachers use the school's main number all day.



Tips for Parents by Susie Kohl

Identifying and Validating “Big Feelings”

“USE YOUR WORDS,” we urge children when they are acting aggressively. This is actually an abstract phrase that isn’t always easy to understand. Imagine how hard it is when we’re very upset to express our emotions. Children need our help to learn words for what they feel at time when they are not upset so that they can communicate when big feelings overtake them.

The truth is we are often triggered by a child’s intense feelings, the noises they make, the things they say in anger. It helps to reflect on how adults responded when we were upset as children. Were our feelings dismissed? (“That’s nothing to be upset about!”) Did they communicate that being angry wasn’t acceptable? Did they ignore our feelings? When we’re trying to help a child who is acting out, we are part of the equation.

Children who have their feelings identified and validated consistently are more able to develop emotional, social intelligence, and self-regulation. Research by the Gottman Institute demonstrates that proactively noticing children’s feelings before they are intense and validating them reduces their stress even in difficult situations. This is the basis of emotional resiliency.

The Gottman Institute also provides valuable information for parents on emotionally coaching their children. Go to www.gottman.com and search for “emotional coaching” to learn more.

Nurtured Heart Corner
Promoting Children’s “Inner Wealth”

Leaking Negativity

The first “stand” of the Nurtured Heart Approach is the core of the program, and it’s worth revisiting now and then: “I refuse to energize negativity. I will not accidentally reward negativity with my energy, connection, or relationship.” One of the biggest ways we can help ourselves use NHA more effectively is by learning to notice when we “leak negativity” in our interactions.

When we “reset” a child, whether it’s using the word reset or using a redirection phrase such as “I need you to stop talking and turn your body around,” it can be hard to keep our voice even and neutral. However, as soon as we let that edge of frustration creep into our voice or body language, we’ve reinforced a negative behavior with our energy. Keeping our own feelings in check is often the most challenging part of NHA, but it’s an essential part of the technique. We can check in with our emotions throughout the day, start to notice our own triggers, and continue to work on managing our reactions.

Reminder: No school Friday or Monday

School will be closed this Friday and next Monday for Presidents Day Weekend.