



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Dear Parents and Guardians:

The last ABC Program book for our 1st – 4th grade classes is *The Recess Queen* by Alexis O’Neill. In this story, Mean Jean the “recess queen” rules the playground with an iron fist. No one dares cross her path for fear of being hit, punched, or kicked. One day, a new girl shows up on the playground and catches Mean Jean completely off guard. Katie Sue is not the least bit intimidated by Mean Jean. Katie Sue actually invites her to join in a jump rope game! In no time, Jean and Katie Sue become friends.

This clever book helps our students think of creative ideas to handle bully behaviors during lunch and recess. The lesson discusses:

- Ways to fill buckets for the bully
- How UPstanders can improve school climate on the playground
- Peaceful ways to diffuse conflicts using *I Messages*
- Using the many tools in the *ABC toolbox* learned throughout the year

Using *I Messages* is a technique that our children can use to peacefully resolve conflicts. As a caring adult, here are steps you can use to help youth in emotionally charged conflicts:

- Help them identify the conflict.
- Without interruption, have each person describe briefly what happened.
- Use empathetic listening. No judging, just listening.
- Have each of the involved persons name how they feel with an “I statement”:
 - A. I feel _____ when _____ because _____.
 - B. I feel _____ when _____ because _____.
- Help children repeat and refine their statements until tension from the misunderstanding or conflict subsides.
- Celebrate the successful resolution of conflicts and acknowledge the compromises each person made so that the solution would work!

You are the most influential role model in your child’s life. By remaining calm in response to frustration, you help your child learn how to react peacefully in difficult social situations. Your guidance, empathy and support allow them to practice and acquire new skills. Your swift and empathetic response to bully behaviors helps our school and community feel safe and more caring for all kids.

I hope you have enjoyed hearing about our ABC program this year. More tools and strategies to improve school climate will be discussed in next year’s ABC Program. Please contact our schools Program Lead to join the team as an ABC Reader next year! To learn more about Project Cornerstone, check out www.projectcornerstone.org.

What you can do at home this summer:

Take time to sit down with your child and talk about the *Steps to Conflict Resolution*. See the list of ABC Tools learned through out the year for more clever ways to address frustration, conflict and disappointment. These frequent conversations about tough topics like bullying help your child see you as a trusted ally!

STUDENT STEPS TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. State the conflict.

- Each person describes briefly what happened.
- While one person talks, the other person listens.

2. Name how you feel with an *I statement*:

I feel _____ (state the feeling)

when _____ (state the behavior)

I would like _____ (state what you want to happen)

I feel angry when you call me names. I would like you to call me by my real name.

3. Reduce the tension:

- a. *I statements* may identify and resolve the misunderstanding or conflict. If not, continue to step 4.

4. Brainstorm ideas for problem solving. Remind the students about past ABC themes/tools:

- a. *Bucket Filling*
- b. *Swimming Free*
- c. *Say or Do Something*.
- d. *UPstander actions*
- e. *Tell and Make a Report*
- f. *Positive Self-Talk*

5. Evaluate the solutions. Together agree on and choose a solution to try.

6. Get help from an adult if you need it. Being an *UPstander* means finding help when you need it.