



Empowering Our Youth Solving “Big” Problems and “Small” Problems

As parents and educators, how do we help

to empower children to become healthy problem solvers?

First, it’s important for children to understand the difference between “**big problems**”, that require help from an adult to and “**small problems**”, that they can work through on their own.

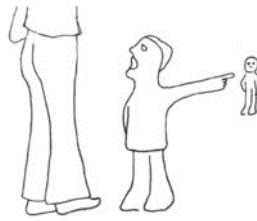
“Big problems”, are problems such as a student injury, a stranger on the playground, or when a student could be in danger. A “small problem” is when there is a minor conflict between students, such as a disagreement.

It’s important for students to also learn the difference between telling and tattling. When students “**tattle**”, they’re trying to get another student into trouble. They are going to an adult when they have a “small problem” and could have solved this on their own. When they “**tell**”, they’re trying to keep another student safe, and getting help for a “big problem”.

It’s beneficial as parents and educators that we empower students to become problem solvers, so as they grow, they don’t always need to rely on an adult to solve the problem for them. **Students can learn** that when they’re dealing with a “small problem”, they should try at least two healthy choices before they seek help from an adult. When students have these tools and **are able to resolve** “small problems”, teachers have more classroom time to focus on academics, because less time is spent on solving “small problems” between students.

Children can choose two of the following healthy choices to help them work through “small problems” that arise.

- *Apologize when you make a mistake
- *Walk away
- *Ignore the bad behavior
- *Ask them to stop
- *Make a deal with another student
- *Wait and cool off if you get angry



- *Go to another game
- *Talk it out with the other student
- *Share and take turns.

If children have tried using at least two healthy choices to **solve the “small” problem** and the behavior continues, they can ask for help from an adult. For example, if a student is being teased **on the playground** they could choose to **walk away** from that student and to ask that student to stop. If the teasing continues, the student should then seek help from an adult since he/she has tried to solve it first on his or her own. Children benefit greatly by being able to **problem solve** on their own, it gives **them confidence and makes them feel they have control** over their situation, which results in healthy problem solvers and **happier children**.

From our Friends at CASA

Did you know that the number of children entering foster care in Montana has skyrocketed in recent years? In 2018 alone, **510** children were removed from their homes due to **abuse and neglect** in the Billings



area, resulting in almost **900 children** currently in local foster care. **You** could be the voice for one of these children by becoming a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate. **The next round of CASA training begins in May.** Please give CASA of Yellowstone County a call at (406) 259-1233 or visit yellowstonecasa.org to learn more about upcoming information sessions and how you can make a difference in the life of a child.

Kids in Motion

*Bitterroot has a date with Kids in Motion! They will be at Bitterroot in May 16th to **repair bikes for free!** 2:30 – 5:30, we will need volunteers. Please contact the office 281-6205 if you are willing to help out.*



Sports Physicals

School sports physicals are **required** yearly for those students participating in **middle school (including 6th grade) sports**. The pre-participation physical exam form, which must be completed and accompany the student at the time of the physical, can be downloaded from the MHS website under Resources/Forms/Miscellaneous. **Forms** will also be available in **the Kids Corner at Bitterroot School**. Along with information on physicals available from Billings Clinic.

From the Library:

A big **THANK YOU to **SCHEELS** for donating books to our library through Usborne books. We appreciate you!*

****Book Club** is back by popular demand. Every Monday and Wednesday 4/15-5/17, 4th & 5th graders will meet to eat and discuss the latest book. Thank you Mrs. Anderson for doing this!*

Sonic Fundraiser – April 10th

Feeling like eating out? **Sonic** is partnering with the Bitterroot PTA for a fundraiser. **50%** of sales on April the 10th will benefit Bitterroot Elementary!! Watch for the flyer!



Dates to Remember

- 4/3-7 Shrine Circus @ the Shrine**
- 4/4 4th Grade Field Trip**
- 4/5 Skyview Presents Sherlock Holmes
7PM @ Skyview**
- 4/6 Sherlock Holms 1PM @Skyview**
- 4/8 No School for Students**
- 4/10 Sonic Fundraiser 5-9 PM**
- 4/11 5th MSUB Field Trip**
- 4/13 Jr League Free Laundry Day
BYO Laundry 10AM – 2PM**
- 4/16 Skyview Play Assembly 9:20**
- 4/17 Pizza with the Principal 12:30**
- 4/18,19 & 22 Vacation Days No School**
- 4/24 & 25 NWEA Testing 3rd - 5th Grades**

FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Spring is here - it is our busiest time and that means we are already starting to make plans for next year. We are accepting **kindergarten enrollments now**. If you know



of anyone that intends to have a child attend kindergarten next year, please encourage them to **come enroll ASAP**. Having enrollments early helps us prepare for next year and ensure we have appropriate staffing.

Another piece **we start**

discussing this time of year is class placement. Many factors are considered as we assign students to classrooms including peer relationships, social factors, teacher & learning matches and many others. Medical and instructional needs take precedence over all other factors. I am asking that you first and foremost trust the judgment and wisdom of those who observe your child on a daily basis in the learning process. If your child has a medical or instructional need that I should be aware of please complete a parent input form that is available at the office or email me for a copy.

This is also the start of our busiest testing season. K-2 students will be assessed with the **FastBridge** reading and math probes in May to help us measure student growth that occurred this year. Students in 3rd-6th grade will take the **NWEA Measured Academic Progress**

(MAP) assessment along with the state mandated **Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC)** April through May. Your teacher should be communicating specific dates of testing with you. We truly use this data to help us guide student learning so it is important that students are present and do their best. If you plan to be gone when your child's class is taking a test, please let us know so we can make plans for make-up days.

The last **Pizza with the Principal** for the year will take place Wednesday the 17th at 12:30p.m. We will be discussing the plans for next year, class placement info, how to read your child's year end assessment reports and any other topics you would like to cover. Please RSVP to me via email or call Christy to let us know you will be attending.

Kevin Croff
Principal - Bitterroot Elementary

**rock
the
test**

