

## MONONGALIA COUNTY SCHOOLS DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION NEWSLETTER

### “KINDNESS TO ALL CULTURES”



## Monongalia County celebrates the importance of Kindness in November

Kindness can be dated back to the 13th century.

Everyone has a different story, they come from a different walk of life and they have different viewpoints. Even though we have differences that doesn't mean we shouldn't continue to show kindness to one another.

We may never know what is going on in someone else's life. A simple act of kindness can make someone's day or change their life. Holding the door open or offering to help may not be a big deal to one person, but could be the different to another.



There has been research done on the study of kindness and the way that it makes us feel. The research shows that kindness can make us feel better because an act of kindness can give our oxytocin hormone levels a boost. Oxytocin is associated with making us more trusting, more generous, friendlier as well as lower blood pressure.

Besides increasing our oxytocin levels kindness also increases:

- Energy
- Happiness
- Lifespan
- Pleasure
- Serotonin

Besides the things that kindness increases it also decreases:

- Pain- acts of kindness produces endorphins
- Stress- Kind people are shown to have 23% less cortisol levels
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Blood Pressure

As a county we will be promoting acts of kindness in our schools. Kindness has shown to have many advantages and does not take a lot of effort or energy to do. Please help us support our message of being kind to one another, not just this month, but year round.

## November Observations

- National Native American Heritage Month
- World Kindness Week- Week of November 13<sup>th</sup>
- World Kindness Day- November 13<sup>th</sup>

For questions or more information please contact:

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## IN THIS ISSUE

### PARENT CORNER

#### GUARDIAN CORNER

*The guardian corner is optional reading for parents that are looking for additional resources or ideas at home. Monongalia county schools in only providing optional resources and respects everyone's differences*

We all would like for our kids to be kind and to grow up being kind and caring adults. You have probably repeated the words, "be kind" at some point. Many children develop kindness and empathy on their own, but it is still important to teach and model kindness to kids.

Teaching your kids to be kind is where you want to lead by example. Kids learn to be kind by watching what others do around them.

Throughout the day if you are showing kindness to people your child is more likely to show kindness too. It is important to show your kid kindness too. Try to speak to them kindly, even when you may be frustrated or exhausted.

It is also important to find moments when you child is showing kindness and acknowledging them for it. If you see you child share their toy, make sure to acknowledge it with them. You can tell them, "I am proud of you for sharing your toy. That was very kind of you."

#### Activities you can do at home

##### 1. Random Acts of Kindness Presents

Making an art project for someone for no particular reasons. Pet rocks or paperweights are easy to do.

**What you need:** rocks; acrylic paint; paper; scissors; pencils, crayons, or markers; googly eyes; stick-on gems.

#### **What to do:**

For pet rocks and paperweights:

- Paint the rock.
- Attach googly eyes if making a pet rock. If you are making a paperweight, decorate the rock with stick-on gems and write messages: 'I love you,' 'You are beautiful,' 'You make me smile,' 'I love your laughter,' 'You are fun!'

- Give the rock to a neighbor or friend.

##### 2. Random Acts of Kindness Bingo

Kids understand how to be kind, but sometimes they have difficulty knowing how to put the concept into action. By playing kindness bingo you can have easy options for your kids all the time.

**What you need:** paper, pencils, crayons or markers; bingo stampers or highlighters.

#### **What to do:**

- Make a grid on a piece of paper. Make as many squares as you wish but sixteen or twenty-five work well.
- The kids can decorate the Bingo sheet with images that come to mind when they think about kindness (hearts, rainbows, helping hands).
- In each Bingo square, write an act of kindness. Get your kids involved and encourage them to think up ways to be kind: say hi to a neighbor down the street, help younger sibling pour the milk, set the table without being asked, etc.
- Make, decorate and cut out small hearts. Then, stick the hearts to the bingo board when the kids complete the acts of kindness. You could also stamp the square with a Bingo stamper or highlight it if you prefer.
- When the Bingo square is complete have some way to celebrate: a special dessert, or a half-hour later bedtime, for example.

##### 3. Kindness in the Mail

**What you need:** card stock or thick paper or blank postcards; pencils, crayons or markers. Stamps.

#### **What to do:**

- Cut thick paper or cardstock into rectangles.
- Decorate one side of the postcard with a picture or words or collage.
- Draw a line down the middle of the back of the paper, write the address of the recipient on the right side, and add a message on the left side. Messages can be: thinking of you! Or Can't wait to see you soon! Or Remember when we caught that fish last summer... Emphasize messages of kindness and good feelings.
- Mail the postcards to cousins, aunts and uncles, grandparents and long-distance friends.

### LOOK BACK AT LAST MONTH

#### Teaching your teenage kindness

Teaching a teenager about kindness is a lot easier than most people will think. If you really want to teach your teenager about kindness there is not better way than to teach by example.

Your teenager is listening and observing you quite a bit, even when you think they are not. What you do they are watching you. It doesn't have to be big actions either small actions are just as important:

- Give someone a hug
- Smile at a stranger
- Share something with someone
- Offer to help someone do something
- Hold a door open for someone
- Give sincere compliments

While each one seems small it all add up if they are done consistently and will help them pick up the habit as well.

#### **Preview to next Month**

*December is "Celebrations all over the world"*

This month will focus on the different celebrations that happen all over the world. There are over 120+ celebration around the world each year. Not everyone celebrates the same things and that is okay. It is important to recognize and respect different celebrations that take place around the world.

## December Observations

- National Human Rights Month
- Human Rights Day- Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>

*\*Please note that these are not all observations throughout the month. If any were missed that relates to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion it was not intentional\**

## *A Look Back at Last Month at Suncrest Middle...*

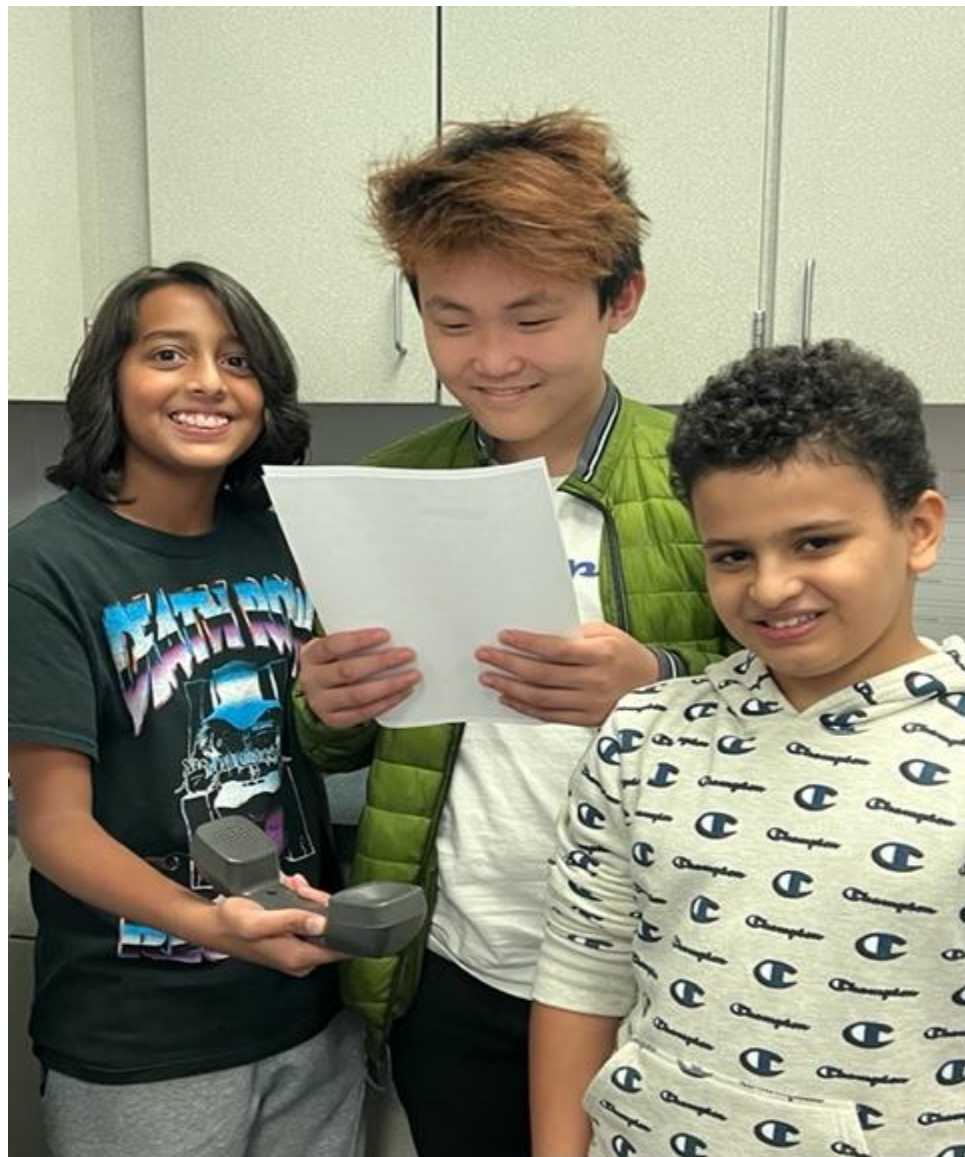
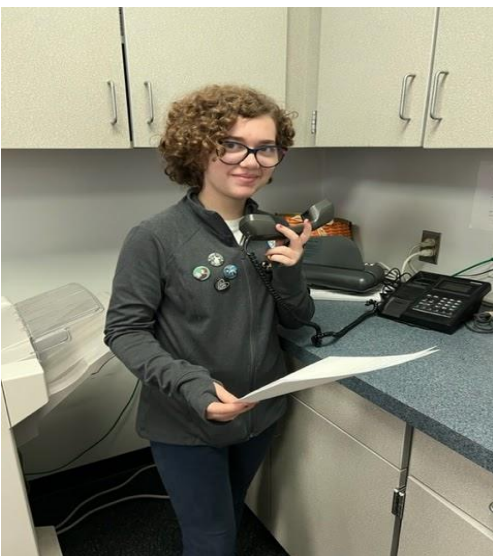
Suncrest Middle School is looking forward to the cooler weather while celebrating diversity in the school halls!

National Hispanic Heritage Month finished October 15th with a Dance Therapy guest from Venezuela; Also in October, we celebrated Global Diversity Month by exploring different languages spoken by our own school community. And finally, Suncrest Middle staff and students took a closer look at building relationships and discouraging bullying within our homerooms.

### **DURING GLOBAL DIVERSITY MONTH:**

Each morning a Suncrest student or a Suncrest Middle teacher delivered a global awareness message in a different language. This began Oct. 4 with one of our 7th graders speaking in Italian. (October was also National Italian American Heritage Month, and the cafeteria made pepperoni rolls for lunch to help celebrate!) National German American Day (Oct.6) was recognized in the morning with our own Crystal Heckman speaking in German.

This continued every school day through the month of October with Suncrest students greeting their peers during announcements in another language. These bilingual students highlighted our diverse educational community by reading a morning message in different languages: Arabic, Spanish, Fijian, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Manipur, Italian, German, Russian, Mandarin, Telugu, and Turkish.



## Each grade level activities

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***In the classroom:*** 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students were celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15th - October 15th. Profesora Bush invited a dance therapy teacher from Venezuela to talk to and teach dancing to the students late September/early October.

***In the homerooms:*** Anti-bullying and Building Relationships was the focus for all grade level homerooms at Suncrest Middle for the month of October. Students watched videos, completed writing prompts and engaged in discussions about how to build better relationships with others and to support individuals who may be feeling isolated. Students also discussed issues around bullying and cyberbullying. The efforts to discuss relationship building will help November's initiatives on kindness. Kindness week is this month from

