

# JUNE THEME 2022 # PEACE

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
Psychotherapist, SEL Specialist**

This month's social and emotional learning (SEL) theme is **#PEACE**. The theme of **#PEACE** was selected for the month of June to keep us focused on recognizing a feeling of accomplishment and to focus on one definition of **#PEACE** which is freedom from disturbance and tranquility.

It is a very timely theme this month as the nation faces devastating and tragic loss of young children whose lives were taken within their very classrooms.

With **#PEACE** as our SEL theme this month, the meaning of this word can hopefully provide a reminder of how important it is, no matter the age, to understand what brings us **#PEACE**.

For educators, as we look back on the past school year and the challenges that we have overcome to get to June, it should be an opportunity to recognize how we contributed to the growth, education, and well-being of our students. These goals were accomplished with minimal or no disturbance and total acceptance by our students.

We can embrace a feeling of **#PEACE** as we look at our students who are equipped to proceed to the next grade or move into the next phase of their academic career as graduates of WUFSD.

**#PEACE** reminds us as educators that we are charged at the beginning of every school year to not only fulfill the requirements of our jobs throughout our classrooms, but to also meet our individual goals for reaching our students. With this success, we can release a sigh of relief, and a strong resounding applause for achieving our academic goals.

The theme of **#PEACE** also brings our SEL theme initiative to a successful close of the 2021-2022 school year. Each month we have been committed to focusing on our monthly themes and creating learning experiences around them.

As we head towards the culmination of our academic year, with our students facing final exams, engaging your students in focusing on **#PEACE**, can provide them with their focus on remaining calm and motivated towards completion of the semester with success.

At this challenging time, **#PEACE** is a theme that can spark conversations about what brings us **#PEACE**, how we can be **#PEACEful**, and to feel at **#PEACE** in the safety of the classrooms at WUFSD.

Ways in which the theme **#PEACE** can be used is to have students engage in discussions and participate in school activities that focus on **#PEACE**.

**#PEACE** relates to many of the themes we focused on this school year. If we are trying to achieve **#PEACE**, then we need to have **#PATIENCE** and **#GRATITUDE** for our lives and where we are in our pursuits and journeys. **#PEACE** also relates to our themes of **#HONESTY**, **#CONFIDENCE**, **#SELF-DISCIPLINE** AND **#SELF-AWARENESS** which all contribute to accepting and believing in yourself.

SEL themes provides building blocks for classroom teachers, administrators, and parents to have a consistent focus on behavioral and social and emotional health.

### **FOR OUR PARENTS**

For parents, focusing on and discussing the theme **#PEACE** provides parents with an opportunity to connect engage their child in truthful conversations about what it means to have **#PEACE** in their lives.

We invite every parent to encourage their children to wear the **#PEACE** bracelet daily. The bracelets serve as a reminder for our students to be aware of the importance of our monthly SEL themes and be a resource as they go throughout their day.

### **FOR OUR TEACHERS**

#### **TEACHING TOOLS:**

We encourage our teachers to be mindful of the five (5) core SEL competencies and to use them as a guideline for implementing our monthly themes.

**These are the competencies:**

### **#PEACE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

#### **SEL TIPS: #PEACE**

#### **How to achieve #PEACE...**

The social and emotional learning initiative at WUFSD focuses on one theme each month. This SEL initiative includes the distribution of SEL themed bracelets, posters in each school, posters throughout the community and banners on every school building.

We invite all parents to join our (SEL) social emotional learning initiative by helping your children focus on the (SEL) theme **#PEACE**.

Why is peace important?

**Peace builds, strengthens, and restores**

How do you get peace?

1. **Self-awareness — Recognizing emotions and thoughts, understanding how they influence behavior and assessing personal strengths and weaknesses.**
  2. **Self-management — Regulating thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Setting goals, controlling impulses, and managing stress.**
  3. **Social awareness — Understanding the perspective of others, showing empathy for diverse groups of people, and finding support through family, school, and community relationships.**
  4. **Relationship skills — Communicating, cooperating, resisting negative pressure, and offering help. Building and maintaining healthy relationships.**
  5. **Responsible decision-making — Making ethical and respectful choices about personal behavior and relationships and evaluating the consequences of decisions.**
- **Gather students in conversation groups to discuss the meaning of #PEACE.**
  - **Use the theme #PEACE as a prompt for writing and sharing a story about when they had to tell the truth and face the consequences.**
  - **Relate our past monthly themes to #PEACE.**
  - **Examine ways in which #PEACE gives students an opportunity to looking at themselves and how it can benefit so many areas of their lives.**
  - **Compare and contrast #PEACE to being #PEACEful.**
1. **Spend Time in nature.**
  2. **Taking short walks in a serene place.**
  3. **Meditate.**
  4. **Being Grateful.**
  5. **Take Responsibility for our actions.**
  6. **Love who you are.**
  7. **Practice acceptance.**
  8. **Feel contentment.**

## **MAY THEME 2022 - #HONESTY**

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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**MAY IS HERE!** This month's social and emotional learning (SEL) theme is **#HONESTY**. With one more month left in the school year, the concept of **#HONESTY**, applies to many of the upcoming requirements our students are facing. As students prepare for their next academic steps, whether it is preparing for exams, planning college visits, or the anticipation of graduation, they are all facing a time of uncertainty and change. It can be helpful for students to be guided by teachers in examining the level of **#HONESTY** they have had with themselves.

This month's theme of **#HONESTY** is an opportunity to connect our past month's themes in developing activities. We can guide our students in conversations centered around what **#HONESTY** means to them.

The theme **#HONESTY** is built upon many other related themes. These themes can be used to expand our student's knowledge of the theme **#HONESTY** and used as vocabulary builders or discussion prompts for classroom teachers.

Ways in which the theme **#HONESTY** can be used is to have students engage in a review of their academic performance throughout the year, participation in school activities, if they have put their best effort out, or engaged in volunteerism on campus. There are also so many ways to relate **#HONESTY** to the themes **#COMMITMENT**, **#PATIENCE**, **#GRATITUDE**, **#CONFIDENCE**, **#SELF-DISCIPLINE**, AND **#SELF-AWARENESS**.

### **HOW DO WE SHOW #HONESTY?**

Focusing on the theme **#HONESTY** in the classroom will allow teachers to also think about their own performance this year and their commitment to students. Teachers can use this month to check off their own 'to-do list,' as they prepare to wrap up the school year.

SEL themes provide building blocks for classroom teachers, administrators, and parents to have a consistent focus on behavioral and emotional health.

### **FOR OUR PARENTS**

For parents, focusing on and discussing the theme **#HONESTY** provides parents with an opportunity to connect engage their child in truthful conversations about academics, friendships, feelings, and emotions.

We invite every parent to encourage their children to wear the **#HONESTY** bracelet daily. The bracelets serve as a reminder for our students to be aware of the importance of our monthly SEL themes and be a resource as they go throughout their day.

### **FOR OUR TEACHERS**

#### **TEACHING TOOLS:**

We encourage our teachers to be mindful of the five (5) core SEL competencies and to use them as a guideline for implementing our monthly themes.

These are the competencies:

### **#HONESTY CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

#### **SEL TIPS: #HONESTY**

The social and emotional learning initiative at WUFSD focuses on one theme each month. This SEL initiative includes the distribution of SEL-themed bracelets, posters in each school, posters throughout the community, and banners on every school building.

We invite all parents to join our (SEL) social-emotional learning initiative by helping your children focus on the (SEL) theme **#HONESTY**.

- **TELLING THE TRUTH.**
- **ACCEPTING WHEN WE ARE WRONG.**
- **ADMITTING WE ARE WRONG.**
- **LETTING OUR REAL EMOTIONS SHOW.**
- **EXPRESSING OURSELVES TRUTHFULLY.**
- **NOT ACCEPTING THINGS, WE HAVE NOT EARNED.**
- **NOT ENGAGING IN CHEATING.**

1. Self-awareness — Recognizing emotions and thoughts, understanding how they influence behavior, and assessing personal strengths and weaknesses.
2. Self-management — Regulating thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Setting goals, controlling impulses, and managing stress.
3. Social awareness — Understanding the perspective of others, showing empathy for diverse groups of people, and finding support through family, school, and community relationships.
4. Relationship skills — Communicating, cooperating, resisting negative pressure, and offering help. Building and maintaining healthy relationships.
5. Responsible decision-making — making ethical and respectful choices about personal behavior and relationships and evaluating the consequences of decisions.

- Gather students in conversation groups to discuss the meaning of **#HONESTY**.
- Use the theme **#HONESTY** as a prompt for writing and sharing a story about when they had to tell the truth and face the consequences.
- Relate our past monthly themes to **#HONESTY**.
- Examine ways in which **#HONESTY** in looking at themselves can benefit so many areas of their lives.
- Compare and contrast **#HONESTY** to being dishonest.

1. Think before you speak.
2. Say what you mean and mean what you say.
3. Always communicate in an open and honest fashion.
4. Present both sides of each issue.
5. Clarify communication to eliminate confusion in your message.
6. Accept responsibility for your actions.
7. Hold people accountable when their words do not match their actions.
8. Never compromise your integrity and reputation.

**APRIL THEME 2022 - #CREATE**

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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**HAPPY APRIL!** Spring is here and this month's social and emotional learning (SEL) theme is **#CREATE** which is the perfect theme for this month. Spring is a time of flowers blooming, longer and brighter days, and the anticipation of something new. For our students, this anticipation may focus on new outdoor activities, new opportunities to excel, and discovering new talents in the arts. Spring provides a colorful palette to express ourselves by observing the new growth of flowers, trees, and warmer breezes. This month exudes opportunities to **#CREATE** and develop classroom and school-wide activities that express the definition of **#CREATE** which means 'to bring something new into existence.'

This month's theme of **#CREATE** is an opportunity to connect our past month's themes in developing activities. We can guide our students to think of what it takes to think of an idea and put that idea to a canvas, poem or short story. Our creativity flows easier when we feel **#SELF-CONFIDENT**, **#BELIEVE** in our talents and abilities, have **#PATIENCE** in the creative process and trust our abilities because we are **#SELF-AWARE**.

Teaching the concept of **#CREATE** requires teachers to ask their students about their interests beyond the classroom. Students may need a bit of encouragement in sharing what hobbies, activities, or special interest groups they participate in during their time away from school and how they can apply the theme **#CREATE** in sharing with other students.

The SEL initiative provides building blocks for classroom teachers, administrators, and parents to have a consistent focus on behavioral and emotional health.

The concept of **#CREATE** is built upon many other related concepts. These words can be used to expand our student's knowledge of the theme **#CREATE** and used as vocabulary builders or discussion prompts for classroom teachers:

## **FOR OUR PARENTS**

For parents, focusing on and discussing the theme **#CREATE** provides parents with an opportunity to connect it to the SEL theme **#CONFIDENCE**. Parents have a wonderful opportunity to encourage our students to join school activities for the first time. The theme **#CREATE** can also be a conversation starter for parents to share their creative side and talents with their children.

We invite every parent to encourage their children to wear the **#CREATE** bracelet daily. The bracelets serve as a reminder for our students to be aware of the importance of our monthly SEL themes and be a resource as they go throughout their day.

## **FOR OUR TEACHERS**

### **TEACHING TOOLS:**

We encourage our teachers to be mindful of the five (5) core SEL competencies and to use them as a guideline for implementing our monthly themes. These are the competencies:

**#CREATE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:**

- 1. Discuss ideas with students to begin a new activity.*
- 2. Encourage students to use their imagination through creative writing and storytelling.*
- 3. Discuss future goals and dreams about who they hope to become.*
- 4. Expand students' imagination through books.*
- 5. Create a new classroom routine focused on self-awareness.*
- 6. Use the new Spring season to spark discussion on nature.*
- 7. Encourage sharing by having students talk about their hobbies and talents.*
- 8. Teach a lesson through art or music.*
- 9. Celebrate artistic expression.*
- 10. Share your artistic, musical, or written talent with your students.*

The social and emotional learning initiative at WUFSD focuses on one theme each month. This SEL initiative includes the distribution of SEL-themed bracelets, posters in each school, posters throughout the community, and banners in every school building.

We invite all parents to join our (SEL) social-emotional learning initiative by helping your children focus on the (SEL) theme **#CREATE**.

- 1. PASSIONATE**
- 2. SENSITIVE**
- 3. OBSERVANT**
- 4. SELF-CONFIDENT**
- 5. SELF-AWARE**
- 6. IMAGINATIVE**
- 7. FOCUSED**
- 8. DEDICATED**
- 9. EXPRESSIVE**
- 10. CREATIVE**
- 11. *Self-awareness*** — *Recognizing emotions and thoughts, understanding how they influence behavior and assessing personal strengths and weaknesses.*
- 12. *Self-management*** — *Regulating thoughts, emotions and behaviors. Setting goals, controlling impulses and managing stress.*

13. **Social awareness** — *Understanding the perspective of others, showing empathy for diverse groups of people and finding support through family, school and community relationships.*
14. **Relationship skills** — *Communicating, cooperating, resisting negative pressure and offering help. Building and maintaining healthy relationships.*
15. **Responsible decision-making** — *making ethical and respectful choices about personal behavior and relationships and evaluating the consequences of decisions.*

## MARCH THEME 2022 - #COMMITMENT

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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This month's social and emotional learning (SEL) theme is **#COMMITMENT**. The definition of commitment is a promise or agreement to do something and the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause or activity.

**#COMMITMENT** helps you stick to your goals when distractions or barriers get in the way. **#COMMITMENT** allows you to understand the need to see a goal as important. **#COMMITMENT** also reminds us of the need to believe that we are able to accomplish a goal or task.

For children and adolescents, teaching the concept of **#COMMITMENT** is vital to their **#SELF-AWARENESS**, **#CONFIDENCE**, **#PATIENCE**, and increases the ability to **#BELIEVE** in themselves.

The social and emotional learning initiative at WUFSD focuses on one theme each month. This SEL initiative includes the distribution of SEL-themed bracelets, posters in each school, posters throughout the community, and banners on every school building.

The SEL initiative provides building blocks for classroom teachers, administrators, and parents to have a consistent focus on behavioral and emotional health.

The concept of **#COMMITMENT** is built upon many other related concepts. These words can be used to expand our student's knowledge of the theme **#COMMITMENT** and used as vocabulary builders or discussion prompts for classroom teachers:

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This month's focus on **#COMMITMENT** can also help our students think about the importance of focusing on and completing a task.

We invite every parent to encourage their children to wear the **#COMMITMENT** bracelet daily. It will provide a reminder for them to be aware of the importance of a promise, a goal, and following the steps necessary to completion to achieve success.



We encourage everyone to focus on showing **#COMMITMENT** and bring more order, focus, and a sense of achievement to each day.

### TIPS

#### **#COMMITMENT**

***Work with others as a team.***

***Accept responsibility.***

***Convey honesty.***

***Be trustworthy.***

***Express and show appreciation.***

***Give full attention to the assignment.***

***Follow the rules.***

***Assist others who are struggling with the assignment.***

***Show full dedication to achieving success.***

***Refocus and reset when challenges to tasks occur.***

We invite all parents to join our social-emotional learning initiative by helping your children focus on the SEL theme **#COMMITMENT**.

1. **DEDICATION**
2. **DEVOTION**
3. **ALLEGIANCE**
4. **LOYALTY**
5. **RESPONSIBILITY**
6. **OBLIGATION**
7. **BOND**
8. **ADHERENCE**
9. **ATTENTIVENESS**
10. **SHARING**

## **FEBRUARY THEME 2022 - #PATIENCE**

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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**Happy February!** This month's social-emotional theme is **#PATIENCE**. It is an appropriate theme for the month of February for many reasons. January, for many, was a sign of new beginnings, of wiping the slate clean and thinking about how we want to improve or change things about ourselves. The theme of **#PATIENCE** is a reminder that all we hoped to change or accomplish in the new year, cannot be achieved in one month. Change and improving ourselves takes time and **#PATIENCE**.

**#PATIENCE** is a word that is useful for our students because it allows them to look at life as a journey and not a race. **#PATIENCE** is a word that reminder for all of us that every goal is not reached at the same pace and some plans take longer than others.

When we think of the word **#PATIENCE**, it should also be a reminder of how we respond, react, and treat others. **#PATIENCE** implies that we are kinder to friends, teachers, co-workers, and family. When others see the **#PATIENCE** you give, it tells them you are a good listener, like to be a helper and that you have time to give to someone else.

Practicing **#PATIENCE** is a positive activity and has healthy physical and mental health benefits. As we go through our day with our focus on **#PATIENCE**, it allows us to breathe easier, pause and take time to inhale and exhale, share a smile, or extend our help and support to another.

We invite every parent to encourage their children to wear the **#PATIENCE** bracelet daily. It will provide a reminder to be aware of their ability to wait, pace themselves, and manage their time to meet responsibilities.

This month, we encourage you to focus on practicing **#PATIENCE** and bring more calm, peace, and smiles to your day.

### TIPS TO PRACTICE

#### **#PATIENCE**

We invite all parents to join our social-emotional learning initiative by helping your children focus on the SEL theme **#PATIENCE**.

1. Practice mindfulness.
2. Accept the concept of waiting and staying on course in pursuing goals.
3. Build a tolerance to wait for your turn to come without complaining.
4. When you're feeling rushed, take a few cleansing breaths and slow down.
5. Make time for fun, play and sharing.
6. Understand that things are not perfect all the time.
7. Practice being a good listener and not rushing other words.
8. Be aware of things that make you lose patience.

9. Show others you can give of your time.
10. Be in the present moment.

# JANUARY THEME 2022 - #CONFIDENCE

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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As we welcome the new year, this month's social-emotional learning theme for January 2022 is **#CONFIDENCE**. We selected **#CONFIDENCE** to begin 2022 to set the tone for our children to start this year with a feeling that they are ready, willing, and able to achieve their goals.

The word **#CONFIDENCE** serves as a reminder that we need to provide our children with the proper tools to feel empowered, knowing they have the support of the teachers, counselors, administrators, and coaches at Westbury School District.

Many activities are designed for the students to build confidence, define confidence and show confidence throughout their days in school each week. As teachers in every classroom engage their students, they also include a focus on social and emotional learning and **#CONFIDENCE**.

Throughout the month of January, students will enter every school building and be welcomed with a banner of **#CONFIDENCE**. Also, throughout the halls of every school building, students will see posters and bulletin boards that promote

**#CONFIDENCE**.

Every month, each student and every Westbury School District employee receives a bracelet with the monthly theme to reinforce our commitment to engaging everyone at Westbury in our social-emotional learning (SEL) initiative.

We invite every parent to encourage their children to wear the **#CONFIDENCE** bracelet. It will provide a source of encouragement to feel confident as they go through their day.

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## TIPS TO ACHIEVE # CONFIDENCE

**A feeling of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities.**

We invite all parents to join our social-emotional learning initiative by helping your children focus on the SEL theme **#CONFIDENCE**.

1. **Believe in their ability to achieve.**

2. **Feel they contribute to their learning environment.**
3. **Are ready to try harder.**
4. **Excited to face new challenges.**
5. **Push beyond others' expectations.**
6. **Understand mistakes are part of the learning process.**
7. **Engage with others on projects and assignments.**
8. **Ask questions for further understanding.**
9. **Volunteers for new activities.**
10. **Share their talents and abilities.**

## **DECEMBER THEME 2022 - #SELF-DISCIPLINE**

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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This month's social-emotional theme is **#SELF-DISCIPLINE**. It is a theme that can apply to every age group and many areas of our lives.

**#SELF-DISCIPLINE** is one of the first lessons parents teach their children. As parents, we think about giving our children the tools to be aware of the danger, to understand that there are times when we need to make choices, and to learn that achievement is tied to **#SELF-DISCIPLINE**.

When I think about how I taught my children about **#SELF-DISCIPLINE**, I can recall when they were toddlers and exploring the world and touching everything in their path. I took them by the hand and used a stern face and serious voice to warn them about touching the stove or going down the stairs alone. It was a lesson to say, we cannot do everything we want and to control ourselves—making smart choices.

Those days of teaching these simple lessons led to discussions on making choices as they moved into their teen years. These discussions also focused on understanding what was necessary to achieve a goal including sacrifice and compromise, like how it was more important to study than watch their favorite television show.

As our children get older and face increased choices, managing their own time and understanding that their decisions will affect their futures, **#SELF-DISCIPLINE** is an important and healthy habit.

### **TIPS TO ACHIEVE #SELF-DISCIPLINE**

This month we encourage you to have conversations with your child about how they define **#SELF-DISCIPLINE** and how it applies to their school and home responsibilities.

1. **Following through on commitments.**
2. **Being aware of and not giving into distractions.**
3. **Taking good care of self.**
4. **Work at developing healthy habits.**
5. **They set good boundaries for work and play.**
6. **Recognize the benefits of developing and keeping a routine.**
7. **Decisions are made based on time and deadlines.**
8. **Establish clearly defined goals.**
9. **Stick to decisions and follow through.**
10. **Be disciplined and dedicated to achieving their goals.**

## **NOVEMBER THEME 2022 - #GRATITUDE**

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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The social-emotional theme for November is **#GRATITUDE**. As we enter a season of giving and celebration for many, it is also a time to think about what or whom we have in our lives that makes us grateful and full of **#GRATITUDE**.

Focusing discussions, classroom activities and family time on **#GRATITUDE** provides children with an opportunity to learn about the concepts of kindness as they think about what they have done for others. Providing children with activities that learn about who they are and what they must give and share with others, contributes to emotional development and increased confidence.

The theme of **#GRATITUDE** in social-emotional learning encourages thinking about:

Children who have received the lessons of **#GRATITUDE** become adults who understand what it means to appreciate their gifts and share them with others. Children who truly understand that **#GRATITUDE** must be practiced, work harder to make others happy and, therefore, feel happy and satisfied because of the good deeds they share and the confidence they develop.

As parents and educators, we have an opportunity this month to celebrate the theme of **#GRATITUDE** in creative and exciting ways that will continue to expand our children's and students' knowledge. In addition, a daily practice of **#GRATITUDE** also improves our mental health and wellness as we think of all that we are grateful to have in our lives.

- **Did someone do something nice for you?**
- **Did someone give you something or take you somewhere fun?**
- **What are all the reasons you're thankful for this?**
- **Why do you think someone did something nice for you?**
- **Does this mean something to you?**
- **When you think about these special things or people, how do you feel?**
- **What can you actively do to express your gratitude for this person, place, or thing?**

# OCTOBER THEME 2022 - #SELF-AWARENESS

**By Dr. Teresa Taylor Williams, HS-BCP  
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**PARENTAL TIP:** Recognize and encourage individuality in every child.

Do you remember the first time your toddler found a mirror? What an astonishing moment!

All at once, this little one saw a person who was unfamiliar yet had something about them that was engaging and a bit unsettling all at once.

The first time a baby sees themselves in the mirror, their instinct is to reach out and touch the face. With fearless determination, they touch the mirror repeatedly. They put their tiny palms on this image, never realizing – “it’s me!”

What may seem to be a simple exercise is actually a lesson in self-love. Watching that toddler smile at the face in the mirror, engage and even attempt to hug and kiss this image is creating a sense of self-love as they become increasingly more self-aware.

With this month’s theme being #SELF-AWARENESS, it is a wonderful opportunity for parents to think back to the days when their child first became self-aware. In that time of discovery also came major changes in the life of that child as they not only loved the image staring back at them, but they also loved being able to do things without you, like crawling, standing, and eventually taking their first steps alone.

Our theme for this month, #SELF-AWARENESS, is a very vital component of social-emotional development because it goes together with recognizing individuality in our children. Many times, children may feel lost, ignored, or become one of the crowds in their homes and at school and not feel comfortable speaking up, making themselves heard, and retreat. These children need to be encouraged to express their thoughts and given opportunities to know themselves better.

Every child is seeking to know who they are and by encouraging communication we are giving them the opportunity to learn about themselves. The tip for this month is to focus on the individuality of every child and I encourage parents to take a moment to recognize and celebrate what makes each child special.

**#SELF-AWARENESS | #INDIVIDUALITY | #INDEPENDENCE | #SELF-LOVE**