

Dear Families/Caregivers,

As humans, we have the capacity to feel a myriad of emotions. They drive our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors and impact our self-esteem and social interactions. As teens mature, they become more aware of how emotions impact their behavior and affect their bodies and their relationships.

We have been learning about emotional intelligence, or EI, which is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions in ourselves and our relationships. We worked on identifying positive ways to express our emotions.

EI can be broken down into 4 components:

- **Self-Awareness:** Understanding your own emotions and emotional triggers.
- **Self-Management:** The ability to choose how you react to your emotions and to choose strategies for managing your emotions.
- **Social Awareness:** The ability to recognize and understand the emotions of others. Social awareness requires you to listen, observe body language and facial expressions, and understand situations and perspectives.
- **Relationship Management:** The ability to use social awareness and self-management to navigate relationships and interactions with others. When you are good at relationship management, you build connections with others and collaborate effectively.

Here are a couple of ways to help your teen develop his or her emotional intelligence:

- Encourage your teen to identify a positive outlet for expressing his or her emotions (e.g. art, music, dance, sports, writing, etc.).
- Ask your teen to tell you about an emotional moment that he or she had during the week and help him or her to think about he or she could have handled the situation better.

Emotional intelligence is a skill that can be improved with practice. Using positive ways to express emotions is a healthy habit that can build emotional strength and maturity.