

HABIT 5: Seek First to Understand, Then Be Understood

Dear Families,

Habit 5 of the 7 Healthy Habits for Effective Kids is: seek first to understand, then be understood. When we say "habit 5" at school, it prompts our students to remember:

Listen before you talk!

We all see the world differently. The problem is, we think we see things the same way others do. Communication is important to achieve understanding because no two people see, think, or experience the world the same way. Therefore, there is a great need, especially in families, to seek first to understand and talk second so we understand one another's point of view.

Steps for Listening Before You Talk:

1. I listen to others without interrupting.
2. I listen to other people's ideas and feelings.
3. I look other people in the eye when listening and talking
4. I try to see things from other people's viewpoints.

Family Activity: When someone is speaking, the listener can use reflective listening to let the speaker know they are really listening to what is being said. Here is a simple examples of reflective listening:

Speaker: "I love you"

Listener: "You seem to feel love about me."

Yes, that is a very simplified example; however, reflective listening can be that easy! Need some simple phrases and questions to keep the door open for understanding?

Try these ones:

- Tell me more about that
- Can you give me an example
- You're saying...
- I am hearing that is that what you are telling me?
- How does that make you feel?