

Too Good for Violence Home Workout

For Parents and Kids

Grade 3

Dear Parents,

Our class is beginning the third grade lessons in a program called *Too Good For Violence*, a violence prevention/character education program developed for kindergarten through eighth grade students. This program, developed by the Mendez Foundation, teaches peaceable attitudes and life skills through activities, songs and stories.

From time to time you will receive “Home Workouts,” home activity sheets that reinforce and extend at home what your child is learning at school. By sharing these activities together, you will help your child to learn important social skills that will help your child to get along well with others and to resolve conflicts in peaceful ways.

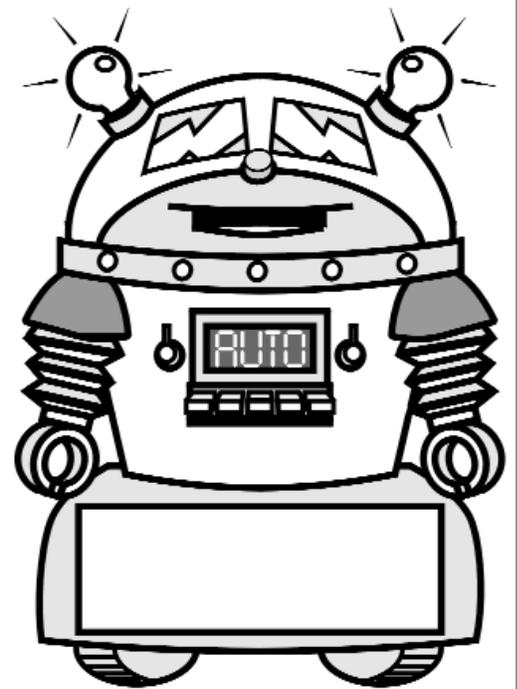
Thank you for your interest and help in teaching the skills to help us all live in a peaceable place. Being responsible for a child is the most difficult and, at the same time, most joyous and rewarding of experiences. As parents and/or caregivers, you have the opportunity to guide the growth and development of a young life in a positive direction. What a tremendous responsibility! I wish you well in your journey to become the best parent you can be.

Sincerely,

The Too Good For Violence curriculum for third grade uses the theme of robots to teach effective communication skills and to introduce students to some basic conflict resolution skills. In our first lesson we met “Auto,” a robot who helped us to understand the definition of peace and conflict. He also helped us learn that conflict is part of being human and that every person is capable of learning skills for solving conflicts. Ask your child to tell you some of the things that make humans different from robots. Unlike robots,

- We are special, and each one of us is different.
- We have feelings to warn us when we have a conflict.
- We care about ourselves and about others.
- We can understand how another person feels.
- We have self-control to stop and think before acting.
- We can create many new ideas for solving conflicts.

Making peace is very important work. As human beings, we have everything we need to do this important work. All we have to do is learn to use the tools we already have.



Trace your child's hand on colorful paper and print one strength on each finger with a watercolor pen. Cut out and put on the refrigerator to affirm both your child and your belief in making your world a peaceable place.



Being involved in your child's schooling is very important for the child's healthy growth and development. A child whose parent is involved is more likely to:

- Achieve higher grades and test scores.
- Have better school attendance.
- Have a positive attitude toward school.
- Choose friends with positive values.
- Become involved in positive activities both in and out of school.

That same child is less likely to:

- Have learning and behavioral problems.
- Be suspended or expelled.
- Become involved in drugs or violence.

Look for ways to become involved in your child's school. You can:

- Simply ask your child what happened that day.
- Show an interest.
- Help your child with homework.
- Call your child's teacher and check on progress.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences at school.
- Join the Parent Teacher Association at school.
- Volunteer in the classroom.
- Get to know the other children in your child's class, and their parents.
- Let your child know that you care about his/her life at school.

Sources: Search Institute, National Center for Education Statistics, National Institute of Education.

Resources

Books for You

Bully Proofing Your Child, by Garrity, Baris and Porter. Sopris West, 2000. This book is described as First Aid for Hurt Feelings. It provides information for parents to help reduce the chances of a child being the target of bullying.

How to Help Your Child with Homework, by Marguerite Radencich and Jeanne Schumm. Free Spirit Publishing, 1996. This book is written by teachers and is filled with practical suggestions and tips to help your child succeed in school.

Wonderful Websites

The National Education Association: www.nea.org/parents/index.html.

The NEA offers tips for getting involved in your child's education.

The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education: www.ncpie.org.

The NCPPIE advocates the involvement of parents and families in their children's education, and to foster positive relationships between home, school, and community.

Mendez Foundation: www.mendezfoundation.org

This site is produced by the Mendez Foundation, the developers of *Too Good for Violence*. This site has information on drug/violence prevention and wellness. You may order Mendez products such as pencils or T-shirts by visiting the on-line store.

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We are learning how to use I-messages to express our feelings.

An I-message goes like this: "I feel (name the feeling) when you (name what the other person did)."

Children who learn to express feelings with words are less likely to act out their feelings in harmful ways.

To help your child learn this important skill, have fun unscrambling these feeling words together:

GARYN

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PYPAH

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DRESCA

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DAS

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DOPUR

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LILYS

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SEFNUDOC

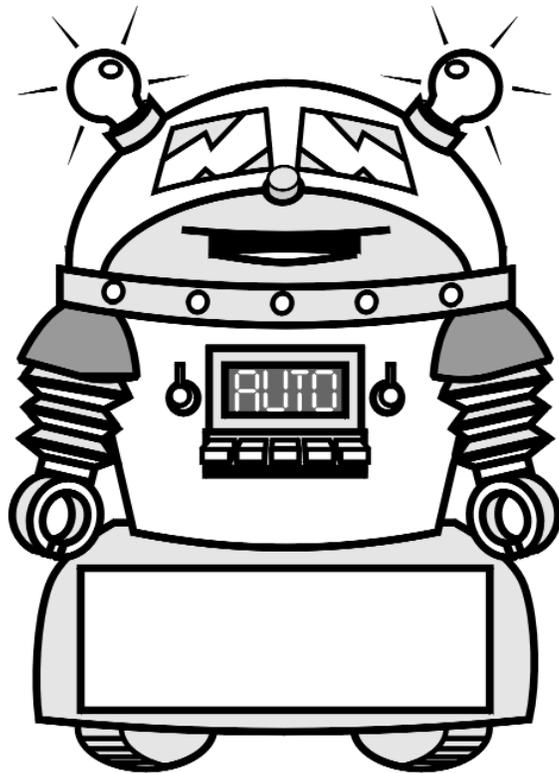
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CETIDEX

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DRISEPURS

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Answers: (angry, happy, scared, sad, proud, silly, confused, excited, surprised)

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In *Too Good For Violence*, we have been learning about the importance of clear communication, especially when we have a problem or conflict with another person.

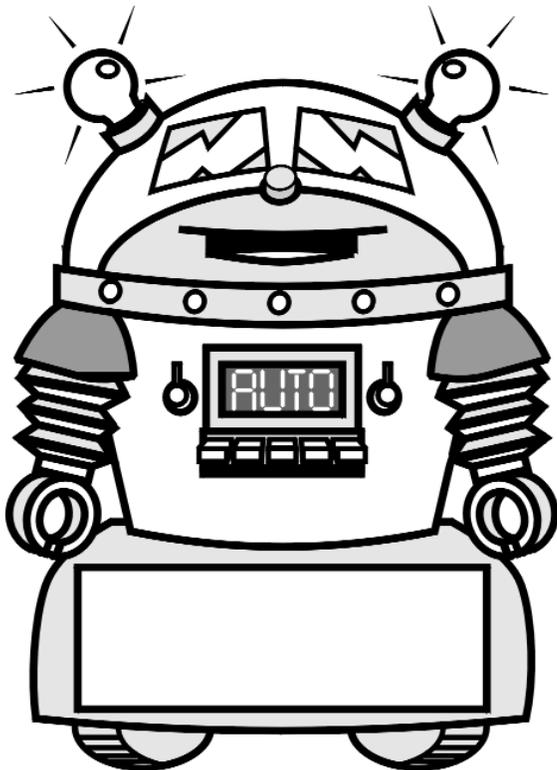
We are learning to use an I-message to begin solving the problem by naming it without blaming anyone. Using an I-message helps the other person to understand our feelings.

We are also learning not to use You-messages. Using a You-message blames the other person and doesn't help to solve the problem. It usually makes the problem worse.

Our friend Auto the robot is helping us to tell the difference between I-messages and You-messages. Auto understands I-messages, but You-messages "do not compute."

You can help your child practice this important skill by sharing this activity together. Read the messages below. Draw a line connecting the I-messages to Auto. Cross out the You-messages. They do not compute!

(Hint: Remember, do not use the words "like" and "that" after "I feel" in an I-message!)



- I feel happy when you make your bed.
- I feel angry when you call me names.
- You are mean!
- I feel like yelling at you!
- I feel upset when you borrow my things without asking.
- I feel proud when you think of others.
- I feel loved when you give me a hug.

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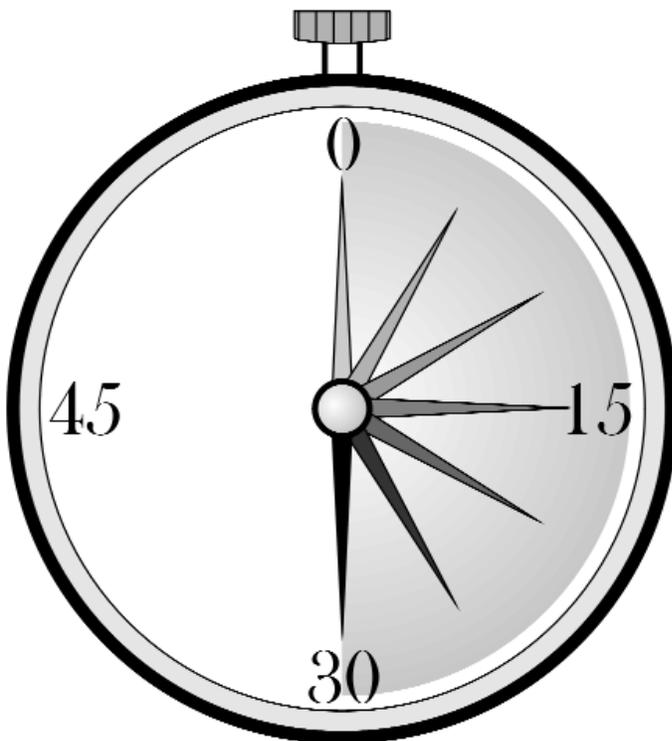
Today we learned about the importance of listening. When you listen to someone, remember three things to do:

Look at the person who is speaking. Watch their body language and facial expressions.

Listen to the words the person says and also to the feelings they express through the tone of their voice.

Ask questions about what you have heard. Ask to make sure you understand correctly. Asking shows other people you care about their feelings.

Within your family, practice listening to one another.



Listen to one person speak for 30 seconds. Is it hard to be quiet for that long? Let each person in the family tell about:

- something that made them very happy,
- something scary,
- something funny or
- a time when they were very proud of themselves.

As each person talks, look and listen. After the 30 seconds, ask questions to show that you care and to make sure you understand correctly.

Listening without interrupting lets everyone in your family know that you care.

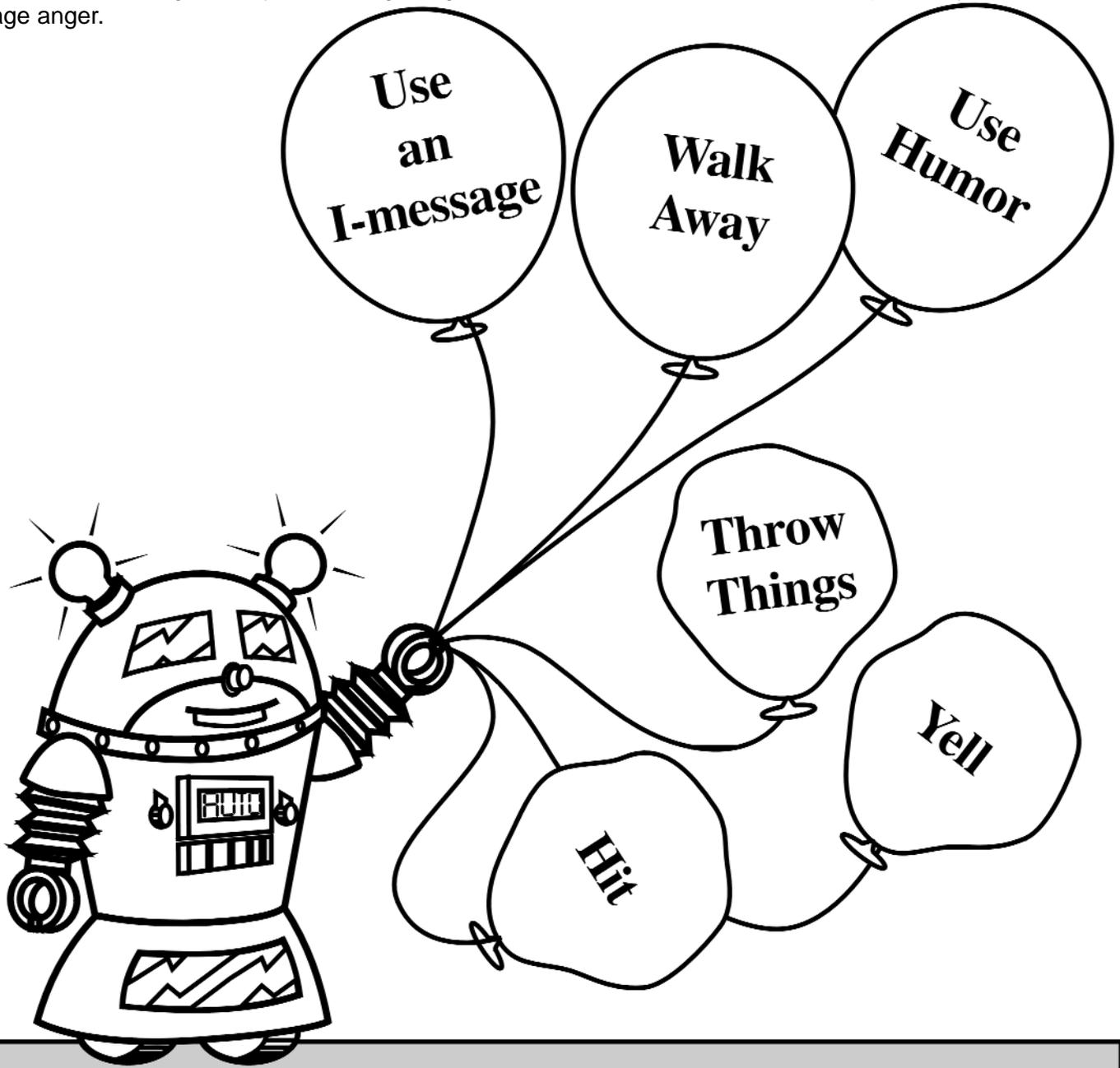
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Today in *Too Good For Violence* we learned that when someone pushes our buttons, we can use self-control. We can rise above the situation by using an I-message, using humor or walking away until we feel calm again.

You can help your child to develop self-control by reinforcing this lesson at home. With your child, color the balloons that contain good ways to manage anger. Cross out the balloons that contain poor ways to manage anger.



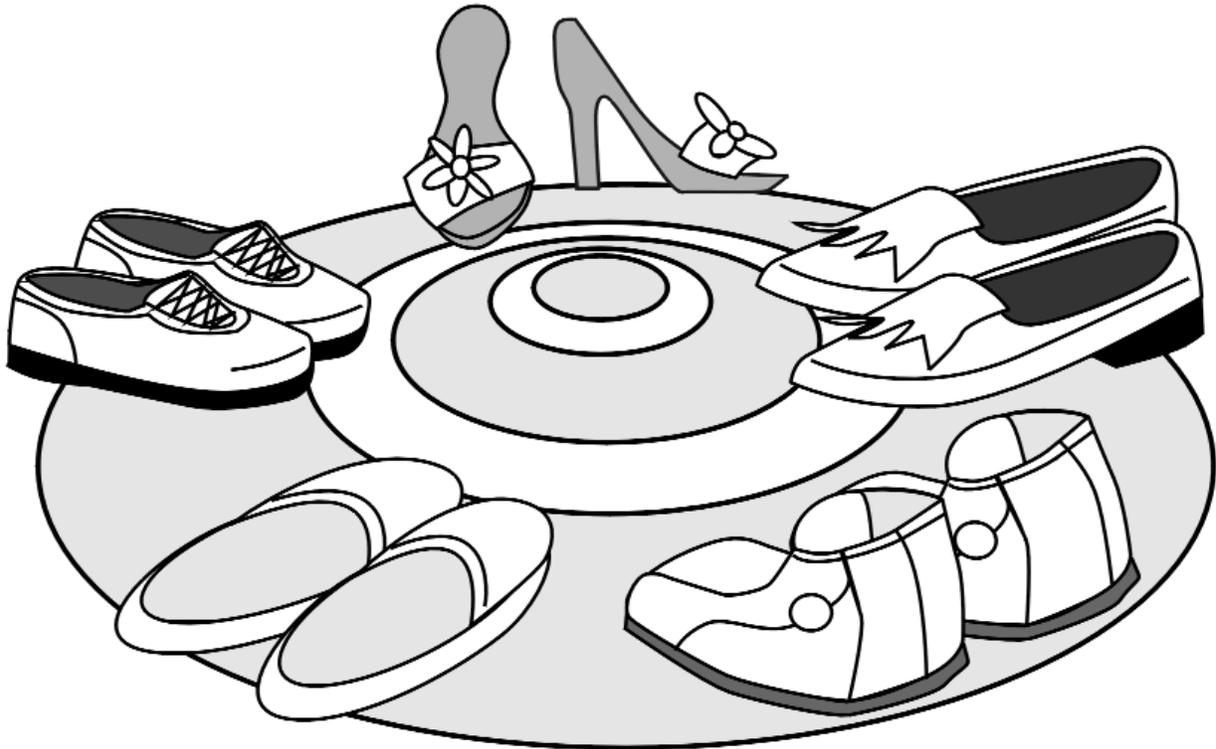
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In *Too Good For Violence*, we have been learning to recognize other points of view. You can help your child to develop this skill by playing this game together as a family.

Take a pair of shoes from each person in the family, and put them in a circle on the floor. Have each family member face someone else's shoes. Name a situation, such as how the school year is going, and have each family member describe that situation from the point of view of the person whose shoes he or she is facing. After everyone has had a turn, have your family members move to face a different person's shoes. Name another situation, such as an approaching holiday, and let each person describe it from the perspective of the person whose shoes they are now facing. Repeat several times or until each family member has had a chance to speak from all the other points of view.



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It is important for children and adults to learn to cope with angry feelings without resorting to violence. As parents and caregivers, we can set an example for our children by modeling skills for handling anger in healthy ways. The American Psychological Association suggests these tips for dealing with anger:

- **Talk about your feelings.**

If you can't find the right words to describe what you're going through, find a trusted friend to help you one-on-one.

- **Express yourself calmly.**

Express criticism, disappointment, anger or displeasure without losing your temper or fighting.

- **Listen to others.**

Listen carefully and respond without getting upset when someone gives you negative feedback. Try to see the other person's point of view.

- **Negotiate.**

Work out your conflicts by brainstorming alternative solutions together.

Character Education - Tips for Parents

- Make clear statements about your values.
- Have family meals together (without TV) as often as possible.
- Be authentic - model good character at home.
- Read to your children.
- Show respect for each member of your family.
- Know where your children are and what they are doing.
- Know your child's friends.
- Pay attention to television shows, videos and movies that your children watch.
- Provide supervision for your child.
- Plan family activities.
- Assign responsibilities (taking out the trash, making the bed, etc.) at home to everyone.
- Insist that all family members use good manners.
- Look for opportunities to reward wise decisions and desirable behavior.
- Set clear expectations and limits (learn to say no) for your children.

(Source: Randolph County Board of Education)

Did you know?

“Kids whose parents don't let them watch R-rated movies are five times less likely to try cigarettes or alcohol than youngsters who are allowed to watch whatever they want.”

Age range: 9 - 15 years

Madeline Dalton and Dr. James Sargent

Pediatric Department, Dartmouth Medical College Study

C. E. Mendez Foundation

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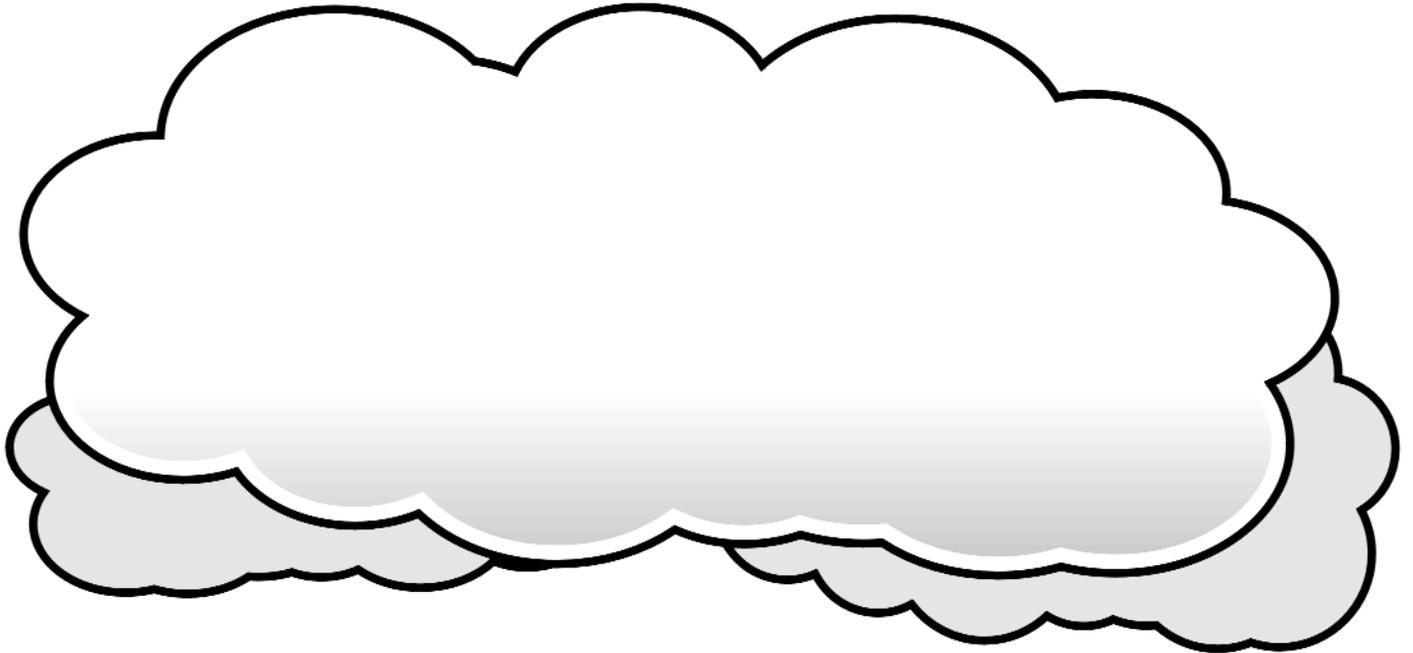
Phone (800) 750-0986 Fax(813) 251-3237

www.mendezfoundation.org

When there is a conflict or problem to solve, try brainstorming for solutions. A brainstorm is a storm of ideas...the more ideas, the better. When you brainstorm,

- Encourage everyone to suggest ideas.
- Suggest as many ideas as possible.
- Don't put down any ideas.

You can help your child learn to brainstorm by doing this activity together. Pretend that you want to enjoy a family day together, but your child wants to do something different. As a family, brainstorm ideas for a fun family day that everyone will enjoy and list them in the storm cloud below.



Now choose an idea that meets everyone's needs, and have a great day!

Resources

Books for You

Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues That Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing, by Michele Borba. Jossey-Bass, 2001. Step-by-step guidelines for building empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness.

Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention, Partnership for a Drug-Free America, U.S. Department of Education, 1998. To order, visit www.kidsource.com or call (800) 624-0100.

Wonderful Websites

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center: www.safeyouth.org

Sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Federal Working Group on Youth Violence, this site provides information for parents and professionals on various aspects of youth violence and prevention.

Mendez Foundation: www.mendezfoundation.org

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