

SEL NEWS



Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) & Whole Child Well-Being at MPSA

Primary

Whole Group Lessons bi-monthly; September's theme is Self-awareness: what I can do; naming feelings/

Lower Elementary

Whole Group Lessons bi-monthly; September's theme is Self-awareness: growth mindset, identifying strengths

Upper Elementary

Whole Group Lessons bi-monthly; September's theme is Self-awareness: growth mindset, identifying strengths;

Responsible Decision Making:
Taking responsibility for one's actions

5th Grade-Middle School

Information will go out to parents throughout the year. Please check APS website, Seesaw, Gunston or neighborhood middle school websites for announcements



What is Social-Emotional Learning?

by Diane Reeser, MA,AMS,ASCA

It happened a long time ago while vacationing at Stone Harbor along the Jersey Shore. One late afternoon, as I was walking back from the beach with some friends, we stopped in our tracks. Clinging to a pine tree, next to the house where we were staying, was a kaleidoscope of monarch butterflies. It truly was one of life's moments that take your breath away.

Did you know that a group of butterflies is called a kaleidoscope? Our MPSA family is a kaleidoscope of children and adults from diverse backgrounds. We represent many countries, cultures and traditions. In contrast to what we often see on the news, here at MPSA we model and teach how to respect our own identities and the identities of each other. That is part of the self-awareness of social-emotional learning (SEL).



Meet Our Counselor

Diane Reeser, MA

Full-time, GWU graduate; member of the American Montessori Society; member of the American School Counselor Association.

This is her fifth year working as a school counselor at MPSA.

Special interests: her cats, Sunny & Willow; ballroom dancing; kayaking.

Grew up in small town, Pennsylvania; lived in Peru for 5-1/2 years; worked in Guatemala for three summers; worked in El Salvador for one summer.

Lives in Arlington; Loves our MPSA students.

Contact Information:

diane.reeser@apsva.us

703-228-8791

Of course, we cannot connect with each other, unless we first know how to connect with self. This requires quiet times and an awareness of our emotions. We ask our students to pause, reflect and regulate strong emotions by giving them strategies.

We are social beings and we share space with others in school, at home and in public. SEL lessons teach children how to respect physical boundaries and emotional boundaries by considering the perspective of others. The social climate of today's world emphasizes being a social butterfly, fluttering about looking "cool" and acting "cool." In contrast, here at MPSA, we teach the importance of empathy. Children feel happiest when they are connected with others in this way.

Dr. Maria Montessori was passionate about peacefully solving problems on a global level. She knew the only hope for this lofty goal to be accomplished was the education of the child in conflict resolution. Teaching children the skills to solve relationship problems supports the building of a healthy classroom community and prepares the child for life.

Self-awareness, self regulation, social awareness and relationship skills are not ends in themselves. These facets of SEL serve the purpose of increasing our children's ability to make responsible decisions that will lead to good consequences for themselves, others and our colorful global community.

