
COUNSELOR CORNER

ISSUE # 2

FIRST TWO STEPS FOR CALMING DOWN



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I AM THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR
AT BOTH PERUVIAN PARK
ELEMENTARY AND SUNRISE
ELEMENTARY. PLEASE REACH
OUT IF YOU HAVE ANY
QUESTIONS, OR YOU NEED
SOMEONE TO TALK TO ABOUT
HOW YOU ARE FEELING.

USING A STOP SIGNAL

When we notice our emotions are becoming overwhelming, using a stop signal is a way to stop emotions from escalating, (getting bigger).

NAMING A FEELING

Just naming a feeling can help the emotion to become less intense.

DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BRAIN

When we have strong emotions, our bodies can send messages automatically to the part of our brains that just react—the amygdala. This is what we called “flipping your lid” when we talked about the Hand-Brain model on the “Managing Strong Emotions” page. The amygdala doesn’t think—it just reacts. So we need to try to activate the thinking part of our brains—the cortex. Using language by having a stop signal, and naming our feeling can help our cortex to activate. Your stop signal can just be simply saying “Stop”, or putting your hand up as if you’re stopping someone from moving toward you. Also simply naming what you’re feeling helps you to begin to calm down, since using language requires you to use the thinking part of your brain—your cortex.

ALL FEELINGS ARE NORMAL, AND OKAY

It is normal to have feelings of disappointment and worry. Especially right now, many of us feel sad that we can’t come to school or play with our friends. We can’t do many of the activities that we could do just a few weeks ago. We may have had trips cancelled, sports or other activities on hold, and birthday parties postponed until who knows when. Having these things happen are bound to create some negative emotions. **THIS IS NORMAL.** Whatever we feel, it is okay. We do however need to learn to not let these feelings overwhelm us. When we feel that these feelings might be overwhelming us, we need to use our stop signal and name what we’re feeling. These are the first two steps we can use to begin calming down.

TALKING TO OTHERS

Talking to others about how we are feeling is another way to begin calming down. We can talk to people in our immediate family, and use our phones to call or FaceTime extended family and friends. Talking to others can also help us to realize that other people feel the same way, and that we’re not alone. We are all in this together.