

Benainu: Coping Skills Email to Parents

Dear Parents,

This week 6th graders participated in the Coping Skills portion of the Benainu program.

Coping Skills are healthy and appropriate strategies and activities that people learn and use in order to help them manage stress, negative or positive emotions, and/or difficult life situations. The 6th graders chose one of the following: Yoga, Art, Mindfulness and Music or Physical Movement. For the past few days, they have been raving about the Coping Skills lessons and want more of it!

Yoga

- A Yoga instructor led the kids in a yoga class and taught them ways it can help their minds and bodies.
- She discussed Jewish values such as honesty, humbleness, respect for oneself and others, and modesty and how they are so deeply connect with yoga.
- She helped the children quiet their minds and bodies and encouraged them to find time to practice “silence” on a daily basis.

Art

- Mrs. Spector engaged the kids in sketching and mandalas. She described how texture, color, materials, pressure, and stroke can all help you release and express feelings, represent feelings, and help you process stress.
- Some other suggestions of how art can help with stress: DIY arts and crafts, sketchbook, art class, photography, finding a cozy corner/safe place to relax, putting thoughts and feelings into a jar or box. These can all help kids redirect their thoughts and can be a cathartic experience.
- The students talked about the importance of not judging their artwork when it’s used for relaxation.

Physical Movement

- Coach Burkom and Coach Fuld discussed the ways in which stress and exercise can impact your body and mind.
- They led a physical activity (Human Hungry Hungry Hippos), which led to a discussion on how stress increases glucose in the body, and the body’s negative response is to increased glucose. He also discussed endorphins and how the kids can get more of them!... by exercising,
- The students had an opportunity to share personal experiences about their life stressors and how they managed.
- The students left with a how, why, and when to exercise to deal with stress.

Music and Mindfulness

- Our students exist in a hectic world. Sometimes, with all that the world throws at them on a daily basis, even a few minutes of mindfulness and relaxation can make all the difference. Often, music can be used to help relax one's body and focus one's mind.

- During this session, students will experience short listening exercises that will introduce strategies that they can use to use to relax, regroup, and re-energize using music, as well as experience various types of 'relaxing' music.

Looking forward to your children's continued growth in the Benainu program.

Mrs. Vicki Hervitz, LCSW-C

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