

Benainu: Ethical Decisions Email to Parents

Dear Parents,

This week our 6th grade participated in the Ethical Decisions portion of Benainu. Mr. Stevens discussed the topic of ethical philosophy and used a scenario to explore the discussed ideas.

Defining Ethics-

- Mr. Stevens led the students in defining "ethics", and exploring how society and cultures are connected to the development and following of ethical behavior.
- Students were excited to hash out the definition of "ethics". Some definitions they came up with were: acceptable behavior, principles of right and wrong, how to act to get along with others, what to do to stay out of jail.

A Deeper Look into "Honesty"-

- Mr. Stevens and Mrs. Hervitz acted out a scenario in which a student was given an opportunity to cheat on a paper in order to attend a movie with a friend- thus an ethical dilemma. The 6th graders had an opportunity to end the scenario: would you cheat or not? The answers were funny at times and insightful. Overall, the discussion reflected that your children have good moral compasses, however are challenged when faced with these and other types of ethical decisions.

Using the Guiding Principles When Faced with Ethical Dilemmas-

- Throughout the presentation, students brought up their own ethical dilemmas seeking advice of how to handle them. Mr. Stevens and Mrs. Hervitz gave some of the following guidance: stop and think- what are the positive and negative consequences of each decision, how can this be hurtful or helpful to myself or others, what trusted adult can I talk this through with?
- The following was discussed: if one makes an unethical decision, whether or not they need to continue down the unethical decision making road. We answered that people have the choice and control to change their behavior. The students seemed surprised by this idea, and felt they may be inclined to continue making unethical decisions after making one unethical decision (ex. - telling one lie will lead to more lies rather than coming clean with a past lie).
- We took a deeper look at the reasons to engage in ethical behavior, other than just because something is "right or wrong". Making sound ethical decisions can: be helpful, rather than hurtful, to yourself and others, helps one get what they need and want, can lead to a happier and easier life, enable one to gain the respect and trust of others, increases the likelihood of developing and maintaining healthy relationships, prevent one from becoming more unethical, and give one the opportunity to learn and experience the positive aspects of life.

Discussion Questions-

- Pose ethical dilemmas and ask your children how they would handle it.
- Why are honesty, fairness, equality, dignity, and diversity important?
- What do you do if you've made an unethical decision?

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

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