



Riverside School
Princeton, NJ

Fall 2015
Volume 7, Issue 1

Riverside School Counseling Newsletter

What's New?

Welcome back to Riverside for the 2015-16 school year! You may have noticed the letter I sent home about classroom lessons for the month of September. As always, we have continued to stress our "Upstander" message across all grade levels. This has become the cornerstone of the character education program here at Riverside.

As I said in the letter, students always kick off the year by talking about this important topic. My hope is that you'll continue the discussion with your children at home. With your support in promoting prosocial behavior, we can set our children up for success in all facets of life.

Over the next few months, we'll begin Riverside's Campaign of Kindness, an initiative designed to promote kindness and gratitude across all grade levels. While we're still ironing out the details, there will undoubtedly be tons of valuable activities for students to participate in. We can't wait to begin!

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your child's academic, social or emotional progress at Riverside, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,
Ben Samara
Riverside School Counselor

Helping Children Who Cry Easily

*Reprinted from Psychology Today
by Dr. Eileen Kennedy-Moore*

Strategies for handling the urge to cry

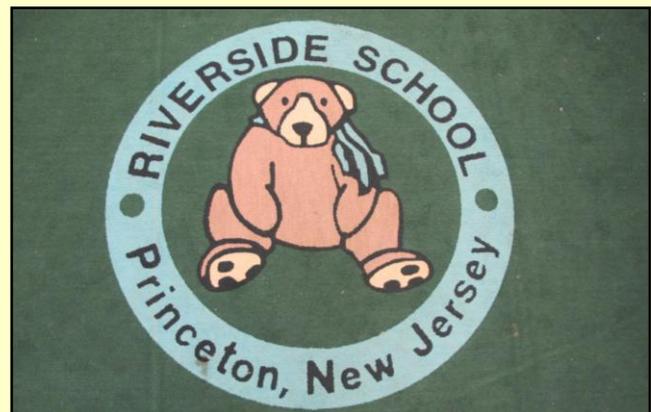
Here are some general strategies that you may want to share with your child for when he or she feels like crying in public.

Breathe deeply. Slow, deep breaths can be very calming. Help your child practice breathing slowly and quietly, in through the nose, out through the mouth.

Count. Silently counting floor tiles, reciting even numbers, or doing mental math facts can be a good distraction to help your child get back on even keel.

Take a break. Sometimes the best way to regain self-control is to step away from the situation. Your child could go to the bathroom or get a drink of water.

Self-comfort. Tell your child to cross arms and give him- or herself a subtle little hug while thinking a comforting thought such as, "I'll be okay," "I can get through this," or "Pretty soon I'll be home and can tell Mom or Dad about this."



Book of the Month

Sage Stands Up

Written by Ben Samara

Illustrated by Ashley Kennedy

In this section, I always feature books that have been useful during lessons with students. This time around, however, I'm proud to show off a collaboration that was recently completed with my colleague, Riverside's Art Teacher Ashley Kennedy. Our first children's book, *Sage Stands Up*, will be released this November!

"*Sage Stands Up* is a story about a boy who learns about his "special job," to be an Upstander for his friends, his school and his community.

When Sage sees his friend getting teased on the playground, he isn't sure what to do. But a meeting with Mr. Matthews, the School Counselor, opens Sage's eyes."



I'm so excited to have the opportunity to share this story, and to use it with our classes here at Riverside!

We'll be launching *Sage Stands Up* with a gathering at the Princeton Public Library on **Saturday, November 14 at 3:45pm**. The brief presentation will include a reading and a discussion about the book. All are welcome to attend!

Helpful Websites

National Association of School Psychologists

<http://www.nasponline.org/families/index.aspx>
Family section of the NASP website has numerous articles that can help parents deal with behavioral or psychological issues.

PBS Kids – It's My Life

<http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/index.html>
A portal for children (and their parents) to read articles and advice on topics like family, friends, school, and emotions.

Found a great website you'd like Mr. Samara to know about? Please e-mail me at:
ben_samara@princetonk12.org

Important Dates

November 5 & 6

NJEA Convention Break

November 10-11 & 17-18

Riverside Parent Conferences

November 26

Thanksgiving

December 15

National Cupcake Day!



About Mr. Samara

Ben Samara is Riverside's School Counselor. He is available to answer any question you may have about your child's academic, emotional or social progress.

Phone: (609) 806 - 4260 x6781

E-Mail: ben_samara@princetonk12.org

Riverside Room #: 24