



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

Riverside School
Princeton, NJ

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Riverside School Counseling Newsletter

Connecting with Your Child's School Counselor

An article from the American School Counselor Association:

The school counselor's role is to act as the first line of contact for parents and students for assistance in academic, social or personal development. The professional school counselor is a certified/licensed educator trained in school counseling with unique qualifications and skills to address students' academic, personal/social and career development needs.

"Strong in-school counseling programs contribute to overall student success," added Rich Lapan, Ph.D., professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. "Regular communications between parents and counselors can help a child tremendously."

In an effort to help busy parents communicate more effectively with their child's school counselor, ASCA is offering five "Back-to-School" tips to improve parent-counselor dialogue:

1. Understand the expertise and responsibilities of your child's school counselor. School counselors make a measurable impact in every student's life, assisting with academic, career and personal/social development. Professional school counselors are trained in both educating and counseling, allowing them to function as a facilitator between parents, teachers and the student in matters concerning the student's goals, abilities and any areas needing improvement. School counselors provide services not only to students in need, but to all students.
2. Meet or contact your child's school counselor at least three times per school year. The beginning of a school year is an

excellent opportunity to initiate contact with your child's school counselor and doing so can ensure your child's positive school experience. Find out who the counselor is and what his or her experience and background are. By communicating with one another at the beginning, middle and end of the school year, parents and counselors can have a definite impact on a child's success.

3. Discuss your child's challenges and concerns with the school counselor. As a parent, you know your child best. However, the school counselor can help you better understand your child as a student. It's important to encourage your child's expression of needs, hopes and frustrations. School counselors are trained to help your children.

4. Learn about your child's school and social connections from the school counselor. When you need information or assistance, your child's school counselor can help you get in touch with the appropriate school officials; learn about school policies on behavior, attendance and dress; know the school calendar of important dates; and stay connected with the school in many other ways. The school counselor can also help you locate resources in the community when you need them.

5. Work with the school counselor to identify resources and find solutions to problems. If your child is having a problem at school, it is important to work with your child's school counselor to find solutions. Discuss resources available within and outside of the school, and get information on how such programs can benefit your child. Your school counselor can be a valuable partner in your child's education and preparation for life beyond school.

Mr. Samara is on Twitter!

As part of an ongoing effort to provide parents with multiple sources of valuable information, you can now follow me on Twitter @BenSamaraRS.

From this account, I will post and retweet helpful articles and tips related to parenting and child social-emotional development.

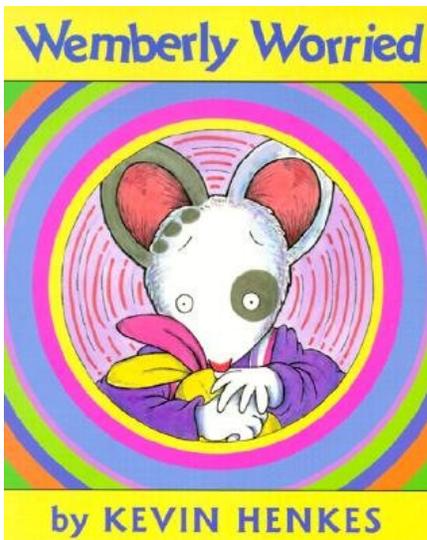


Book of the Month

Wemberly Worried
by Kevin Henkes

“Poor little Wemberly worries about everything! Now this adorable little mouse has the biggest worry of all to overcome, the first day of nursery school.”

This is a wonderful book for children with lots of worries or anxiety. I use it frequently in small groups and classroom lessons with our younger Riversiders.



Helpful Website

Yahoo! Kids

<http://kids.yahoo.com>

According to DigitalTrends.com, which tracks popular websites, Yahoo! Kids offers “games of all kinds, music, movies, jokes, sports, horoscopes, e-cards, and even a StudyZone that has information on animals, reference materials, and more.

“If you want to check up on your kids activities, go to the parent section, which provides movie reviews from a parent’s perspective, advice on online safety, and much more. Of course, the best feature of Yahoo! Kids is the child-friendly search engine, which only pulls up appropriate links.”

Important Dates

February 14

Valentine’s Day

February 18

No School

March 4

1pm Dismissal

March 12/13 & 19/20

Riverside Parent Conferences

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.

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