

Corpus Christi Montessori School  
822 Ayers Street  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78404  
www.cc-montessori.com

October 27, 2022



Dear CC Montessori Families,

We are nearing the end of October and wish you a safe and wonderful weekend. We hope to see everyone out for our first Annual Trunk or Treat on Friday from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Treat Event. *We have 2 spots open for families if you would like to decorate your car or table and pass out candy. Please ensure your child packs lunch with additional snacks on Monday - Thursday and snacks only on Friday. We have many students needing snacks in the afternoon*

Please take a moment to read the article [How to Teach Your Child to Be an Includer](#). No one wants to be left out and this is a great article on how to help ensure your child understands about including others.

Have a wonderful week and weekend.

CC-Montessori

[Art with Ms. Dawn](#)

ART with Ms Dawn: The students have been enjoying some fun and messy process art in art class -- playing with FOOD. For International Pasta Day (10/25) and National Potato Day (10/27), of course. We glued spaghetti, fusilli, bowties, and elbows into creative pictures (*composition!*). We scooped and sculpted potatoes for stamping. *Shapes, shapes everywhere!*

## Upcoming Events

- October 28 Character Dress Up & Parade 11:30 a.m.
- October 28 Trunk or Treat and mini festival 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
- November 2 Upper Elementary to Garden
- November 4 No School – Staff Development

## Wish List

Veggie scraps for the chickens

Potting soil

Bagged Candy or treat donation for Trunk or Treat

Spray on Hairspray for Trunk or Treat



## Graceful Parenting – by Eve M. Dreyfus M.D. Teach Empathy

*Empathy is defined as experiencing the feelings and thoughts of another person and is a very important part of human relationships. Empathetic parents raise empathetic children. Teach your child to understand the ways others feel and think about things. Do this by considering concrete problems between your child and another person. Have your child imagine out loud how he or she would feel and act if he or she were that other person. A child who learns empathy will easily relate to and understand the world.*

## How to Teach My Child to Be an Includer by Katie Hurley LCSW

A ten-year-old girl came to me with tears in her eyes. She was sad and frustrated and couldn't understand *why* her "former best friend" left her out at recess that day. To hear this little girl tell her version of events, her friend iced her out of a new club she formed with their peer group. Not only that, the other girl teased her in the classroom to get a laugh from the kids around her. It's a heartbreaking story to hear, and yet I hear some version of this repeatedly from many kids.

When we talked more about the circumstances leading up to the event, new information emerged. My client, as it turned out, left that other girl out of a big weekend outing just weeks before. She felt hurt and excluded, so she responded by hurting and excluding.

### Relational Aggression

This story took place almost a decade ago, but similar stories play out with young children every single week. Exclusion is an example of relational aggression, which is defined as behavior that intends to harm others by damaging or manipulating their peer relationships. This insidious form of bullying can be hard to detect but causes significant psychological stress for kids. Other acts of relational aggression include gossiping, rumor spreading, alliance building and public humiliation.

Survey results from The Ophelia Project, a national non-profit dedicated to addressing relational aggression through systemic change in social culture, show that 48 percent of students are regularly exposed to relational aggression and

that students age 11 to 15 are exposed to 33 acts of relational aggression during any given week.

While many bully prevention programs aim to put an end to negative behaviors in the classroom setting, teaching kids prosocial behaviors empowers them to make positive choices both in school and out in the world. It's not enough to teach kids what *not* to do; we also must teach them what to do to promote kindness and compassion among their peers.

The good news is that not only is kindness contagious, but it also results in greater happiness and increased friendships. A study published in the journal [\*PLOS One\*](#) followed a group of 400 9-to-11-year-old students in elementary schools in Vancouver. The kids were split into two groups. One group was asked to track the pleasant places they visited while the other was asked to perform acts of kindness. After four weeks, both groups reported higher levels of happiness, but the kindness group also reported greater acceptance from their peers. Simple acts of kindness resulted in both greater overall happiness and more friendships in the classroom. That's a win-win.

### Empower Your Child

The question I hear often is not, "How can I raise a kind kid" but "What do I do when my kid is excluded?" It's heartbreaking to hear that your child is on the receiving end of any kind of relational aggression, but to think that your child might be alone and upset at school each day can be devastating. It's natural to want to "fix" the problem. The thing is ... fixing rarely fixes.

The best thing parents can do is to empower kids to act as "includers." When we instill kids with prosocial skills, we spread kindness and

compassion. Follow these steps to teach your kids to include others.

### 1. Listen and empathize.

It can be very difficult to sit back and listen when a child tells a story of being excluded, humiliated or otherwise hurt at school, but listening and empathizing are the two best things you can do. While it might be tempting to respond, “What a terrible friend!” what your child *actually* needs to hear is, “That sounds terrible. You must feel so upset right now.” When we empathize with our kids, we teach them to do the same for others. Empathetic kids can create giant ripples of kindness in this world. All we have to do is be there for them and let them work through their emotions.

### 2. Be an “includer.”

Ever stare at your phone to avoid social interaction when you’re just not up for it or you don’t know anyone in the room? You’re not alone. Technology makes it easy to avoid uncomfortable situations but using technology to avoid social interactions sends mixed messages to our kids. If we want our kids to learn to reach out to others and include new people (or people they wouldn’t otherwise sit with), we need to do the same. Show your kids how to make new friends by introducing yourself to new people and striking up conversations with people they don’t know.

### 3. Look for someone who needs a friend.

It’s normal for kids to get caught up in their usual groups. Young children like routine and tend to sit at the same table at lunch or play with the same groups at recess, but this can be limiting. Teach your child to scan the room (or field) to look for someone who might need a friend.

Practice ways to invite a new kid into the group or ask others to join a game. When kids practice these skills at home, they are better able to use them out in the world.

### 4. Talk about unintentional exclusion.

Sometimes kids exclude others without intent to harm. In the case of my client above, she didn’t invite that other girl to the weekend outing because it involved roller coasters and she knew the girl didn’t like roller coasters. She meant to protect her friend, but in planning a secret outing with others she caused more harm than good. Talk to your kids about what it means to exclude and how they can include others. Ask your kids to draw connections between being excluded and possible negative emotions *and* between being included and possible positive emotions. Open and honest communication helps kids work through feelings and emotions. It also increases empathy and compassion. Host a weekly family meeting to talk about the good, the bad and the in-between. In helping our children process emotions, we show them that kindness really does count.

There is no one quick, easy answer to relational aggression. Neither you nor your child can control how other children act. What you can work on is how your child responds to relational aggression or exclusion and how your child can take the lead to be an “includer” of other children.

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/authors/katie-hurley-lcsw>