



#LIBERTYSTRONG

Newsletter from your Clinical Team

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How are we doing and what would you like to see in the Clinical Newsletter?

We want to connect with you! Please let Angie Huber know what you would like to see in the newsletter. We will do our best to meet your request. Send any requests to aahuber@fcps.edu.

Positivity Project (P2): Focus Citizenship

by: Joanna Wheeler School Psychologist Liberty MS

Parents, as most of you are aware of, Liberty Middle implements The Positivity Project. The Positivity Project is a curriculum of social emotional learning that highlights several character strengths, one of which is teamwork/citizenship. Citizenship is defined by the positivity project as,

"You work well as a member of a group or team. You are loyal and sacrifice your individual desires for the greater good."

Why does teamwork and citizenship matter? Well, I don't think I could say it better than The Positivity Project itself. "Our ability to work effectively within group structures is tied directly to the group's ability to succeed. In schools and workplaces across the world, commitment to teamwork and to the 'greater good' helps further learning and achievement for all group members. Maintaining the idea that #OtherPeopleMatter is essential to any successful team environment- and that includes teamwork as a country too."

In addition, guided conversations and learning experiences grounded in the idea of citizenship and teamwork may help **promote empathy and compassion**. A 2016 study in Hong Kong, reported that global citizenship education, that included a model of empathy and experiential learning, resulted in students developing perspective-taking empathy related to poverty. The students were able to imagine connections between their lives and the lives of others who were disadvantaged, which may improve caring and willingness to act.

During this time, it may be helpful to remember that how teachers and parents represent citizenship and teamwork to our students and children impacts how they perceive their role locally, nationally, and as a global citizen. Since promotion of citizenship and teamwork can begin in families here are some points of conversation and activities.

- **Do your share** Doing your share means to care about the common good. We act as good neighbors; we volunteer to help youth programs and communities to make them better.

Create a Kindness Tree

Throughout the season (and even year round!), keep track of everything you and your child have done to help others by creating a kindness tree. Make a tree trunk out of cardboard or paper and cut out leaves from colored construction paper. Hang the tree trunk on the wall of the kitchen or the door to your child's room and, on each leaf, jot down an act of kindness or activity your child does to help others. This is a great time to reflect on giving back and to talk about how it makes your child feel. Have your child hang each leaf up...and watch the tree grow.

Donate Food

Take a trip to the store to buy food to donate...and make it fun! If they have child-sized shopping carts, encourage your child to take the reins. Ask your child to pick a favorite holiday food to donate so that others can eat it, too, and work together to find it in the store — if it's stuffing, grab some boxes of that; if it's pumpkin pie, grab some cans of the filling. Once you make your purchases, have your child drop everything in the bin.

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WHAT ARE SOME ACTIONABLE THINGS WE CAN DO TO HELP FOSTER EMPATHY DEVELOPMENT?

- Point out how someone is feeling: *"She looks sad. He seems happy."*
 - Imagine how they are feeling.
 - Ask them how they are feeling.
 - Ask what they might need.
 - Listen to understand, rather than to respond.
- Validate feelings with empathy statements: *That must be hard. Tell me more.*
- Switch roles to try and imagine what they're feeling (perspective taking).
 - Think about what you might want/need in that situation.
- Brainstorm ways that you might show compassion & kindness.
 - Read and discuss fiction to help elevate empathy.

Why is Attendance Important?

by: Angie Huber, School Social Worker Liberty MS

The dreaded attendance issues...especially now! It is so important to start with good attendance when your child is young. It teaches them to be responsible and to have integrity. Attendance habits also transfer into adult life. Chronically absent students (10% or 18 days of school missed in a school year) makes students more likely to be a high school dropout and to later experience poverty, decreased health and criminal justice system involvement. Reasons for chronically absent students are widely varied, including disadvantage households/ communities, poor health, lack of transportation, lack of safety and lack of parent involvement. Students who do not develop the academic foundational skills are more likely to be absent from school and less motivated. For 2nd quarter, we have had 11% of students to be chronically absent from school. Many think that these habits can be corrected later when "it matters", but these habits often get ingrained in a person's mind and are hard to correct. Students who begin life with poor attendance, barring isolated extenuating circumstances, often continue with poor attendance throughout their school life. In addition, their attendance often becomes worse over the years.



Pay Attention to Attendance Keep Your Teen on Track in Middle and High School

Even as teens grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure teens participate or get to school safely every day.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Absences can be a sign that a teen is losing interest, struggling with school work, dealing with a bully or facing some other difficulty.
- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a teen may drop out of high school.
- Missing 10% (or just 2 days each month) of school can drastically affect a teen's academic success.
- Attendance is an important life skill that will help your teen keep a job and graduate from college.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Communicate with the School

- Contact your teen's teachers and let them know how to reach you.
- Request a schedule of classes and log in information for your teen.
- Ask for help from school officials, after-school program providers, other parents or community agencies if you're having trouble getting online or need help with food, housing or some other challenge.
- Know the school's attendance policy and the consequences for absences.
- Check on your teen's attendance to make sure they are attending all of their classes regularly.

Make School Attendance a Priority

- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day so your teen knows this is your expectation.
- Encourage your teen to maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework or getting a good night's sleep.
- Avoid scheduling non-urgent dental and medical appointments when classes are in session.
- Post your teen's class schedule and log in information in a visible location, such as on the refrigerator or teen desk.
- Identify a quiet place for your teen to participate in class. Or ask your school or community agencies if they have created places for distance learning. If you have multiple children, make a schedule.

Help Your Child Stay Healthy and Engaged

- Make sure your teen wears a mask, as needed, and gets the flu vaccine and other required shots.
- Find out if your teen feels safe from bullying. Make sure that school discipline policies don't lead to your teen becoming disengaged or pushed out of school. If there are problems, work with your school to find a solution.
- Check in weekly about your teen's academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors.
- Stay on top of your teen's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping class. Teens who have a hard time making friends can feel isolated.
- Ask for help when you need it. School staff, after-school program providers, and other parents or community agencies are available to help families access online learning, obtain food or housing and address other experiences that make it difficult to attend and participate.

Developed in partnership with ConnectED, Families in Schools, and Parent Institute for Quality Education.
Visit www.attendanceworks.org for more downloadable resources.

Student Success Plans Can Be Very Helpful!

My Attendance/Participation Success Plan

POSSIBLE STRATEGIES FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Please review the list and choose strategies that fit your daily schedule.

- I will make attending and participating in school every day a priority.
- I will post my class schedule of classes and log-in information in a visible location near my desk or on the refrigerator.
- I will set alarms / alerts to remind myself to wake up on time and participate in classes.
- I will try to find a quiet place at home where I can participate in class and complete my school work. If I cannot, I will ask my school or community organization if they have a safe place where I can study and log into class.
- I will keep track of my attendance and absences.
- I will find a relative, friend or neighbor who can help me resolve a problem keeping me from attending or participating in school.
- If I am absent, I will contact my teachers to find out what I missed.
- I will keep healthy by wearing a mask, as needed, and getting a flu shot.
- I will set up non-urgent medical and dental appointments for weekdays after school. If I must make a non-urgent medical appointment during the school day, I will try to attend school for the majority of the day.
- When I am struggling with a challenge that is keeping me from attending or participating in school I will confide in an adult at school and seek help.

To improve my attendance/participation, I commit to the following:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

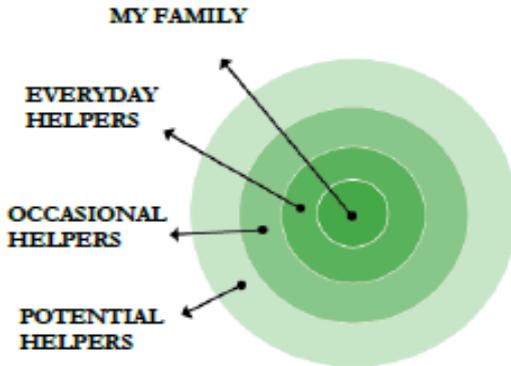
Parent/Caregiver Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____



To learn more, please visit www.attendanceworks.org

MY FAMILY'S HELP BANK



1. **My Family:** List who lives in your house.
2. **Everyday Helpers:** Identify who you can call on to help drop your child off or who can pick him or her up when you cannot. These are people like friends, neighbors, and relatives who can help regularly.
3. **Occasional Helpers:** Identify people who probably cannot help everyday, but can help in a pinch. Maybe it's a godparent, a relative or a friend who lives outside your neighborhood but can be there for short stints.
4. **Potential Helpers:** Identify people who are part of your school community, church or neighborhood who are able to help—if you ask.

1. My Family:

2. Everyday Helpers:

3. Occasional Helpers:

4. Potential Helpers:

If I need help getting my child to and from school, I will ask the following people to be our back-up:

Name: _____

Best Contact Number: _____

Name: _____

Best Contact Number: _____

Name: _____

Best Contact Number: _____



To learn more, please visit www.attendanceworks.org

Adapted with permission from the DeVos Family Foundation, and from materials created by [Early Works](http://www.earlyworks.org) at Earl Boyles Elementary School in Portland, Oregon.

More resources— Attendance works: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/>

Every Student Present: <https://www.everystudentpresent.org/resources.htm>

Deliver Goodies to Local Organizations

Whether you and your child love to bake cookies or whip up endless amounts of snack mix, make extra. Decorate bags with your child, stuff them full of treats, and go around and pass them out to employees at the police and fire stations, hospital, and other local organizations that serve the community.

Work with Animal Shelters

Animals deserve the best, too. Contact a shelter nearby to see what they need — dog food, cat litter, bowls, etc. — and go to the pet store with your child to pick everything out. Or, call ahead to ask if you'll be able to walk around and pass treats out to the animals. Either way, when you go to the shelter, do a lap around the kennels with your child and give the dogs and cats some love.

Go Through Toys and Clothes

Why not do your spring cleaning a bit early this year? Together, choose a few items to donate to children who can use and benefit from them. Then, pack everything up, go find a clothing drop-off site, and let your child do the donating!

Make Cards

Does your child love to draw, decorate, or color pictures? Set aside some time to make holiday cards for children in the hospital, troops overseas, people in assisted living communities or nursing homes, and anyone else who could use an extra dose of happiness this time of the year.

Help keep your community clean. You can always pick up litter that you see wherever you are, but concentrate on your neighborhood. Perhaps you can gather your family and friends every so often and have a neighborhood cleanup day.

Videos Related to Citizenship for Parents

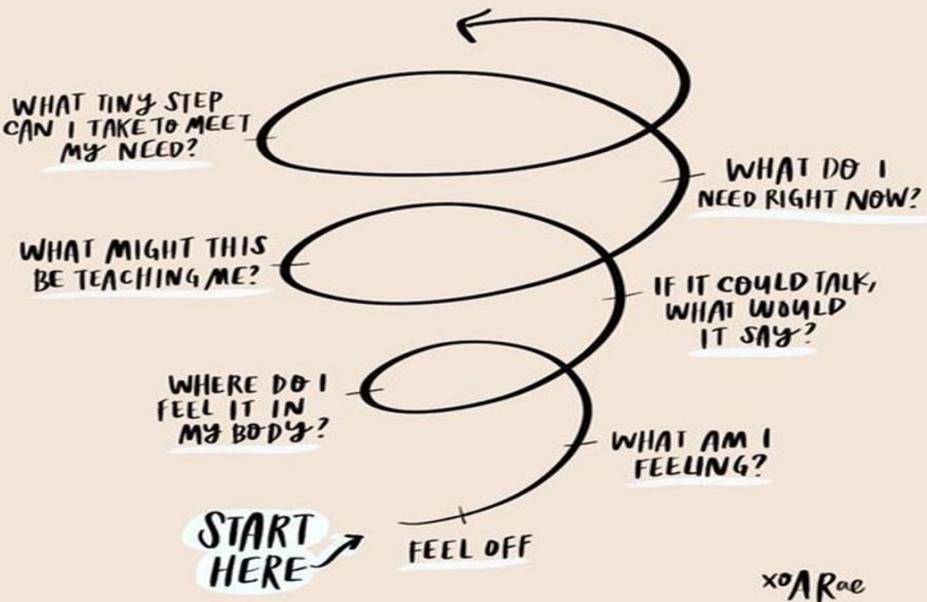
How to Understand Power-
Lessons On Digital Citizenship From Charlie Brown-
Kid, you posted WHAT?! How to raise a digital citizen-

What are the universal human rights?-

Resources for this Article

Chong E.K.M. (2017) Teaching Global Citizenship Education with Empathy Model and Experiential Learning: Case Study of Action Research on Developing Empathy in a Hong Kong Secondary School. In: Choo S., Sawch D., Villanueva A., Vinz R. (eds) Educating for the 21st Century. Springer, Singapore.
Citizenship and Teamwork Build A Happy World- Lisa Cypers Kamen
Kid-Friendly Ideas for Giving Back to the Community-Jeannie Krill

HOW TO GET OUT OF A FUNK



HOPE CHATS!!



Your students will have the opportunity to participate in HOPE CHATS. This will be a time when the students can send in questions or concerns that they would like to have addressed by a multicultural and multiprofessional team. Students will be given an opportunity to send in topics or questions each week. We will be available to answer questions during that time or individually at a different time, if they would prefer. If you would like your student to send questions or concerns, please send them to the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc_4bQMb9gOPrVQfbCo9RqVDSml1knspZ11cX7j193uj7W8XQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Angie Huber, School Social Worker, will reach out to you to set up a time to chat.

More resources that you may find helpful!

The **Parent Resource Center (PRC)** is excited to offer access to our library resources.

Our Library is open for pick-up, on Wednesdays, by appointment only, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Procedures for Checking out Materials

1. Choose Materials to be picked up

Browse the library online: <https://search.follettsoftware.com/metasearch/ui/103238> (login not required to find materials)

Browse our padlet for book recommendations:

<https://padlet.com/eldeem/bookrecommendations>

Speak with a staff member to help choose materials: [email](#) or [call](#)

Check out up to 6 items and keep them for 3 weeks. Renewals are easy ~ just [call](#) or [email](#) us.

Contact the PRC: prc@fcps.edu or [703-204-3941](tel:703-204-3941) to reserve your materials and to make an appointment for pick-up.

- 0 Pick up materials

Call [703-204-3941](tel:703-204-3941) upon your arrival.

A PRC staff member will greet you at door 1 with requested materials for contactless pickup. Please follow recommended guidelines by wearing a mask.

[Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services](#)

[2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1](#)

[Dunn Loring, VA 22027](#)

If you can't get to us, we can use the inter-library loan system within FCPS to send it to your child's school library. The school will contact you and make an appointment for pick up.

Returns are easy!

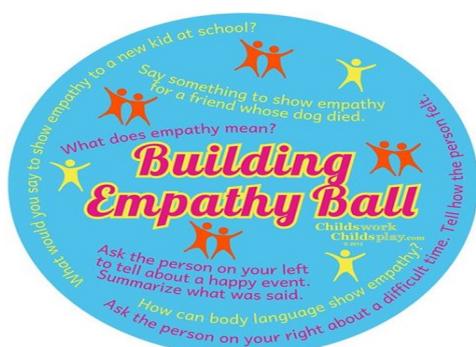
Return library materials to us 24/7 in our Book Return located at Entrance 1 of the [Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services](#)

or

Make an appointment with your child's school to return the materials in the provided envelope.

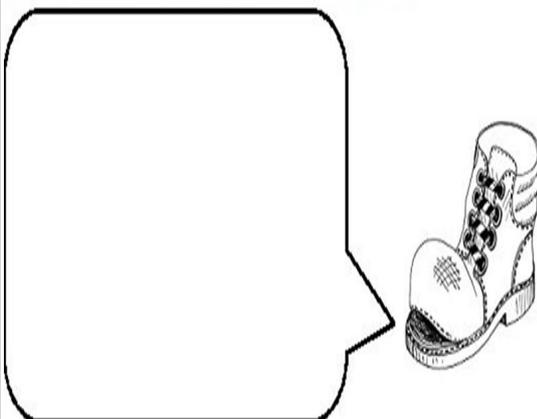
For more social-emotional resources and lessons please visit the **LS Clinical Team's website** (see the link below works best in Google Chrome):

<https://sites.google.com/view/liberty-ms-clinical-team/mental-wellness-topics>



If your shoes could talk...

Write or draw what your shoes would say if one of your classmates was trying to stand in your shoes. How are you feeling? What did you experience this morning?



Take turns sharing what your shoes would say to a partner. Listen to them carefully and use **empathy** to imagine yourself standing in their shoes!

Counseling is often a good approach to help people to work through struggles that they are having in their life. Many feel comfortable with the idea of counseling and many do not feel comfortable. One of the benefits of counseling is that it can help you to find solutions or to problem solve more quickly than without it. However, some still may not be comfortable and to add to the challenges of becoming comfortable with the idea of counseling, during COVID, it is difficult to find counselors who are not meeting virtually, as some do not feel comfortable with meeting virtually. A good alternative is to use journaling. Here are some journal prompts for gratitude:



JOURNAL PROMPTS FOR GRATITUDE CHALLENGE

| 30-DAY gratitude CHALLENGE | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| #1 About your body. | #2 What you find beautiful. | #3 A song you love. | #4 An accomplishment of yours. | #5 A friend. |
| #6 A smell you love. | #7 Something that makes you smile. | #8 A happy memory. | #9 Something you like about where you live. | #10 A person in your family. |
| #11 A food you love. | #12 An ability of yours. | #13 A person. | #14 You're looking forward to. | #15 A life lesson. |
| #16 A person you look up to. | #17 A personality trait of yours. | #18 An item you use every day. | #19 Something about work. | #20 A holiday you love. |
| #21 A technology. | #22 Something made you laugh. | #23 Something nice. | #24 A book, magazine or podcast. | #25 Another person. |
| #26 Something in nature. | #27 A gift you received. | #28 Something that brings hope. | #29 A compliment you have received. | #30 Something you're passionate about. |

www.loveandmarriageblog.com

Try these activities for your student!

⇒ Liberty Middle School Afterschool Program

<https://libertyms.fcps.edu/activities/after-school-program>

⇒ Fairfax County Park Authority Programs

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes>

Resources:

If you or someone you care about is in crisis, please call [911](tel:911) or access one of the mental health resources below:

⇒ *Reach out to a trusted adult (parent, counselor, teacher, coach, etc.); <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk>*

⇒ *Text NEEDHELP to 85511 for the [Crisis Link](https://www.needhelp.org) Hotline at or call them at 703-527-4077*

⇒ *Chat online with a specialist at [CrisisChat.org](https://www.crisischat.org) or [ImAlive.org](https://www.imalive.org)*

⇒ *Call an emergency mental health center at 703 573-5679 (Merrifield Center), 703-536-2000 (Dominion Hospital), or 703-289-7560 (INOVA emergency services)*

⇒ *CR2 – 844-627-4747*

⇒ *Go to the nearest emergency room at your local hospital*

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