

Dear Parents,

Our March First Thursday Coffee featured laughter and insight about the challenges and rewards of parenting, with helpful connections to the language and strategies of Friends School Haverford's social curriculum.

Parents talked of the household routines (bedtime, dinner, getting ready for school etc.) that are most successful and most challenging. We discussed "tricks" that parents can use to turn the latter into the former.

Some of the Strategies We Discussed

- be consistent
- preview expectations
- literally practice the routine
- model the expected behavior
- allow children sufficient latitude to test their independence
- set non-negotiable limits (and don't negotiate)
- be flexible and pick your battles
- exceptions can be made (and can even at times used to reward success)
- associate positives, such as parental attention, with non-preferred activities
- provide countdown warnings for transitions
- work on challenging behavior by setting incremental goals (the harder the challenge the smaller each increment toward the goal)
- choice is a helpful tool, but be sure you are only offering only choices that are acceptable to you

We described social curricula we use at FSH—Responsive Classroom and Zones of Regulation. We shared— the technique of "interactive modeling;" the idea of matching the size of one's response to the size of a problem (putting matters into perspective); the benefit of having a "toolbox" with action steps one can take to address one's feelings; the advantages of being aware of, and able to accurately identify, one's feelings (green zone, yellow zone, blue zone, red zone).

The following texts were shared and lifted up as potentially helpful to parents:

The Secret of Parenting by Anthony Wolf (the middle school age child version: *Get Out Of My Life, But First Could You Drive Me and Cheryl to the Mall?*)

The Blessing of a Skinned Knee by Wendy Mogel (the middle school age child version: *The Blessing of a B Minus*)

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen by Adele Faber (the middle school age child version: *How To Talk So Teens Will Listen*)

1, 2, 3 Magic by Thomas Phelan (there are parent, teacher, and various age children versions)

Thank you to learning specialist, Amy McCann; forest's edge nursery school teacher, Meredith Woods; and prekindergarten teacher, Melissa McMenamain, for participating in this coffee!

Sincerely,

Michael