



Dear Family,

Wouldn't it be great if there were a way to protect your middle school student from risky behaviors, such as bullying, aggression, and substance abuse, while improving his or her school success? Fortunately, research shows there is a way to do just that.

This week we begin the Stepping In program. Building on and practicing social skills throughout the middle school years helps students become better able to use them. As in the Stepping Up program taught last year, the Stepping In program focuses on skills that will help your student succeed in school and in life. These skills include:

- Empathy
- Communication
- Perspective taking
- Respectful disagreement
- Negotiation and compromise
- Emotion management
- Coping with stress
- Decision making

You play a vital role in helping your student develop strong social skills. During the next few weeks, the focus of the lessons will be on empathy and communication. Ask questions about the skills your student is learning, such as:

- “What does it mean to have empathy, and how does it help you in school?”
- “Who are some people you can count on if you need an ally?”
- “What are the steps you use to negotiate and compromise?”

If you have any questions about the program, please do not hesitate to contact me for more information. Thank you for supporting your student in learning the skills that lead to success in school and in life.

Sincerely,

