



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 Ahead program. Building on and practicing skills throughout the middle school years helps students become better able to use them. As in the programs taught in previous years, this 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
- Goal setting

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 empathy and communication. Ask questions about the skills they are learning, such as:

- “What is the best way to handle a grievance?”
- “Why does it help to consider someone else’s perspective when you 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,

