

# Tools of the Heart

## Parent Guide

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your interest in bringing the lessons of *Tools of the Heart* home for your students. Here is an overview of the assembly and the main points of our program.

*Tools of the Heart* is a 50-minute assembly program for elementary students. Using multi-media presentation, live facilitation and student interaction, our program is fun while teaching students important communication skills.

What we say and how we say it is the key to great communication at any age. This fast paced assembly program teaches elementary students important tools to help them express themselves effectively.

Our voice is one way we use to express ourselves. For some of us, it feels safer to keep our voice to ourselves. For others of us we like to use our voice all the time (and I mean all the time). Sometimes our voices lead us to making choices that aren't good for us. For example, have you ever seen something that you knew wasn't right, but you didn't say anything to help? Or have you ever been so mad that you didn't know what to say?

Learning to use our powerful voices to make powerful ways helps us to feel good about ourselves. When we feel good about ourselves, we call that self-esteem. Self-esteem also means self-respect.

Parents, in our assembly, we learned 2 "tools" to help us use our powerful voices:

### 1) **The "I" Message**

- I feel . . . (remember to describe 1 or 2 feelings: hurt, angry, sad)
- When I . . . (what happened: When I am ignored. When I am disrespected)
- I need . . . (what do you need? I need respect. I need to be included)
- Will you . . . (ask for what you want: Will you help me next time?)

The "I" Message is used when you need or want to say something to someone and you don't know how to say it. It could be used when a friend hurt your feelings or when you're feeling angry or sad. An "I" Message is used when you want the other person to really hear you.

### 2) **The Clean Up**

- I know that I . . . (describe what you did: I know I hurt your feelings.)

- I apologize.
- What can I do to make it right? (let the person tell you what he/she needs)
- Next time I will . . . (repeat back what the person needs if you agree)
- Will you forgive me?

The “Clean Up” is used when you need or want to apologize to someone and you don’t know what to say. It could be when you hurt someone’s feelings or when you did something you knew you weren’t supposed to do. We all make mistakes and messes, this tool helps is to clean them up.

Using these tools takes some practice. At home make sure to practice the “I” Message and the “Clean Up” during meals, with brothers, sisters and even dogs and cats. When we hold summer camp programs for kids, we designate a special time for the whole community to express any thoughts and feelings that might get in the way of us working together as a team. This time allows the participants to practice using the tools in a safe environment and helps them to know that their voice and feelings are important. As a family, create a special family time to put the “I” Message and “Clean-up” to work.

To learn more about Soul Shoppe and Soul Shoppe Programs, visit [www.soulshoppe.com](http://www.soulshoppe.com)

# Family Action Plan

- Create a special family time to practice and use the tools
- Review the “I” Message and the “Clean Up” tools
- Practice using the tools with this scenario:
  - Choose someone who will give the “I” Message (Person A) and choose who will do the “Clean Up” (Person B)
  - Person B just ate Person A’s piece of pie in the fridge. Person A is really mad about this. Person A gives an “I” Message to Person B
  - Person B does the “Clean Up with Person A
- Have each family member share at 2 things they did today that they are proud of.
- Share ways each of you can make more powerful choices within your family.
- Make powerful voices and powerful choices a part of your family on a regular basis!