



## **Soul Shoppe Elementary Peace Program talks about CARING**

This month we will be talking about caring and what it means to truly care for ourselves and others. This lesson focuses on ways to overcome the things that stop us from being caring and compassionate towards others.

By now you probably have realized that Soul Shoppe uses “metaphors” in our stories so that children can use their imaginations and critical thinking skills to paint images in their minds to help them understand the concepts we are teaching. This is a very effective method to teach such life skills like caring.

### **Taking Down the Bricks to Find Our True Hearts**

In this month's lesson we will talk about ‘taking down the bricks’. We will help students to visualize how ‘full balloons’ cause people to build walls around their hearts one ‘brick’ at a time. We discuss the fact that we all start life with clean, fresh ‘baby hearts’ or ‘true hearts’ that are open and free. Sometimes things happen like being ignored, being made fun of, not doing as well in school as we want or being blamed for something that someone else did and we start acting out to be noticed, calling other people names and laughing at them and actually doing those things that hurt us in the first place. The ‘bricks’ build a wall so that we don’t even recognize when people are trying to be our friends and help us ‘take down the bricks’ discovering our ‘true’ hearts.

### **Tools for this month**

To help students take down the bricks, we review the “I” message, Clean Up and the Stop and Breathe. These are things you should be practicing at home in place of raising voices or arguing. This month we add four tools to our ‘toolbox’.

Hugs – we’ll practice how good this makes people feel and how very special! Try this at home as often as you can!

Appreciations/Acknowledgements-Students will tell people that they are thankful for what they do for them, even the little things. Students will come home and practice . . . get ready to be appreciated!

Laughter and Smiles – are contagious and make everybody feel good from the inside out and can change a tense moment right away!

Being Respectful and Responsible-we realize we can be the ones who can make a better world.

### **Making every school a Community of True Hearts!**

Our goal is to lay the foundation for every school to be a place where students, staff and parents are true to themselves and share that with others.

### **Home Challenges**

We encourage you to practice ‘taking down any bricks’ that may be hiding in hearts in your household. Have a time once or twice a week where dinnertime is used for giving appreciations! Have each member of the family tell one other member how much they appreciated or are thankful for some little thing they did that day. Give hugs for no reason and laugh a lot and often!

*Parent Newsletter – Short version*

**Soul Shoppe is “Caring” this month!**

Everybody is special and unique and wonderful and starts out with clean and fresh ‘baby hearts’. Sometimes things happen to those hearts that cause us to build walls around them with ‘bricks’ that make sure we don’t get our feelings hurt. We will discuss ways that these brick walls cause our balloons to leak out and hurt others with words or actions. But there are ways to ‘take down the bricks’ and find our true hearts’ by adding these new ‘tools’: giving Hugs, Appreciations/Acknowledgements, sharing Laughter and Smiles, and being Respectful and Responsible to our ‘toolbox’ of “I” message, Clean Up, and Stop and Breath. Everybody practice all of your tools at home, in your neighborhood and especially at school to make a school community of True Hearts!