

Introducing TOOLBOX

Two Kinds of Toolboxes & The 12 Tools



Dear Parents,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to TOOLBOX!

This week, your child's class is being introduced to the 12 Tools of TOOLBOX. These are Tools that reside inside us and help us develop strong social and emotional skills and meaningful, satisfying relationships. Over the coming weeks and months, your child will learn about the 12 Tools through wonderful stories and literature, fun projects, role-plays, class discussions, and through Home Connection Activities to share at home with you and your family.

The 12 Tools of our Inner TOOLBOX are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Breathing Tool | 7. Garbage Can Tool |
| 2. Quiet/Safe Place Tool | 8. Taking Time Tool |
| 3. Listening Tool | 9. Please & Thank You Tool |
| 4. Empathy Tool | 10. Apology & Forgiveness Tool |
| 5. Personal Space Tool | 11. Patience Tool |
| 6. Using Our Words Tool | 12. Courage Tool |

The Tools are simple, but they require practice, practice, and more practice. We invite you to support your child in learning and practicing these Tools at home by reading and posting the 12 Tools Flyer, and talking with them about what they are learning about the Tools in school. Be sure to ask your children about the hand gestures that go with each Tool. You will find that using the Tools yourself will help create a better relationship with your children.

Be sure to ask your school when they will be holding a "TOOLBOX Parent Education Night." At this event, you will receive more information about the Tools, including tips on how to use them in parenting.

You are your child's most important teacher. By learning together about the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you are helping your son/daughter, and us, create a happier, healthier school community, together. Thank you!

With appreciation and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark".

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
Founder, Author
mark@toolboxproject.com

HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Introduction to TOOLBOX

Name: _____ Date: _____

Tools help you do things. Ask a family member to help you find some tools in your home. They could be tools for fixing things (like a screwdriver or hammer), tools for cooking (like a whisk or wooden spoon), or tools for gardening (like a spade or watering can.)

Draw a picture of one of the tools you have in your home and tell what it's used for.

Introducing TOOLBOX

Knowing and Naming our Feelings

Dear Parents,

We all want our children to be happy and successful.



While “Feelings” are not a Tool in TOOLBOX, identifying and naming their feelings is central to children’s ability to understand themselves and others—a critical skill for success in school and life. As parents, we can offer daily guidance regarding the vocabulary of feelings. Asking our kids, “What are you feeling?” let’s them know that we think their feelings are important to what they believe and how they act.

At school, we are exploring the entire range of feelings. We list them on charts, act them out in roleplays, read books about their expression and nature, and draw pictures of them, to name a few.

Here are some suggestions for how you might name the vocabulary of feelings at home:

- Make a list of all the feelings you can name with your family. Post them on the refrigerator or a bulletin board, or add them to the list of feeling words attached to this letter. Spell them with alphabet magnets on the refrigerator. Be creative!
- Ask your kids to identify the feelings that come up when conflicts arise. Talk about your own emotions and how they impact you.
- Complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity with your child.

Our children learn from what we model to them. When you genuinely express how you are feeling emotionally, they will learn to identify how they, themselves, are feeling and that it is safe to talk about their emotions.

Thank you for practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home! You are helping us create a happier, healthier school community together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark".

With appreciation and gratitude,

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
Founder/Author
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Home Connection Activity

Feelings

Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to tell you about a feeling they had today and ask what made them feel that way.

EXAMPLE: Your family member says: Today I was really happy when I saw that the sun was shining.

Draw a picture of your family member showing what feeling they described.



Introducing TOOLBOX

Understanding Anger

Dear Parents,

This week we are learning about anger. The Understanding Anger lesson brings students to a new awareness of anger, especially that anger is not bad. It is what we do with our anger that might lead to trouble.



Here are 5 important ideas to keep in mind:

1. Anger is a normal and necessary emotion that contains energy and information. Aggression is a behavior.
2. We are responsible for our choices. When we react impulsively, we give our power away.
3. It takes only 3 to 5 seconds to change our course when angry. The Breathing Tool gives us this opportunity to choose wisely.
4. Our body will never let us down. We can decide what to do about the messages we are receiving from it, but ignoring feelings will not make them go away.
5. By using self-control and the discipline of restraint, we can retain our personal power and dignity (integrity).

Without a clear understanding of anger and its place in our emotional lives, we may be trapped in self-defeating and hurtful behavior. TOOLBOX works to help prevent negative consequences of anger. Students learn to make interventions for themselves by understanding the workings of anger, whether anger is directed outwardly or turned within.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for supporting TOOLBOX at your child's school. You're helping to build a healthier school community.

With appreciation and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark".

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Founder/Author
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The Breathing Tool

I calm myself and check-in.



Dear Parents,

When you are upset, do you sometimes intentionally use a deep cleansing breath to pause and calm yourself so you can approach the situation from a new perspective?

This week, your child is learning to use his or her Breathing Tool. Here is how the Tool works:

Take a slow, deep breath. With one hand on your stomach and the other hand over your heart, breathe in slowly through your nose, and focus on the air coming into your lungs. With the in-breath, count slowly 1... 2... 3.... Notice how your stomach expands like a balloon. Then let out the breath through your mouth, counting 1... 2... 3.... Do this three times.

Suggestions for bringing the Breathing Tool home:

- Start by having your child teach you how to use the Breathing Tool. This empowers them to participate with you in a meaningful way.
- Ask your children to explain the Breathing Tool tag line, “I calm myself and check-in,” and the hand gesture that goes with the Tool. Help your children remember to use the tag line and gesture along with their Breathing Tools.
- During transition times with your children, take a moment to use the Breathing Tool together. This will help them handle transitions more smoothly.
- During times of conflict or frustration, remind each other to “use your Breathing Tool,” then actually use it! You’ll be amazed at how much easier it is to resolve conflicts when everyone has calmed down.

When learned well, the Breathing Tool can become a lifetime strategy for dealing calmly with life’s challenges.

You are the most important “teacher” in your child’s life, and we invite you to help them make this practice a regular part of their lives. You may find along the way that it is a skill that they can help you learn, too.

Please help your child complete the Home Connection Activity, or do it together as a family.

With appreciation and gratitude,

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
Founder/Author
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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Breathing Tool

Name: _____ Date: _____

Draw a picture of yourself using the Breathing Tool. Show your breath coming in and out.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to draw a picture of themselves using the Breathing Tool.

Ask a family member to help you decide where would be the best place to put the picture in your house to remind you to use the Breathing Tool. Ask them to help you hang up your picture.



The Quiet/Safe Place Tool

I remember my quiet/safe place.

Dear Parents,

When life gets stressful, each of us needs a place to feel safe—a place with some space between ourselves and what is happening around us. The Quiet/Safe Place, whether a real location or a place in the imagination, offers your child awareness that a Quiet/Safe Place is available.



This Tool is about learning to focus on a memory of our safe places, which triggers our body to relax. We ask children to locate both an actual physical place that feels good to them, and to create one in their imaginations that can be visited again and again. We teach them how to “go to” their Quiet/Safe Place in their minds whenever they feel the need for comfort or to reduce stress.

Here are some suggestions for using the Quiet/Safe Place Tool at home:

- Talk about your own Quiet/Safe Place, and ask your children about theirs.
- Ask your children to explain the Quiet/Safe Place Tool tag line, “I remember my quiet/safe place,” and the hand gesture that goes with it. Help your children remember to use the tag line and gesture along with their Quiet/Safe Place Tools.
- During times of stress, suggest that your children use their Quiet/Safe Place Tools.
- Complete the Home Connection Activity with your child or as a family.

By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you are helping your child develop resiliency and helping us create a happier, healthier school community together. Thank you!

With appreciation and gratitude,

Handwritten signature of Mark A. Collin.

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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Quite/Safe Place Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member who is older than you to think back to when they were your age. What was their favorite place back then, and why was it special?

Draw a picture of your family member as a child in their favorite place. Then draw yourself in your Quiet/Safe Place.



Listening Tool

I listen with my eyes, ears, and heart.



Dear Parents,

We listen to get information about others, to learn, and for enjoyment. But how much do we really hear? Do we really hear and understand others? How often do we really listen to ourselves and our own wants or needs?

The Listening Tool highlights the importance of accurately reading the signals and words of others, and paying attention to the information within us (what's going on within me right now?). We listen "with our ears, our eyes, and our hearts." With eyes on the speaker, body language may help us pick up what is unspoken. Remembering to use our heart allows us to notice what the other person is feeling and to empathize with what we would feel if we stood in someone else's shoes.

Listening actively means we are committed to really understanding what our child is trying to communicate—beneath the presenting words, tone of voice, volume, or behavior. When people are in conflict, one of the most common statements made is that they don't feel heard. When the Listening Tool is practiced, good will is fostered and understanding becomes easier.

Here are some suggestions for bringing the Listening Tool home:

- Remind family members to listen with their eyes, ears and heart.
- Ask your children to explain the Listening Tool tag line, "I listen with my eyes, ears, and heart" and the hand gesture. Help your children remember to use the tag line and gesture along with their Listening Tools.
- Work with your children to name the feelings beneath what they are saying. We can say, "I see that you are angry, are you also feeling hurt?"
- Complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity with your child, or as a family.

You are your children's most important teacher. By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home together, you help them become stronger and you help us create a happier, healthier school community. Thank you!

With appreciation and gratitude,

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY

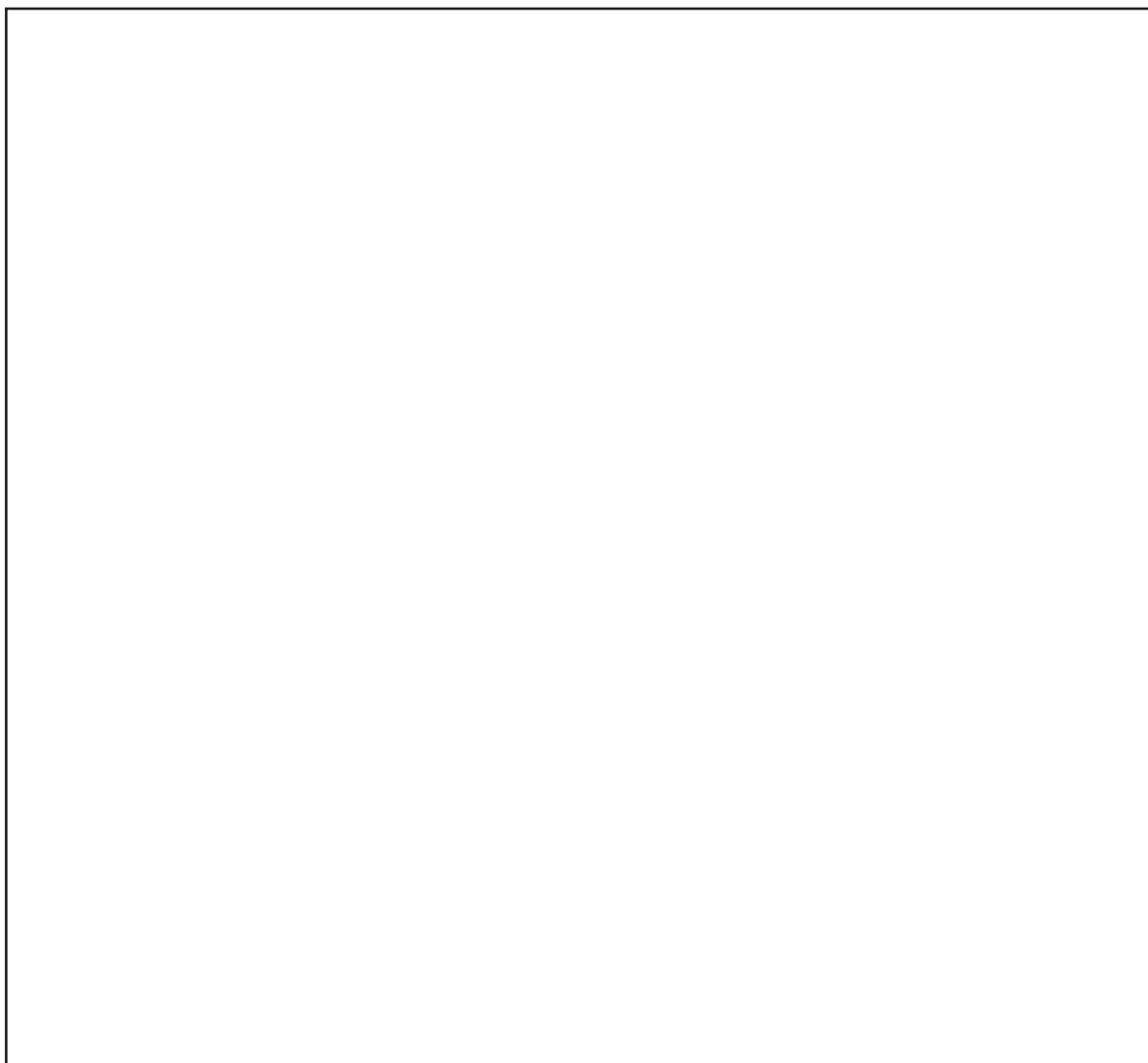


Listening Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to tell you something that happened to them today. Practice Listening with your eyes, ears, mind, and heart. Then ask them to listen while you tell something that happened to you. Afterward, draw a picture of what happened in your family member's day. Include a lot of details to show you were Listening.



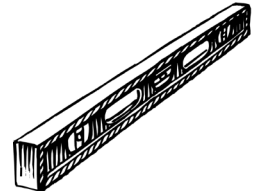


Empathy

I care for others. I care for myself.

Dear Parents,

Empathy is one of the most important Tools for Life. It is defined as “a capacity for participation in another’s feelings or ideas.” To empathize with another is to experience something about what they are feeling. Empathy is the root of understanding, kindness, and forgiveness. Caring and compassion are other words that describe Empathy.



Your child is learning how using the Empathy Tool requires that:

- Start I understand how I am feeling.
- I think about how the other person is feeling.
- I say what I am feeling, and listen with caring and understanding to what the other person is saying and feeling.

Connecting to the feelings of characters in books and stories is a common way to teach about Empathy. When you read to your child or your child reads to you or tells you a story, ask, “Have you ever felt that way?” or “I know just how he feels!” or “How do you think she feels right now?” When your children remind you to use your Empathy Tool, they are asking to have their feelings acknowledged.

Here are some suggestions for bringing the Empathy Tool home:

- Remind family members to “Use your Empathy Tool” as a signal to noticing each other’s emotions.
- Talk with your child about seeing things from someone else’s perspective - by “walking in someone else’s shoes.”
- During conflicts, listen without judgment when your child talks about how he/she is feeling. Naming their feelings is the first step to helping children figure out why they are having those feeling, and then do some problem-solving.

Empathy is caring for yourself and caring for others. Please complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity together. By practicing Empathy at home, you strengthen your family and you help us create a happier, healthier school community together. Thank you!

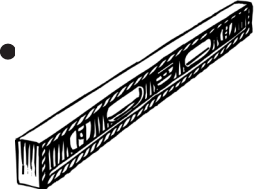
With appreciation and gratitude,

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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Empathy Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to tell you about a difficult thing they had to do. Tell your family member how you think they felt when they had to do the difficult thing.

EXAMPLE:

Mom says—"I had to wait in bad traffic for an hour."

You say—"I bet that made you feel frustrated."

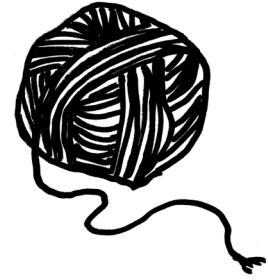
Were you right about how they felt?

Draw a picture showing your family member doing a difficult thing. Then draw yourself helping.



Personal Space Tool

I have a right to my space. You have a right to yours.



Dear Parents,

Ever hear these words echoing through the house—"He's touching my stuff!" "Mom, get her out of my room!" "Move over!"

The Personal Space Tool addresses the need for clear physical boundaries. Many disruptive behaviors at school and home are a result of Personal Space or physical boundary "violations." How one stands in a line, sits in a chair at a table, sits on the rug in a group, and even how loudly a person speaks are all examples of how Personal Space affects us.

The Personal Space Tool gives children a vocabulary to talk about the "space" around them. Our sense of safety, discomfort, or well-being is affected by body language, gestures, position, posture, and voice tone, and volume.

Typically, children are not taught about spatial awareness and the social agreements about what is considered acceptable as it relates to Personal Space. With TOOLBOX they learn:

- Every person has personal boundaries and a right to space around them.
- Each person has a cause (impact) and an effect on others.
- Each person has the responsibility to be sensitive to others' space.
- How to honor and respect the personal boundaries of others.
- How to communicate their needs for physical space boundaries.

Here are some suggestions for bringing the Personal Space Tool home: Have family members practice asking for their "Personal Space," and remind each other when someone forgets.

- Talk about what it feels like (the emotional discomfort) when Personal Space is not respected.
- During times of conflict, see if using the Personal Space Tool might help.

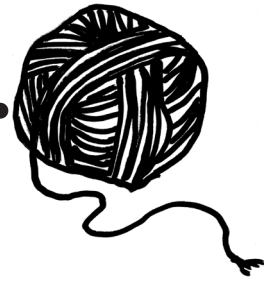
Please complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity with your child, or as a family. By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you help your child, your family, and our school community.

With appreciation and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark A. Collin".

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Personal Space Tool

Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member how much Personal Space they like to have in different situations.

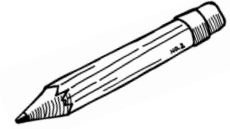
Have the family member help you fill out the chart below.

Situation	Amount of Personal Space needed—check the box that matches what you think.		
	A Little	Some	A Lot
Standing in line to buy something			
At a family picnic			
Helping a friend who's upset			



Using Our Words Tool

I use the “right” words in the “right” way.



Dear Parents,

Using Our Words Tool is about how we communicate with others and to ourselves. It is important to be able to communicate clearly. Having strong relationships by avoiding misunderstanding depends on how we use words, including how we use voice tone.

Your child’s school community is developing a common language about how to talk about relationships and interactions. An important part of the Using Our Words Tool is learning to express a personal point of view with kindness and caring.

By now, you should be noticing how each Tool builds on the others to help your child with better communication. The Breathing Tool calms us down enough to gain self-awareness. The Personal Space Tool helps us to ask for and respect physical boundaries. The Listening Tool helps us to be aware of other people’s needs and wants. The Empathy Tool develops our awareness of other’s feelings in relation to our own feelings, and the Using Our Words Tool reminds us to put our words to work by telling others what we think, feel, and need.

Instead of telling children what Tool they “should” be using, we encourage you to ask, “What Tools in the TOOLBOX could help you in this situation?” When we ask children, “What three Tools have you used?” we remind them that they have the capacity to be their own problem solvers when they use their Tools.

Using Our Words helps children understand that unless they express their needs, wants, and feelings, others can’t know what they need. Instead of acting out, children can talk things out...

Here are some suggestions for using the Using Our Words Tool at home:

- Ask your child to explain what the Using Our Words Tool to you and to tell you about the Tool tagline, “I use the ‘right’ words in the ‘right’ way,” and the gesture that goes with it.
- Remind family members to use their words when conflicts arise.
- Use your own words with care and kindness to help your child understand what your needs and feelings are.

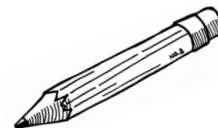
You are your child’s most important teacher. Please help him/her complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity. By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you help us create a happier, healthier school community together.

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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY

Using Our Words Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to act out a couple of stories with you. Practice using your words to solve the problem in the stories in a helpful, not harmful way.

Scenario One: A younger kid is copying everything you say and do on the playground. What should you say to the kid?

Scenario Two: The teacher thinks you were talking during a test, but really it was your friend. What should you say to the teacher and to your friend?

Scenario Three: You are playing at a friend's house and accidentally knock over a glass of water. It breaks! What should you say to your friend's parent?



Garbage Can Tool

I let the little things go.



Dear Parents,

How many times have you told your child to “Just ignore him!” when someone is getting on his nerves? Easier said than done, don’t you agree?

It is difficult for children (and many of us) not to take things personally. The Garbage Can Tool teaches this skill. We teach them to think of mean stuff as “garbage” that can be placed in the Garbage Can where they can, hopefully, let it go.

With TOOLBOX, we teach children to imagine having an invisible Garbage Can to throw mean words into. We visualize our Garbage Can being as big as needed (once a student came into the classroom and reported he needed a dumpster the previous night when his older brother said some mean things to him!). This Tool gives children an immediate way to handle difficult interactions. Since some feedback we hear is important to listen to, we also talk about when it is appropriate to “walk on by,” and when it is important to face a problem and to work on solving or resolving it.

Here are some suggestions for using the Garbage Can Tool at home:

- Ask your child/children to show the family how to use their personal Garbage Cans, as well as the Garbage Can hand gesture.
- Remind family members to use their Garbage Cans when conflicts arise.
- Help your children figure out if an event is important enough to deal with or something they can “just toss in and walk on by.”

You are your child’s most important teacher. Please help him/her complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity. By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you help your child become strong and competent and you help us create a happier, healthier school community together. Thank you!

With appreciation and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Mark".

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Garbage Can Tool

Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to help you make a list of three “small stuff” problems and three “big stuff” problems. Think about what to do for each problem. Small problems can go in the Garbage Can and you can forget about them. Big problems need to be resolved. You might have to ask an adult to help you with the big stuff. Have your family member help you fill in the boxes in the chart below.

Small stuff	What should I do?	Big stuff	What should I do?
<i>EXAMPLE: Your sandwich has grape jelly instead of strawberry.</i>	<i>Eat it anyway. It will still taste delicious!</i>	<i>A kid at school doesn't let you play on the slide.</i>	<i>Tell the student you want to play on the slide too. If they still won't let you, ask a teacher to help.</i>



Taking Time Tool

I take time-in and time-away.



Dear Parents,

In the heat of the moment, during or after an argument, when you're feeling really frustrated... these are all times when removing yourself from the scene to calm down, take some deep breaths and check in with yourself would be a good idea. This week we are giving children the power to take time for themselves rather than wait for an adult to choose that path for them. With the Taking Time Tool we are teaching children the power of self-control.

The Taking Time Tool has two distinct purposes. Time-Away allows us to physically remove or distance ourselves to create more space from the heat of a conflict. It also allows us the space to calm down and take an inventory of how we are feeling and thinking. By giving children the option of physically removing themselves from a difficult situation, we allow them to experience self-control in a way that will benefit them and others.

Time-In simply means to take some time to check-inside oneself to see what is needed. It is time to notice what you feel, to think things through, or cool down. Taking a Time-In doesn't always require leaving a situation; it is more a reminder to turn inward for self-reflection. Time Away naturally leads to Time-In because as relief is experienced, reflection becomes possible.

Note: this is not about telling a child they need a "time out." That is typically used as punishment. TOOLBOX teaches children to manage themselves by giving them the Tools and skills to make positive, personal choices.

Here are some suggestions for using the Taking Time Tool at home:

- Ask your child/ren to explain the difference between a Time-In and a Time-Away, and to show you the Taking Time hand gesture.
- Remind family members to use their Taking Time Tool when conflicts arise.
- Talk about the kind of words and events that may lead to taking a Time-In or a Time-Away, then encourage your child to Take Time when needed.

Please complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity with your child, or as a family. You are your child's most important teacher. By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you help them to be competent and capable and you help us create a happier, healthier school community together.

With appreciation and gratitude,

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Taking Time Tool

Name: _____ Date: _____

Talk together with someone at home about what it means to take “time-in” and “time-away.”
Have the older person tell you what he/she gets from using time-in and time-away.

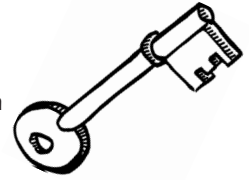


Please and Thank You Tool

I treat others with kindness and appreciation.

Dear Parents,

Saying “please” and “thank you” seems simple enough, but we all know how much reminding children need in order to make this a habit. When used genuinely, these words can have a big impact on school culture. Putting the Please and Thank You Tool into practice changes the quality and tone of our voice, body language, and basic attitude. Using these words intentionally will bring us towards a feeling of kindness and civility.



The Please and Thank You Tool turns demands into requests and impositions into invitations. When we use Please and Thank You, we create an atmosphere of kindness and an invitation to help each other out. When adults use these words, children are more willing to participate whole-heartedly and without resistance.

Children go through developmental stages in which kindness and civility don’t appear to be a part of their vocabulary or behavior. Therefore, it is important that we continue to remind, practice, and model the use of these simple words in a positive manner.

Here are some suggestions for using the Please and Thank You Tool at home:

- Remember to model saying “Please” and “Thank You” often.
- Remind family members to use these words in a gentle way.
- Talk together as a family about things you are thankful for and find spontaneous times to thank each other.
- Have your child show you the Please and Thank You gesture, and practice using it in your home.

You are your child’s most important teacher. Please complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity with your child, or as a family. By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you help your child learn kindness and you help us create a happier, healthier school community together. Thank you!

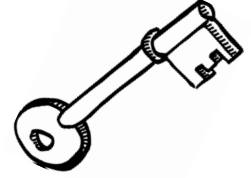
With appreciation and gratitude,

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mark@toolboxproject.com

HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Please and Thank You Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Saying “please” and “thank you” shows appreciation and kindness. Share with someone in your home some things you appreciate about what happened during your day today. Be sure to think about what we say thank you to “inside our heart.”

EXAMPLE: My friend Joe asked me to play basketball.



Apology & Forgiveness Tool

I admit my mistakes and work to forgive yours.

Dear Parents,

This week we are learning about the Apology and Forgiveness Tool. This Tool requires us to put many of our other Tools to work.

The act of a sincere apology takes self-reflection, self-esteem, and emotional intelligence. Personal power is found when a child can make a mistake without feeling a loss of self-worth. Making an apology is a sign of maturity, and asking for and granting forgiveness requires the child to let go of anger and hurt.



TOOLBOX teaches children that, if we are left holding the hot ember of anger, resentment, or hatred, we are the ones getting burned.

Think about how these Tools can impact Apology and Forgiveness:

- Breathing Tool: to calm ourselves, check in and collect our ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- Listening and Empathy Tools: using our ears, eyes, and hearts. Listening well let's us hear how we may have hurt others. Understanding how others feel often makes us want to apologize.
- Using Our Words Tool: Speaking honestly helps others trust us.

Adult modeling is critical to our children learning these things. Try these ways of supporting your child's learning at home:

- Be open to when you feel badly about how you have treated your child and offer a sincere apology.
- Let your children know that you forgive them when they have apologized.
- Help your children think about how they feel when they have been mean to someone, and consider whether they are ready to apologize.

You are your child's most important teacher. Please complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity with your child, or as a family. By practicing the TOOLBOX Tools at home, you help your child learn important skills and you help us create a happier, healthier school community together. Thank you!

With appreciation and gratitude,

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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Apology & Forgiveness Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to tell you about a time when they wanted to apologize to someone. Ask them why they wanted to apologize to that person.

Next, ask a family member to tell you about a time when they wanted to forgive someone. Ask them why they decided to forgive that person.

Draw a picture of your family member apologizing or forgiving someone. Then draw yourself apologizing or forgiving someone.



Patience Tool

I am strong enough to wait.



Dear Parents,

This week we are learning about the Patience Tool. Here are 5 important ideas to keep in mind:

1. Being able to hold the frustration of not having what we want when we want it is no small task. Knowing we are strong enough to wait makes a big difference.
2. Patience helps us to tolerate and accept situations beyond our control.
3. The Breathing Tool is the most helpful Tool with Patience. Breathing deeply and slowly helps us to wait. We need to practice this skill to be able to do it well.
4. We can use the Quiet/Safe Place Tool and Taking Time Tool to help us have patience.
5. Finally, having patience with your child can sometimes be trying and takes practice, but there are two pay-offs:
 - Your child will learn patience from your example.
 - You will feel the benefit of increased patience in this world of ever-increasing stress and high pressure.

The dictionary says “patience” includes serenity. To gain serenity, we must release our expectations and accept circumstances beyond our will. Modeling this behavior for children will help them understand and learn it. The opposite is also true—if we are impatient, our children will learn to be demanding and impulsive.

You are your child’s most important teacher. Please complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity with your child. By practicing the Patience Tool at home and using the hand gesture and tagline (“I am strong enough to wait”), you will be helping your child learn patience. You also help us create a happier, healthier school community together. Thank you!

With appreciation and gratitude,

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
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HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Patience Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to tell you about a time they had to wait for something. What did they do to stay patient? How do they keep from getting angry?

Draw a picture of your family member being patient while waiting for something.



The Courage Tool

I have the courage to do the “right” thing.

Dear Parents,

The Courage Tool is the last of the 12 Tools. Courage comes from the Latin *cor* meaning “heart” and the Courage Tool is about speaking the truth of what is in your heart and standing up for what you believe. Courage is doing the “right” thing even when others oppose you, or it goes against popular opinion. Here are some ideas to keep in mind:



1. Knowing and choosing to do the “right” thing is personal and must come from within. What is “right” cannot be forced on someone. Children need you to encourage them to find their own voices.
2. Children are often faced with issues at school and at home that seem overwhelming or impossible to handle. The Courage Tool helps children to understand and be in touch with their inner strength.
3. Talk with your child about Courage and the many ways we experience and express it. Help him or her learn the Courage Tool tag line, “I have the courage to do the ‘right’ thing,” and to use the Courage hand gesture.
4. Share some of your experiences of growing up, and times you had to use Courage. If you feel comfortable, talk about times when you did not do the “right” thing, or times when you did not know what the right thing to do was. This can be helpful so children can understand how we grow and learn throughout life.

Acknowledging the Courage it takes your children to be brave or to do things when they are afraid is very empowering.

You are your child’s most important teacher. Please complete the TOOLBOX Home Connection Activity Sheet with your child. Thank you for being such an important part of helping your child learn all of the TOOLBOX Tools. Because of your commitment to your children, we have a happier, healthier school community.

With appreciation and gratitude,

Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT
Founder/Author
mark@toolboxproject.com

HOME CONNECTION ACTIVITY



Courage Tool



Name: _____ Date: _____

Ask a family member to tell you about a time they followed their heart and used Courage. It could be someone they know or someone they heard about.

EXAMPLE: Family member says—I was really afraid one time when I had to tell a friend that he hurt my feelings. I used my Courage to talk with kindness to my friend and tell him how I felt.

Next, draw a picture to show the story your family member tells you.