

Welcome to the Fourth Grade Guidance Curriculum I use at Dakota Valley Elementary School. Throughout the school year, I teach the fourth graders lessons on a variety of topics such as; smoking and tobacco awareness and prevention, career exploration and awareness, conflict resolution, and transitioning to middle school. Below you will find an overview of the different curriculums and lessons used during the year.

**First Quarter:** Life Skills

**Second Quarter:** Career Aware

**Third Quarter:** Talking with TJ

**Fourth Quarter:** Transition to Middle School

**First Quarter:** The Life Skills Training program is a tobacco and smoking prevention program. It was carefully designed to target the primary causes of tobacco use after an extensive review of existing research. It is also comprehensive, focusing on all aspects of the problem of substance abuse. Life Skills addresses important factors leading to substance abuse. In addition, Life Skills uses a variety of activities and methods to teach tobacco and smoking prevention skills. The topics addressed in the Life Skills curriculum include:

- Self-Esteem
- Decision Making
- Smoking Information
- Advertising
- Dealing with Stress
- Communication Skills
- Social Skills
- Assertiveness

**Second Quarter:** During the second quarter, we use a booklet called Career Aware which is produced by the South Dakota Department of Labor. Throughout the Career Aware booklet, the students learn about different career options. The booklet is filled with activities and information about a variety of careers. It introduces the students to six career groups. The careers are grouped together based on things they have in common. The six groups are:

- Realistic
- Investigative
- Artistic
- Social
- Enterprising
- Conventional.

**Third Quarter:** Talking with TJ – Conflict Resolution Series is a curriculum teaching conflict resolution skills. This unit is comprised of six or seven lessons describing and practicing conflict resolution skills. There are three videos showing situations where children are having conflicts. The videos have a short section called “Talk Time” which falls in the middle of the video. We use this time to discuss what has been happening in the video, what difficulties the students are facing, and predict what they think the children in the video could do to solve the problem. In addition to the videos, we use role-plays, activities, and games to learn skills for solving conflict. The curriculum teaches nine “Trouble Stoppers”. “Trouble Stoppers” are skills students can use to help solve a problem rather than make the problem worse.

Keep Your Cool

1. Calm Down
2. Say, “Let’s work this out.”
3. Walk Away
4. Ask for help

Take a New Look

5. Share “Here’s how I see it.” (Students practice I-messages.)
6. Ask, “How do you see it?”
7. Show You’re Listening.

Say the Right Thing

8. Work out a win-win solution.
9. Use friendly words.

**Fourth Quarter:** During the fourth quarter, we focus on two different units. The first unit is bullying. We start by watching a video called “Gum in my Hair”. The video teaches students what bullying is, common myths of bullying, and techniques for standing up to a bullying. We learn that bullying is intentional, repeated, hurtful, and involves an imbalance of power. In addition, we learn about the differences between how boys may bully and how girls may bully. Sometimes I will separate the groups to strengthen the lesson and discussion of each group. We also discuss the three roles involved in bullying: the bully, target, and witness. As a class, we discuss these roles, and how they can impact and change a bullying situation.

The second part of this quarter we mainly focus on middle school transition. Lessons are designed to decrease students’ anxiety and increase students’ familiarity with middle school and expectations. We discuss how responsibility changes as we get older and goals they have for middle school. We also practice using combination locks since 5<sup>th</sup> graders have lockers with locks on them. In addition, Mr. Breed, the middle school counselor, visits the fourth graders during their guidance time. This gives the students an opportunity to ask questions, meet Mr. Breed, and feel more comfortable with what middle school will be like. In May, we schedule a tour of the middle school for the fourth graders. They meet some of the staff at the middle school and feel more comfortable within that environment.