



Spotlight on YPC

Community Events

Read Across America	3/2
Flower Pot Frames at East Brunswick Library	3/9
Free Cone Day @ Dairy Queen	3/20

Read Across America is on March 2. These are books recommended by the National Education Association:

For Teens:

For Every One,

by Jason Reynolds

For Middle School:

The Night Diary,

by Veera Hiranandani

Find these at your local library!

Cyberbullying

On February 21, the Catholic Charities Mobile Family Success Center and Amerigroup presented a Cyberbullying workshop to YPC clients. The clients were taught about how to respond to bullies, and were encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they are a victim of bullying. Clients were also encouraged to seek out and show support to their peers who may be victims of bullying.

Month in Review

February has been a busy month here at YPC! Our group activities focused on the topics of Empathy, Conflict Resolution, and Social Skills.

Empathy is the ability to understand and share someone's feelings. YPC clients built on this skill by sharing things about themselves and providing each other with support. They also got to see the ways in which they are similar to each other, which helped them to build empathy for each other. The week culminated with the clients creating scenarios and putting them "on trial." They then had to argue in favor of the "defendant," helping our clients to understand the

complexity of others' life stories and decision making.

Our week on Conflict Resolution focused on understanding that conflict is a normal and even healthy aspect of relationships. Clients were challenged to determine appropriate means to resolve conflict in a positive manner.

We spent two weeks focused on social skills. A social skill is the ability to initiate interaction and communication with others where social norms exist, and relationships are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and nonverbal ways. During our first week of social skills, activities focused on learning about different



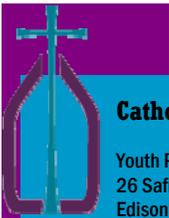
types of communication. Clients were challenged to build on their assertiveness skills through role plays and a game of social skills jeopardy. Our second week of social skills focused on building skills related to personal space, nonverbal communication, and how to engage peers and make new friends.

Random Acts of Kindness Day

Random Acts of Kindness Day is observed on February 17th each year. In celebration of this day, YPC clients created handmade Valentine cards and paper flowers for the children living in the

Ozanam Family Shelter. They wrote upbeat and encouraging messages on their cards. The cards and flowers were delivered to the children on Valentine's Day.





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Family Activity: "Eating In"

Preparing and sharing a meal together is a great way to bond as a family! By preparing the meal together, you can enjoy quality time with your child while also teaching them valuable life skills. You and your child can work together to pick out a new or exotic food that you have never tried before. You can find recipes and ingredient lists online. Then create a shopping list together and shop for the ingredients as a team. You and your child can cook the meal together. When everything is ready, you can enjoy your hard work together as a family. Amp up the fun factor by using fancy table settings and pretending you are in a nice restaurant, or spread a blanket on the floor and have a "picnic." Make sure to enjoy your meal "device-free" so that you can have more quality conversations.



Spotlight on Social Skills: "I" Messages

Part of assertive communication is using "I" Messages to describe your feelings without yelling, threatening, or engaging in acting out behaviors. By using "I" messages, we are accepting responsibility for our own feelings, and communicating to others in a calm and respectful tone what we need from them in order to build a relationship or resolve a conflict.

What is an "I" Message?

Let's say you are growing concerned because your child is spending more and more time in the community with peers, and is not telling you where he or she is going or when they will be returning home. You want to communicate your concerns, but you are worried that doing so will cause a big blow-up and put more strain on your relationship with your child. You feel that you have two options: either

"pick your battles" and don't say anything to your child, or outright tell your child that they are no longer allowed in the community unsupervised.

What if there was a 3rd option? How do you think your child would react if you said this instead:

"I feel worried when you go out without telling me because I don't know where you are or when to expect you home, and I am afraid that something may happen to you. From now on, can you please tell me where you are going and what time you plan to come home?"

This is a basic formula to create "I" messages: "I feel _____ when _____ happens, because _____." Once you have expressed your feeling, you can then make a request for a change or

suggest a resolution.

"I" messages are a good way to reduce arguments and resolve conflicts with your child because they require everyone to take responsibility for their own feelings, and express their needs in a respectful tone. Practice using "I" messages when you talk to your child, and encourage your child to use "I" messages in interactions with you as well.

