



First Impressions Matter

By Barbara Gilmour

Tanner, Rudy, Nicole, Stephen, Carmen and Truman the dragon are here for our “Cool Kind Kid” class.

“We’ve been talking a lot about friends. Who remembers some of the things we said about being a friend and having friends?”

Rudy was first “Don’t be mean and rude.”

Tanner added, “Be kind to everyone, even if they aren’t just like you.” “Listen to a friend with a problem, but don’t share it with anyone,” Nicole shared.

Truman shouted, “Live The Golden Rule!”

“Who knows what a first impression is?”

“Is that what people think of you when they first meet you?” asked Stephen. Everyone thought that was right.

“How long does it take for a first impression? Or, how long does it take for someone to decide if he or she likes you or not, when they first meet you?”

No one was sure. Some said five minutes; others said five days.

“Well, it takes only five seconds for someone to form a first impression about you.” The kids were all surprised and said that was unfair.

“How can anyone know anything about me in five seconds?” asked Carmen.

Stephen laughed and added, “They won’t know how great I am on the soccer field.” Everyone laughed with him.

Truman looked sad as he said, “It’s a shame that some kids won’t like other kids just by what they see at first.”

Tanner had been quiet for a while. “It’s too bad that those five seconds can start a friendship, or not.”

“We all agree that five seconds is too short a time for someone to decide if she or he likes you. But, that is what happens. There are some things that you can do to make sure you make the best impression possible.”

“What’s the first thing people see when they meet you?” Nicole’s hand went up.

“How you look?” “That’s right. And, what does that include?”

Stephen added, “How you’re dressed.”

Carmen was waving her hand. “I bet we will make a good impression when our clothes are clean and neat.”

Rudy jumped in with, “We should be clean, too.”

Tanner added, “That’s good hygiene. Grooming is important, too.” The kids all said looking messy, dirty and smelly would make a bad impression.

“What else is important about how you look?”

Truman thought and then said, “We should look happy, not grouchy. No one wants to be friends with a grouch. It’s okay to be sad sometimes, but when meeting someone new, try to show your happy face.”

How we act is just as important as how we look.”

Tanner said, “My mom always tells me to stand up straight, speak clearly and not do any annoying things.”

“Your mom is right; those things show others that you are confident. Having a good attitude does the same. ‘Cool Kind Kids’ care about the first impression they make because a good one helps them have more friends”.

Barbara Gilmour, Tanner’s grandma, is the creator and developer of the Tanner’s Manners: Be a “Cool Kind Kid” Social Skills, Character Values and Anti-Bullying educational materials and the award-winning “Cool Kind Kid” Audio CD. © Cool Kind Kid. 866-KID-KIND. www.CoolKind-Kid.com.