



# New Year, New You

by Barbara Gilmour

Ms. Gilmour greeted all the kids as they came in for class. Tanner, Nicole, Rudy, Stephen, Carmen and Truman the dragon each greeted her in return. Ms. Gilmour began by asking, "Did you all have a nice holiday?" All hands went up as the kids wanted to talk about their holiday vacation. Everyone agreed that they did not want school to begin again.

"Who knows what a New Year's Resolution is?" asked Ms. Gilmour.

Nicole was first to say, "That's when my mom says she's going to lose weight." Everyone laughed.

Tanner and Rudy added, "Mine, too."

Truman said, "I think that is when we say we are going to try to do something better."

Carmen added, "Or when we try to stop doing something, like biting my nails."

Stephen shared, "That's when we decide to do something different, like playing outside more instead of watching so much TV."

"Each of those is a good way to describe what a New Year's Resolution is all about, especially wanting to lose weight or get more outdoor exercise," said Ms. Gilmour. "What ideas can you think of for ways to help us be 'Cool Kind Kids?'" asked Ms. Gilmour.

Some hands went up right away. "My mom is always telling me to wash up, clean up, stand up," replied Rudy.

Nicole asked, "What does that mean, and how can it help us be 'Cool Kind Kids?'"

Rudy answered, "Sometimes I get lazy and don't want to wash my hands or face. Other times I want to go out looking like a slob. And when I slouch, my mom says to stand up straight."

"But, I still don't know why that helps you be a 'Cool Kind Kid,'" replied Nicole.

Ms. Gilmour said, "A while ago, we talked about personal manners and how we might get teased by other kids if we're dirty, sloppy, slouching or not taking good care of ourselves."

"I remember, now," said Nicole. "I want to be the best that I can be, and that means doing everything I can to keep kids from teasing me."

Ms. Gilmour added, "We don't want to take good care of ourselves just so we won't get teased; doing those things also helps us feel good about ourselves. That feeling gives us the confidence to be 'Cool Kind Kids' — to treat others the way we want to be treated."

Truman said, "I have another idea. Let's be kind to everyone, even if they aren't dragons!"

"That's a good idea, Truman," added Tanner. "Too many kids are picked on or bullied because they are different. We need to be kind and caring to everyone."

Carmen shared, "I agree with everyone; we can all do things better this New Year. First, we should do things to help ourselves improve, like Truman and Rudy said. Then we can help other kids."

Ms. Gilmour added, "Let's use the 'Cool Kind Kid' Challenge as we challenge ourselves to be kinder and better every way we can."

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Barbara Gilmour, Tanner's grandmom, is the creator and developer of the "Cool Kind Kid" Social Skills, Character Values and Anti-Bullying educational materials and the award-winning "Cool Kind Kid" Audio CD. She also writes the Children's Manners Blog, offering tips for teaching your children manners and social skills. [www.CoolKindKid.com](http://www.CoolKindKid.com).