

Love Starts at Home

by Barbara Gilmour



Ms. Gilmour greeted the kids as they came into class. Tanner, Nicole, Rudy, Carmen, Stephen and Truman the Dragon greeted her and sat down. They seemed excited to be there. Tanner asked, "What are we talking about today?" Carmen

also wanted to know the answer to that question.

Ms. Gilmour looked at them and asked, "What holiday do we celebrate this month?"

They all responded, "Valentine's Day!"

Ms. Gilmour then asked, "What are we to be thinking about on this day?"

Rudy made funny lip-smacking noises at Tanner and said, "Loooooove." Stephen did the same, and tried to kiss Nicole. The boys all thought love was "yucky." The girls thought it was "dreamy." Everyone laughed about the difference.

Ms. Gilmour then asked the class, "Where do we learn about love?"

Nicole responded, "TV."

Stephen said, "That's not real love; that's make-believe love."

Carmen asked, "How do you know that?"

Stephen answered, "My family talks about love all the time; especially when I do something that hurts my little sister."

Truman added, "My family talks about love a lot, too. My parents keep telling me that because I am different, I need to extend love to others, even if they tease or pick on me."

Ms. Gilmour commented, "You both just gave some good examples of when love is needed. Do you see where both Stephen and Truman first learned about love?"

Nicole jumped up, "I know! In their families!"

Ms. Gilmour continued, "If we learn about love at home, doesn't that mean that we should show our families that we love them?"

Everyone agreed that was good to do.

"But do we all do that, all the time?" asked Ms. Gilmour.

Many responded, "No." They then started sharing about times when someone in their family wasn't loving.

She then asked, "How often do you say 'I love you' to family members?" Not too many hands went up. She continued, "Many people say, 'My family knows I love them; I don't have to say it to them.' Letting family members know how you feel about them is very important."

Ms. Gilmour looked at the kids and said, "We have been talking for quite a while about the Cool Kind Kid Challenge. I'm going to give all of you a challenge. I want you to say the words 'I love you' every day, to each member of your family. Use the American Sign Language symbol if you want."

Ms. Gilmour went on to say, "I have some questions you can take home and talk about with your families. These will get your family thinking more about 'love' and how it can help them get along better."

1. What are some ways that we can show love in our family?
2. How can love help our family overlook the mistakes and hurtful things that we sometimes do to one another?
3. How can we make our home a happy one?

Ms. Gilmour demonstrated the "I love you" symbol as the kids left class.

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Note to Parents from Ms. Gilmour: Bullying is the #2 epidemic in the U.S. In addition to these Cool Kind Kid articles, we endeavor to provide up-to-date research, articles, and other news on this topic on our Facebook page. For your kids, we post Tanner's Tuesday Tips, on Tuesdays, and Cool Kind Kid Challenger Tips on Fridays.

We also post Shocking Sunday Stats to keep this issue in the forefront of people's minds. We'd love to post stories and photos of your kids being Cool Kind Kids, and how you have successfully dealt with bullying. Go to <http://www.facebook.com/coolkindkid>. To send photos and stories, and give your permission to post, go to info@coolkindkid.com.

Barbara Gilmour, Tanner's grandmother, 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.