



East Ridge Elementary

Home of the Suns!

Sarah White, Principal

swhite@nsd.org

Rae Anne Jordan, Office Manager

Rae Shepherd, Secretary

22150 NE 156th Place

Woodinville, WA 98077

Office 425.408.4400

www.nsd.org/eastridge

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Safe Arrival Line 425.408.4410

Please Remember to Vote February 13th!

This special election has important bond and levies that directly impact our schools!

Information is available on the district website: <https://www.nsd.org/Page/34682>

Kindness: February's Character Trait of the Month

Tanya O'Rourke, East Ridge Parent

"It's not our job to toughen our children up to face a cruel and heartless world. It's our job to raise children who will make the world a little less cruel and heartless."

L.R. Knost

If I had to pick one quote or expression that really captured my own family's brand it would be the one above. I've used it in every workshop and session that I've ever had the pleasure to give. I believe in kindness like nobody's business. I believe in random acts of kindness, I believe that kindness matters and I want everyone to choose kind! I believe that kindness can change our children and that our children, can then in turn, change the world. But hold the pan flute music soundtrack for just a minute because kindness, unfortunately, can be complicated. While conceptually kindness is an easy sell, I mean who hasn't felt obligated to tell their kids to be kind (especially when others are watching), we sometimes forget to give our kids the chance to practice kindness. If you haven't yet noticed the common thread linking each of the character traits that we have embraced at East Ridge this year together, there it is, **practice**. Without the appropriate opportunities to practice important social skills our children often struggle with their ability to rely on these skills when they need them the most. We need to help them understand how, when the going gets tough, the tough can still show persistence, empathy, gratitude, generosity, flexibility and kindness . . . ok, I cued up the pan flute music soundtrack again for just a bit. But let's also be honest about how tough, tough can be.

My 12 year old daughter and I both share the unfortunate experience of migraine. We both also have an arsenal of tools that we try to use to proactively and responsively manage migraine; we rely heavily on biofeedback, we meditate, we practice box breathing, we use aromatherapy, we have a restricted diet and we take rescue medication when we need it. Basically, we bring the party wherever we go. And as much as we know how important it is, to do all of these things, do you know when it's easiest to do them? When we **DON'T HAVE A MIGRAINE!**

We can't be surprised when our kids forget how to be kind in challenging and uncomfortable situations just because we've talked to them about what being kind means or what it looks like. Or because they seem to be able to be kind at home where we have a greater ability to control the environment. We need to be able to

show them and tell them how to be kind and how to hold on to it in tough situations. They also don't learn it just by *seeing us* do this. I loved some research that came out a few years ago that basically explained that kids seeing their parents being kind is not enough to instill kindness in them. They need to be instructed to do it. If we want our kids to be kind they need to understand that kindness is the expectation because we have clearly told them that it is.

My children know that kindness is important to me, that it is core to our family's values and I hope that they learn to be kind by seeing me be kind to others and to them. I also hope that they remember that I apologize to them when I am not. It's not enough. I choose to **tell them** to be kind **each and every day**, I try to acknowledge them when they are, and I choose to tell them, **very clearly**, when they are not. Furthermore, they understand that vicious stare (inherited from my mother who communicated a "you better do this or else" vibe) I give them when I feel that they are missing chances to be kind so that I can encourage, and quite honestly pressure them, to become the greatest of kindness warriors. So maybe it's not just simple kindness that is our family's brand but more of a militant kindness. It's true, I am tough on kindness because I know that kindness can be tough.

Why is kindness so complicated?

Because we are human, and because there are so many parts of our day that can get in the way of being kind. We have mornings and days and nights filled with overblown schedules, tired kids, tired parents, and rushed opportunities. Sometimes we are not kind to our kids. Sometimes we are not kind to our kids because they are not kind to us and sometimes they come home and are not kind to us because someone was unkind to them on the playground. Sometimes someone was not kind to them on the playground because they're just trying to survive recess. I mean seriously, have you ever been out there at recess? It's an elementary school version of *The Hunger Games* layered with frustrating wait times for the bars and the politics of tag. Without giving ourselves one more thing to fit into our daily schedule, let's think about how to unravel the tangled up emotional temperature of our days so that we can celebrate kindness, let ourselves off the hook a little bit, and just generally feel better and have more fun.

I have found that the easiest way to teach my children kindness is to encourage them to be **givers of kindness**. There is an abundance of research that supports the idea that giving kindness makes us happier and healthier as children and as adults. It builds and improves our relationships with our peer groups, builds confidence and our sense of well-being, and happier kids are more likely to have higher academic achievement! So how do we give kindness in simple ways that don't require massive amounts of our time? Encourage your children to smile at others, to say hello, to hold a door open for someone, to let someone else go first. Tell your child to be an includer, encourage them to invite someone new to their lunch table or to their *Hunger Games* inspired game of tag at recess. As a family, you can have your own kindness project. At the end of a day, at the dinner table, or right before bed, you and your child can write down or talk about one kind thing that they did that day. If you don't have the time to do this daily, do it weekly, and of course, it could be more than one thing that you highlight, you get the idea here. Put the little write ups in a kindness jar. Don't want to write it down? No problem, with practice this can be something you check in on, on the way to soccer practice or piano lessons.

These are the easier and proactive things that we can do but how do we encourage our kids to be kind in difficult situations that may or may not involve them? Better yet, how do we keep the line of communication open so that we know when our kids are witnessing or participating in something that is socially challenging and perhaps unkind?

The easiest way I handle this one is to ask my children very specific questions at the end of each day. For my elementary kiddo, it's questions such as: Who did you play with at recess? What did you play? What were others doing at recess? For my middle and high-schooler it's: Who did you eat lunch with? What did you do in Advisory? Who are you texting? (I mean sometimes you need to meet in the middle and sometimes the middle involves a teenager's phone.)

Then you learn how to listen. Listen for whose names are included in those answers for several days and then suddenly whose name is left out. Listen to your kids talking to their friends and for language like “Can you believe she was wearing that?” “He’s too slow to play with us at recess.” While at so many stages of adolescent development this type of behavior is age appropriate it is still up to us to call them on it, to tell them it is unkind, and to show them another way.

Ask them if they think their friends are getting along, and if they’re not, ask them to guess why. You will be amazed at what kids can come up with when they have permission to guess. From there you can probe further with questions that get at the heart of kindness, questions that help your child build their empathy muscles. Questions that might make you personally feel uncomfortable and do take more of your time but questions we need to ask. How do you think a certain friend is feeling about being included or left out? Why do you think a certain friend is behaving as if they are upset? Ask them to imagine how they would feel in such a situation.

The final piece to this complicated puzzle is to ask your child what they did. In a situation that was uncomfortable or challenging for your child, ask them what they did. Ask them how they felt, how they handled it, and if they wished they had handled it differently. Did they perhaps say something kind to someone who may not have been included to make them feel better? Did they notify a recess monitor about witnessing some unkind behavior? Did they explain the situation to a teacher? Did they come home and talk to you about it? At East Ridge we are promoting kind Upstander behavior. We want our kids to feel safe enough to stand up for themselves, to stand up for others, and to stand up for kindness, but they need ideas and strategies from us on how to do this.

This month teachers will be talking to our kids about kindness in classrooms and on the playground. What better way to be kind to our teachers than by supporting them from home with our own conversations about kindness and the kind of community we strive for at East Ridge.

The timing to embrace kindness as East Ridge’s character trait of the month couldn’t be better. We’ve been building some super essential building blocks since the beginning of the school year. By talking about and celebrating Persistence, Empathy, Gratitude, Generosity and Flexibility we have set the stage for a kind February!

A Note from the Nurse

Nasal Drainage/Cough

A runny nose by itself is not necessarily cause to keep your child home. Consider the color of the drainage. Clear drainage is usually associated with allergies or the start of a viral infection. Yellow or green drainage may be a bacterial infection. If the runny nose is associated with a sore throat, nausea or unusual fatigue keep your child home and contact your health care provider if symptoms do not improve within 24-48 hours. Severe coughs should be evaluated by a health care provider to rule out Pertussis or "whooping cough".

Many children suffer from chronic low-grade sinus infections that hang on for months if untreated. Their symptoms include fatigue, sore throat, especially first thing in the morning, headache, and stomachaches.

Please contact me if you have questions.

Nurse Gerry

gcullins@nsd.org

425.408.4406

February

1/22 – 2/16 PTA Art of Discovery, Library

- 2/6 Morning School Bus Evacuation Drill
Beginning Strings, 8:15 - 8:55 am
PTA Board Meeting, 9:10 am
- 2/7 **Early Release Wednesday, 2:10 pm**
PTA Nature Vision, 2:15 - 3:15 pm
Math Team, 5th Grade, Room 33, 2:15-3:45 pm
- 2/8 Beginning Strings, 8:15 - 8:55 am
Game Room Open
PTA Language Class, 3:45-4:50 pm
PTA Spelling Bee, 5th Grade
District K-5 Parent Partnership Program Forum,
Admin Center Board Room, 6:30-8:00 pm
- 2/9 Elementary Conference Day, Early Dismissal 12:20 pm
Coffee with the Superintendent Reid, 8-9:30 am, The
Hangar at Town Square, Kenmore
- 2/12 PTA Engineering with Minecraft, 3:40-5:10 pm
- 2/13 Beginning Strings, 8:15 - 8:55 am
Earthquake Drill 1:15 pm
Remember to Vote!
Pre-School/Pre-K Open Houses
- 2/14 **Early Release Wednesday, 2:10 pm**
PTA Nature Vision, 2:15 - 3:15 pm
Math Team, 5th Grade, Room 33, 2:15-3:45 pm
- 2/15 Beginning Strings, 8:15 - 8:55 am
Game Room Open
PTA Language Class, 3:45-4:50 pm
Camp Cedar Springs Packets Due
PTA General Meeting & Trivia Night, 6:00-8:00 pm, gym
- 2/19 **No School / Presidents Day**
2/20 - 23 NO SCHOOL – MID WINTER BREAK
- 2/26 PTA Engineering with Minecraft, 3:40-5:10 pm
- 2/27 Beginning Strings, 8:15 - 8:55 am
- 2/28 **Early Release Wednesday, 2:10 pm**
PTA Nature Vision, 2:15 - 3:15 pm
Math Team, 5th Grade, Room 33, 2:15-3:45 pm
Northshore Sings 5th Grade, Kenmore Middle School,
3:00-8:00 pm

Camp Cedar Springs

Save the date! Camp Cedar Springs will be held this year from **April 23rd to 25th**.

Important information:

- Parent Counselors Needed! Counselor request forms due February 15.
- **Payment for camp is due now.**
- Information packets have been distributed and are now due.
- Important dates coming soon!



Northshore Pre-School / Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Northshore will be holding Pre-school and Pre-Kindergarten Open Houses Feb. 13, 4-6 p.m. This is a great time for families to see the classrooms and meet the teachers.

Program information and locations are available on the [Tuition Based Pre-School webpage](#).

Coffee with the Superintendent Feb. 9

Parents and other community members are invited to join Dr. Michelle Reid for an open chat from 8 to 9:30 a.m. at The Hangar at Town Square, 6728 NE 181st St., Kenmore, on **Friday, Feb. 9.**


Please come with questions, comments, concerns or discussion topics.

District new K-5 Parent Partnership Program Forum Feb. 8

Northshore School District families are invited to attend a community forum on **Thursday, February 8th**, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. regarding a new K-5 parent partnership program scheduled to begin next fall. The forum will be an opportunity for the community to hear about the new program and provide input and ideas that will assist in preparations for a **September 2018** opening. The forum will be held at the Northshore Administration Building in the Board Room. On-site childcare will be provided during the forum for children of age 4 and higher. Please call 425-408-7682 to reserve childcare for the event and/or if you have questions.

We are Monsters! February 2018 Rehearsal Schedule:

**1-3RD graders join 4-5th graders for rehearsals week of 2/5, OverCast starts 2/14:*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
5.	6. 3:40-5:15pm GYM -1-5 th Vamps -Select Sound Crew 3:40-4:15pm GYM -Select Stage Leads 3:40-TBD Rm 10 -Stage Support: Costumes	7. 2:15-4:15pm GYM -Principle Cast: 4Humans/Oozy1 & 2 Tar/Far	8. 3:40-5:15pm Rm 10 -Stage Support: Sets/Props	9. 12:20-2pm GYM -1-5th Werewolves 12:20-1pm GYM -Select Stage Leads
12.	13. 3:40-5:15pm GYM -1-5 th Vamps -Select Sound Crew 3:40-4:15pm GYM -Select Stage Leads	14. 2:15-4:15pm GYM -Principle Cast: 4 humans/Oozy1 & 2 Tar/Far & OverCast Lil Monsters	15.	16. 3:40-5:15pm GYM -1-5 th Werewolves -Select Sound Crew 3:40-4:15pm GYM -Select Stage Leads
19. <i>NO SCHOOL</i>	20. <i>NO SCHOOL</i>	21. <i>NO SCHOOL</i>	22. <i>NO SCHOOL</i>	23. <i>NO SCHOOL</i>
26.	27. 3:40-5:15pm GYM 1-5 th Vampires & PC/Oozy1	28. 2:15-3:15 GYM Oozy2/Sunny/KC & OverCast Lil Monsters *no play practice Northshore Sings! participants		2. 3:40-5:15pm GYM -1-5 th Weres & PC/Oozy2 -Select Sound Crew 3:40-4:15pm GYM -Select Stage Leads



BEcommunity Auction Baskets Are Here!

Follow the steps below for a super easy way to contribute to our BEcommunity Auction supporting your East Ridge PTA!

Auction baskets can be found following the below steps:

1. From the main Amazon page under the sign in & lists tab select the "Find a list or registry" or you can click on the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/z29hewd>
 2. Enter "BEcommunity" in the search engine.
 3. On the left are the available baskets. After you select the basket it will show you all of the items. As a parent or grandparent, you can select as many items as you would like to purchase from the basket.
 4. At checkout please select the address BEcommunity Auction Baskets c/o Dawn to ensure that it makes it to the auction. 😊
 5. Purchase the item and you are done!
 6. After you purchase the item please email ankv@myuw.net letting us know that you purchased an item from a basket. We will include all basket contributor's names on a special thank you sign at the auction.
- If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the BEcommunity auction committee at ankv@myuw.net and thank you for your participation!!!

SW I NG BY THE ERPTA GENERAL M EETI NG &

THURSDAY 15th February
6PM ERPTA GENERAL MEETING
 please come and give your input on issues that impact our school and children
6:45pm - 8PM TRIVIA QUIZ NIGHT
 please see reverse for information on the trivia night. This event is a free family event. Children must be supervised at all times by an adult.

FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE I NFORM ATI O N PLEASE LI KE ERPTA O N FACEBOOK.

Box Tops for Education Collection

Help make a difference in our school by harvesting all of your Box Tops and sending them to school! Clipped Box Tops are worth 10 cents each for our school. Send them in a plastic baggie marked with your name.

More information on the ERPTA website.
 Event to be held in the East Ridge gym.



Hello Local Businesses!

Please consider being a Sponsor or providing a Donation for our BEcommunity Auction event this May. A collaboration between East Ridge Elementary PTA & Bear Creek Elementary PTA to raise funds to benefit the students of both schools.

Details regarding Sponsorship

- \$1,000 Platinum Sponsors receive:
 - Exclusive signage in the auction area of your choice:
 - Bar, Dessert Dash, Silent Auction, or Class Projects
 - Large Logo displayed on invitations, website, catalog, registration table, and bidding paddles, two tickets to BEcommunity Auction
- \$500 Gold Sponsors receive:
 - Large logo displayed on invitations, website, catalog, and registration table, one ticket to BEcommunity Auction
- \$250 Silver Sponsors receive:
 - Small logo displayed on invitations, website, catalog, and registration table

Thank you!

*please let us know by Tuesday Feb 6th
To ensure your logo is on the invitation*

Please contact auction@erpta.org
for more info on Sponsorship/Donation

These activities are not sponsored nor endorsed by the Northshore School District or any of its schools. The district assumes no responsibility for the conduct during or the safety of the activities. Northshore School District shall be held harmless from any cause of action, claim, or petition filed in any court or administrative tribunal arising out of the distribution of these materials including attorney's fees and judgment or awards.

Northshore School District prohibits *discrimination on the basis of* age, sex, marital status, genetic information, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, race, creed, color, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification, *in all its employment procedures, training, programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.* The following employee has been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged unlawful discrimination: Jeff Sherwood, Human Resources Director, 3330 Monte Villa Parkway, Bothell, WA 98021, (425) 408-7606.