



TIMBER LINES

Bridges Academy, Inc.
Established
November 2003

November 2009

A Live Connection

Today we are all suffering from information overload with digital, cable, and satellite news bombarding us 24 hours a day and commentators offering their opinions on TV, blogs, and social networking sites like Facebook.

While all of this technology can be good, many social scientists and education specialists are worried that we are losing our ability to communicate on a human-to-human basis. It seems as if people don't really talk to each other anymore, they just Twitter their thoughts to other computers and cell phones. Some observers are concerned that the rise of nonpersonal communication, like texting and social networking, is actually leading to more isolation at a time when we need more human contact.

So maybe it's time to introduce

some antidotes to the potentially toxic information age. Here are a few things you can try at home and at school.

At school, some teachers have recognized that we are losing our ability to have "normal" conversations without electronic devices. These teachers have introduced elements of social conversation into some of their classes--not just public speaking, but talking and the art of conversation. Other teachers and school boards have brought in text-free days once a month when students (and teachers) are asked to give their thumbs a rest so that they actually talk in real time to each other. Still others have taken to bringing a newspaper with them to school and asking their students to take the time to read an article and then have a discussion about it, without chattering opinions coming at them

from commentators or blog posters.

Home is also a great place to build an antidote to information overload. Meal times at the kitchen table are ideal opportunities to rekindle human connections and allow both children and adults to talk a little about their daily lives, as well as the latest news. These conversations at the dinner table don't have to be deep or profound to be meaningful, but they do have to allow time to have a human interaction without too much background noise.

The new information age has given all of us some tremendous opportunities to share ideas with our friends, neighbors, and strangers. But we should never forget that as much as we need information, we also need that human touch.



Mark Your Calendar

NOVEMBER

- Fundraiser:** Scholastic Book Fair
November 9th - 13th
- 01 Daylight Saving Time Ends
 - 12 Book Fair Extravaganza Night
6pm-8pm
 - 13 6th Annual Thanksgiving Feast
Early Release 1:00pm
 - 19 Fall Photo Retakes - Individual
Dress For Success
 - 20 Early Release 1:00pm
 - 23-27 NO School - Holiday Break

DECEMBER

- 14-18 Uniform Swap Shopping
3:30pm-5:30pm
- 18 Winter Pajama Party Day
Early Release 1:00pm
- 21-04 Winter Break

JANUARY

- Fundraiser:** Little Caesars Pizza Kits
- 5 Classes Resume
 - 12 Bowling Party 4pm-6pm
 - 15 NO School - TWVD
 - 18 NO School - MLK Jr. Day
 - 30 LDA Conference

NO \$\$\$ FUNDRAISERS!!!

We will continue to participate in the following no cash needed fundraisers.

- * BOX TOP\$ for Education
- * Campbell's Labels for Education
- * Nestle Pure Life Go Play! Water Labels

Focus on Faculty

Do you know Mr. John Bolin?

- *He is the newest member of our pack and his title is Assistant Finance Manager.
- *He was born in Pekin, IL.
- *Mr. Bolin graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
- *He enjoys fishing and riding motorcycles.
- *His favorite food is fried chicken.

Do you know Ms. Sarah Lake?

- *She teaches Math, Power Writing, and Learning Strategies.
- *Ms. Lake graduated from the University of Washington.
- *She was born in Seattle, WA.
- *Her favorite restaurant is Outback.
- *Ms. Lake enjoys canoeing and spending time outdoors.

LDA Florida State Conference

MARK THE DATE...

Saturday, January 30, 2010
@
Embassy Suites Orlando North
225 Shorecrest Drive
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701
PH: (407) 834-2400

For Registration Information & Forms

(407) 366-1099

Or

www.LDA-FL.com

ONLINE RESUME

The web is like an online resume whether you like it or not. Once it's out there, you can't take it back. The simple moral behind this story is once something has been posted, published, uploaded, twittered, emailed or texted to the web, it is out of your control and you cannot get it back. That photo, joke, comment or document is out of your control. Those electronic files have become part of your life resume. For that reason, you must be very careful what you send to that great storehouse of information called the web, because "Once it's out there, you can't take it back."



Sunday, November 1, 2009

SOCIAL BRIDGES™ TO THE HOME



For five years, Social Bridges has been proud to be a part of the Bridges Academy “Family.” This year, school faculty have received ongoing training on how to incorporate social skills training into the Bridges school day. In addition, students from Packs A and B attended a workshop on bullying. All students have received social coaching to help them be successful at the Hoe Down and the Pack C students will have another round of Social Coaching prior to the dance in the spring. All students have learned “buzz words” regarding social skills and are coached throughout the school day by their teachers. On Friday afternoons, the Social Bridges Staff, Emily Foote MSW and Rachel Slavkin M.Ed., facilitate group sessions for selected students at the school to provide additional training and practice. Social Bridges continues to be a vital part of the support that students receive at Bridges Academy. Below please find the “**Skill of the Month**” as well as ideas for coaching and reinforcing these skills as home:

Reading and Responding to Social Cues

According to Rick Lavoie, word meaning is but a small part of overall communication. In addition, social cues (both verbal and nonverbal) comprise the majority of our communication. These include **tone of voice, voice volume, facial expression, body language and eye contact**. All of us:

Give Cues - to let others know if we are interested in interacting.

Read Cues - to let us know whether others are interested in interacting with us, and how we respond to them. An example would be “reading” your audience after telling a joke to see whether they smiled and laughed in appreciation or turned away quietly with no eye contact if the joke was a “dud.” Green light cues might mean you go on to tell another joke. A red light cue might signal that you have lost your audience and to stop.

There are two types of cues:

Green Light Cues - (eye contact, body facing/leaning towards the speaker, smiling, nodding, asking questions, pleasant/interested tone of voice) shows that the listener is interested and comfortable with what you are saying or doing.

Red Light Cues - (lack of eye contact, leaning or facing away from the speaker, no conversation, annoyed tone of voice) shows that the listener is NOT interested or comfortable with what you are saying and doing. The cause may be personal – the other person is perceived as being annoying, bossy, invading personal space or the listener may be tired, hungry, grumpy, etc.

Much like driving a car, green light cues mean “go” and red light cues mean “stop.” Just as in traffic, if you go through a red light, you may cause an accident which can hurt you and others. In social situations, running a red light social cue can cause **social accidents** which can mean the loss of good will and necessitate the need for repair.

Children with learning disabilities, language delays, attention challenges, anxiety and autism spectrum disorders often find reading and responding to social cues to be particularly challenging.

Social Coaching means helping your child to become more self aware of how they are interacting with others and giving them phrases or buzz words that serve as reminders of what they can do differently.

Suggestions for **social coaching** to read and respond to social cues include:

- Is that a red light cue or a green light cue?
- What does red light mean?
- What can you do if you receive red light cues (move on to talk or play with someone else, do something on your own)

Activities you can do at home to reinforce these skills:

Identify cues by looking at facial expressions/body posture in books (younger children) and in magazines (adolescents)
Be a detective – watch portions of DVD’s without sound – make tallies of red or green light cues. Watch again with sound to see how accurate you were.

Play I spy...a red light cue/green light cue (younger children).

Watch TV together and comment on whether characters are showing red or green light cues.

Make picture collages of red and green light cues (cut out pictures from magazines).

Play charades and have others guess if you are showing red or green light cues.

Look at photo albums or photos of friends and family on the computer and decide if they are showing red light or green light cues.

With practice and reinforcement at both home and school, children can improve their ability to better read and respond to social cues. This in turn can improve their relationships with peers, teachers and family members.