



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**PROJECT
CORNERSTONE**
A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Today in your child's classroom, I read *Today I Feel Silly and Other Moods that Make My Day* by Jamie Lee Curtis. This book teaches students to identify emotions; their own and to understand how another person may be feeling. Learning to identify feelings is important because it is one of the first steps to becoming a *bucket filler*. *Bucket fillers* express empathy for others.

In the lesson, students learned specific skills they can use to influence things that happen to them and *switch directions* to change the outcome of their day. They also learned to notice the feelings of others and learn ways to help someone else feel better on a difficult day. Here are some of the skills we discussed:

- **Accept and name** your feelings. Say to yourself: "I am sad." "I am _____."
- **Remind yourself that this feeling is temporary.** You will feel happy again. Look to caring peers and adults for support. Take steps to *put a lid on your bucket*. Do not allow yourself to *dip into your own bucket*. Use *positive self-talk* to remind yourself of the ways you have overcome difficult times in the past.
- **Relax and take a time out** before you act. Allow yourself a bit of time to feel this way. Then, take slow deep breaths and relax all of the muscles in your body. Get ready to *choose the way you respond* to your emotion.
- **Think** about ways to help move out of your mood. Use *positive self-talk* to help make a plan. Thinking helps you make positive decisions.
- **Do something to switch directions and change the way you feel.** Take control of how you respond to this feeling by doing something you enjoy. Talk to a caring adult or friend about how you feel, or do something physical.
- **Be there for a classmate who needs support.** *Filling buckets* is a great way to change a bad day to a great day. When you *fill the buckets* of others, your bucket fills too! Talk, spend time, or interact with someone who is feeling out of sorts. Help them *switch the direction* of their day. You can *fill their bucket*, and fill yours, too!

Let your child know that sometimes you experience good and negative emotions. Share the strategies you use to change your own mood. Name, model and practice these steps to help your child learn more valuable tools to cope with their feelings.

PS. On the back of this letter make a list of things you both can to do to help switch directions and make every day a good day.