



Ellicottville Elementary



February 2012

This month's character trait is **Perseverance**.

Perseverance is the act of pursuing with determination and patience while showing fortitude when confronted with failure and challenge.



IMPORTANT DATES

February 2	Ground Hog Day
February 3	Report Cards Go Home
February 10 & 11	Elementary All County
February 14	Valentine's Day
February 16	Eagle Time – Grade K
February 20	President's Day
	NO SCHOOL
February 21	NO SCHOOL – for Students
	Staff Development Day

Communication and Information:

Message from our Principal, Mrs. Poulin

EQ vs. IQ - Perseverance is the character trait focus this month. I contend that EQ or Effort Quotient is more important than IQ or Intelligence Quotient.

Imagine any of the following:

* It is 8 PM on a Sunday and your fifth grader is at the dining table working on a book report. He has been at it for the last 30 minutes. All of a sudden, he runs to you and wails he has no idea how to begin. And there is absolutely no way he can finish it. It just so happens that the report is due the next day. What do you do? Do you offer to do the report yourself?

* Your daughter decides one summer that she wants to enroll in ballet lessons. After a few sessions, she screams, "I quit!" Do you allow her to quit?

* Your son repeatedly tells you that he has no homework yet his teacher has told you that there will be some homework every night. Do you just bask in the notion that he is so fast that he completed it all in school or on the bus because you don't want to deal with the drama that seems to come when he sits at the table to do his homework?

These are common problems that face parents - Can we all imagine a time when a child quits even when he has barely begun. What can you do to help? How can you teach a child to persevere at a task and not give up so easily? Keep in mind a few things to repeatedly practice:

1) Set realistic and high expectations of your child regarding positive attitude and hard work;

2) Teach him how to go through a task step by step;

and

3) Praise his "small victories" as he sets out to accomplish something. Be certain to be very specific with your praise.

Set realistic and high expectations for your child regarding positive attitude and hard work.

Parents need to impose performance standards for a child but such standards must be realistic and take into account his age and skills. For example, you cannot ask an infant to feed himself but you can certainly expect a fourth grader to be able to do his homework. The main thing is to let children know exactly what is expected of them. Otherwise, they will feel either that they can get away with anything or that nothing they do is ever good enough. This area is yet another situation in life where communication is vital. These set expectations refer not only to homework but to other tasks as well.

Children should be encouraged repeatedly to become receptive to being assigned simple things to do in the house. Some tasks that they can do would be folding clean clothes, taking care of their own clothing and outerwear, preparing the table for meals, sweeping the floor, feeding the pets, helping prepare desserts or sandwiches, and other similar tasks. The important thing is for them to think of assigned tasks at home as something valuable that they can contribute to the family.

Teach a child how to go through a task step by step.

Children need a lot of structure. You have to help them break a large project, such as a book report or a term paper, into smaller tasks so they are not totally overwhelmed. Children in grade school need parents to help them set up a regular place and time to do homework, as well as constant reminders that they need to do it. As trust and maturity increase, reminders will decrease.

So, what do you do if your child puts off doing his homework and he turns in his report late? It is tempting to jump in and offer to finish it for him but don't do it. This is the only way he will learn that procrastination has unpleasant consequences. The next time, you can pitch in and help him plan his time better. Teaching our children to problem-solve and to make decisions, according to the level that they are currently capable of, is crucial in empowering them for life. What is best is to just give suggestions if the child seems to be having some difficulty with the task but help them make decisions on their own. Encourage them to think of solutions or of the best way to do things. Again, communication is the key.

Praise your child's 'small victories'.

A common mistake that can be made is routinely telling a child he's terrific or great or deserving when there is nothing concrete to back up the praise. Such empty platitudes do more harm than good. On the one hand, they may lead a child to overestimate his abilities; on the other, they deprive a child of recognition when he really does achieve. We must remember to give a commensurate amount in relation to what was done or accomplished. If we praise them for every little thing that they do, then the power of praise to influence them is diminished.

Another perseverance related practice that is critical to the long term life success is that children should be praised for effort and not for intelligence. It only seems logical that when children are praised for intelligence, they may avoid risks in an effort to keep looking smart. However, the kids who are praised for effort may actually be energized by the difficult questions and tasks.

We may very often overestimate the power of intelligence and underestimate the power of effort.

We must also use caution when rewarding good grades with money or material rewards as it sends out the wrong signals. Giving our children money or other kinds of rewards just to get them to do something is not a good idea. We should be able to inculcate in them the desire to do things to the best of their ability, to strive for excellence, and to be proud of a job well done.

To children, even more important than the praise and the encouragement they get from their parents is their need to know that they are accepted and valued. It is so important that parents use the "language of acceptance" to encourage their kids. The "language of acceptance" tells our kids that they matter to us, that they are individuals with their own thoughts and feelings, that we want to know what they think and how they feel. The goal is to make our kids feel loved and valued just by being themselves. When a child is given acceptance and love just the way he is, he starts thinking of how he can "better" himself and how he can achieve his highest potential. That may seem like a contradiction but it is true. Never give your child an excuse to feel sorry for themselves or a reason to not do their best. **"We love you just the way you are AND we also have high expectations for you to always give your best effort and to push through when a task is really hard," is the phrase we can say over and over with our children.**

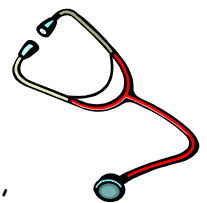
In closing, I reflect and make a connection that I wrote on a number of student report cards this quarter, "I know you will enjoy the extra time spent practicing. You most certainly will enjoy the success that comes with the practice." The best things come with perseverance, positive attitude and hard work!

Message from the Nurse: Mrs. Golley

The Gundlah Dental located in the Dialysis building on the Olean General Hospital Campus provides a program for the Ellicottville Central School 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and 7th graders in January.

The program, through a dental grant, provided a visual dental exam to determine the need for dental sealants as well as any obvious decay or other dental problems.

The sealants and fluoride treatment were done in the Health office by a hygienist for the several students who participated.



Message from the Guidance Office: Mr. LaCroix



As we move into the 2nd half of the 2011-2012 school year, I am hoping to form a few more groups for students who may struggle or lack some skills in particular areas. We currently have "Banana Splits" going right now, which focuses on students whose parents have recently split up, or students who are still having a tough time adapting to their parents being divorced. If you have a child who you feel could benefit from this group, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I would also like to offer groups related to friendship, study skills, changing families, grief, coping, anxiety, and self-esteem. These groups could be as little as a few sessions, or might go until the end of the school year. So if you have a child who could benefit from working with other students who share similar situations, or even if you would want them to just meet with me one-on-one, let me know and I will be more than willing to help. I can be reached at 699-2318, or you can email me at dlacroix@eville.wnyric.org.

The "We Care" Rules

We listen to each other.

Hands are for helping, not for hurting.

We use caring language.

We care about each other's feelings.

We take responsibility for what we say and do.

Message from the PTO:

Dime Carnival



The Dime Carnival is back! This year's Dime Carnival is being held on Friday, March 2nd from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Come to the High School Gymnasium to join in on all the fun. We will be using tickets for the games this year and they will be sold 10 tickets for \$1. We will also have tickets for our themed baskets for sale at \$1 each or 12 for \$10. If you would like to help the PTO out by volunteering your time, donating desserts for the cake walk, or donating clean glasses, plates, cups, etc. for the dime pitch, please contact Diana Olson at 699-2318 or dolson@eville.wnyric.org. We look forward to seeing you at the Dime Carnival!

Box Tops

We are getting closer to our goal of raising \$1,500 in Box Tops! Please keep sending them in! We will be sending our next shipment at the end of February. Please feel free to send Box Tops in with your students or drop them off in our collection boxes located at TOPS Market in Ellicottville or at the Great Valley Post Office. We have received several Box Tops at all three locations! Thank you!!!

Get involved!

Come find out what the PTO is doing and get involved. PTO continues to help the students and community. It can't be done without all of the volunteers! Our next two meetings are Tuesday, February 7th Tuesday, February 28th at 3:15pm in the elementary art room. We will be finalizing plans for the Dime Carnival.

