

Klasse2000

Promoting health in elementary school
Preventing violence and addictions

Dear parents,

Your child is participating in the Klasse2000 programme in the third year now. This programme wants to advance your child's healthy development. The child shall learn what he or she is capable of doing himself or herself to promote well-being and health. This includes physical exercise and a healthy diet just as much as non-violent conflict resolution and saying no to tobacco and alcohol.

To be sure, the children earn all of this mostly from you, their parents. Your education and example are among the most decisive elements that form your child's behaviour. This is why we want to inform you about the topics we will cover in the third grade and include some hints on how you could practice them at home as well.

The third grade focuses on promoting social skills:

Thinking about your own strengths and weaknesses, recognizing how somebody else feels and responding adequately. Being able to solve conflicts without resorting to violence.

Exercise and nutrition will feature this year again. You could support the school programme by walking on foot with the child as often as possible, making excursions, playing and exercising outdoors. It will promote both the child's and your own wellbeing.

To eat healthy every day does not take much of an effort: just offer your child fruit and vegetables five times a day. It tastes good and makes your diet more 'colourful'.

Sincerely yours

Thomas Duprée
Manager

Subjects covered by Klasse2000 in the third grade:

The heart and blood circulation

The children learn about the way heart and circulation work. They will experiment with a stethoscope and compare their pulse rate at rest and after exercise. They also learn to see the link between blood circulation and the need for healthy nutrition, lots of exercise and rest.

Emotions? – All KLARO!

This is all about body language. The children will learn how to recognize somebody else's feeling and to respond to them adequately.

KLARO's magic formula that they already learnt in second grade will again help the children to deal with their own feelings. In third grade the formula will be expanded by the "**ME message**" which will help the children to control extreme emotions such as rage, anger, and fear and to solve conflicts without violence.

Because. All feelings are permissible, but not every behaviour is permissible!

Together we are strong!

Mutual trust is important for good team work and a good atmosphere in class. In different games and exercises the children experience that every team member is important for success, that each team member must and can make a contribution.

All people have their own strengths and weaknesses - that is a normal fact of life! Therefore the children will think about their own strengths and weaknesses and how they can contribute those to the group.

What you can do at home:

How to deal with emotions

All people - young and old - would be happiest, if they could live together in harmony. But our emotions don't always play along!

- Just think how fast your temper rises when the child flies into a tantrum, wouldn't you just love to yell along?
- How much can somebody else's rage affect me and make me feel bad?
- Isn't it that negative emotions get out of hand and that then leads to a clash?

To respond to these situations the children learnt **KLARO's magic formula**:

- ☺ **STOP- CALM DOWN** (like - take a deep breath, get rid of your fit of anger by doing something that won't hurt anybody or anything, but can get it all out of your system - e.g. hit a pillow)
- ☺ **THINK** (What happened? How do I feel? What do I want to be different?)
- ☺ **ACT** (e.g. communicate your feelings in a ME message)

These hints won't help only children. You as well can easily make them part of your life to control unpleasant feelings:

1. Let an outburst of feelings not just take its course, but stop short to calm down, before you act. It' like pressing the 'pause' button on a DVD recorder
2. Think about what you want to achieve: Do you just want an outlet for your anger or do you want to find a satisfactory solution for this situation?
3. Express your thoughts in a ME message (see next page) and communicate it calmly.
4. And if things still went wrong then: Stop - calm down - think back together why it just did not work.

Non-violent conflict resolution

To escape the dangerous escalation of "attack and defence" in a conflict the best thing to do is to use a **ME message**:

- Concentrate on yourself and talk about your feelings? (=> *How do I feel right now?*)
- Explain what made you feel like that (=> *What happened?*)
- Say how you think the conflict should be solved (=> *What do I want to be different?*)

An example for a **ME message**: *"It really annoys me when you just throw your bag in the hallway and I have to climb over it all the time. Why don't you take it to your room."* => This statement is very plain without attacking anyone.

An example for a **YOU message**: *You never learn, don't you! Stop throwing your bag in the hallway or else...!* => This statement is an attack on the other person and invites a defense.

Help your child to actively use ME messages: Ask the child....

... about his or her feelings (*How do you feel now?*)

...about the reason (*What happened? Why are you so upset about it? What are you afraid of?*)

... about possible solutions (*What do you want to be different? Who or what might be able to help you now? What would you like best?*)

It is sometimes helpful, if you phrase these situations and feelings on behalf of your child. This will help the child to get oriented and to get its feelings under control faster.

And never forget:

ME messages also work with a positive message! *"I'm really impressed that you took your bag straight to your room today. I really appreciate that."*

Additional information on Klasse2000 is available from the school or
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