

# Kids learn to be responsible, safe and respectful to others

## Behavior program kicks off at Washington Oak

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COVENTRY—The words “responsible, safe and respectful” sum up the program kicked off at a school in Coventry. The program isn’t new, but the school wide kick-off made its debut this year.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) comes from the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College. It is described as “a proactive systems approach to school-wide discipline.”

Through role playing, instruction and staff demonstrations all 687 students at Washington Oak Elementary School learned about the PBIS matrix this past Thursday and Friday.

The program is district-wide, but fourth grade teacher Paula Jacquard said they wanted to get all the kids at Washington Oak on the same page with the program.

The matrix, which covers classroom, lunchroom, playground, physical education, hallway, bathroom and bus behaviors, is meant to let kids know exactly what is expected of them.

Through demonstrations and role playing stu-

dents now know what every part of the matrix should look like, Jacquard said.

In the bus demonstration principal Dr. Donna Raptakis had the kids put their feet in the aisles, throw balls and yell while on an imaginary bus. Raptakis then role played what could happen if students actually did those things on a real bus. She talked about how students could distract the bus driver and how students could be injured as a result. She called it the “magic D word”—“distract.”

In the hallways, the students were instructed to “walk silently” and were reminded that no running is ever allowed.

The program “rewards positive behavior that the [students] display on a daily basis,” Jacquard said.

In reward for good behaviors, students will receive white Wallaby slips. Wallaby is the school’s mascot. The teacher or administrator who sees the good behavior will mark off responsible, safe or respectful and give it to the student.

When a student earns 25 Wallaby slips they will receive a band—similar to the Livestrong bands—with the words responsible, safe or respectful on it.

In each pod there will also be a chart documenting the slips received by that grade.

Not only will students receive the slips at school if they are seen walking quietly in the



Dr. Donna Raptakis, principal at Washington Oak Elementary School in Coventry, role played with students the proper behaviors for riding the bus.

Angelena Chapman-Daily Times

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# Students to be rewarded for good behavior

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hallway or keeping their hands to themselves, but parents can award Wallaby slips at home.

The slips will be a different color, but parents can award their children for good behaviors at home and then the students can bring those in to be added to their totals.

On Wallaby Wednesdays one student from each classroom who has received a slip will also be randomly drawn to win an award.

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade weren't afraid to voice their ideas and ask questions during the demonstrations. Parents will have that chance at the open house at Washington Oaks this Monday night.

One aspect that Raptakis said they have added to is the parent element.

She hopes parents will become more involved in the process and in reinforcing the behaviors at home. There will be a parent link right on the Washington Oak website.

The open house is this Monday night from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the school.

Raptakis, psychologist Courtney Milburn, behavioral specialist Ruth Daniels and Amy Anzalone from professional development will offer three 25 minute presentations for parents.