

The Counseling Connection

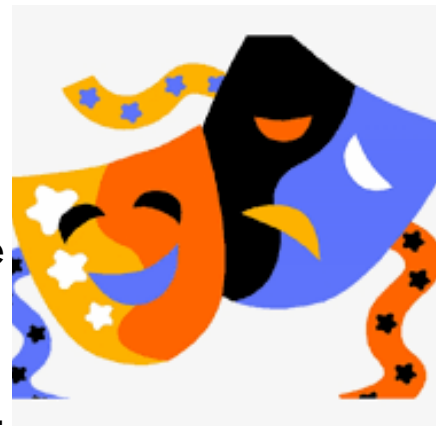
In this Issue:

Drama	1
Drama Cont'd	2
Parent Help	3
Parenting Tip	4

Dear DRMS Parents & Guardians,

What's a middle school newsletter without talking about D-R-A-M-A?? It seems to be more prevalent this year in more ways than one and the counseling staff at DRMS feels it is necessary

to talk about how we can keep the drama at bay and support our students in making good choices. Conflict is inevitable, but how we handle it



is what makes the difference.

***"Work hard.
Have fun. No
drama."***

Issues We Are Seeing

Oftentimes we associate drama with girls and that is just not always the case. The boys can be right in the mix stirring up issues as much as the girls. Students putting themselves in situations that

do not involve them, sharing private conversations with others, spreading rumors, and using social media to attack others are just a few ways we are seeing examples of drama

played out in an unhealthy way at DRMS. These situations are taking the attention off of academics and grades are starting to be effected.

Social Media & Drama

Social media has so many great aspects to it and when used appropriately it can be a wonderful tool to connect with others. Unfortunately, most middle school students do not use it appropriately and it can have some damaging effects on students' mental health. Mrs. Chandler and I meet with students daily and more often

than not the issues we deal with start at home on social media. Snap-Chat and TikTok are the two apps we hear the most about. These forums allow for students to make fun of others, make threats, share private information, and instigate fights.



Psssst, did you know....

Another big issue we see in the counseling office is this idea of "loyalty". Students truly feel that they are being loyal friends if they tell their friends when others are talking about them. I can't tell you how many issues are created because a best friend told another friend that a classmate was talking about them. I always ask students what have they gained by knowing that information. Usually the only

thing gained is hurt feelings. These hurt feelings sometimes are masked with anger and conflict inevitably ensues. A good/real friend protects a friend's feelings and doesn't tell them something that would hurt their feelings. Sadly, the reason they typically share this information is because they want to see the drama unfold. This type of behavior instigates situations and makes things worse.

***"Hard times will
always reveal true
friends."***

How About a Game of Telephone?

Do you remember that game? It is exactly what happens in middle school. One student tells another student a rumor and then that student tells another student, but the rumor grows a little bit. Then, that student tells another student and the rumor grows even bigger.

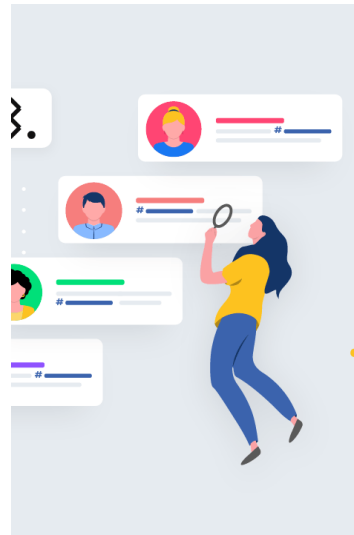
This continues until the rumor becomes so big that we have an even bigger conflict on our hands. Middle school students are not mature enough to understand the repercussions in spreading rumors, but in a small school these rumors can be incredibly detrimental.



Monitor, Monitor, Monitor

Believe it or not parents have the power to stop the spread of drama at school. The first way is to monitor your child's social media and phone usage. I know I sound like a broken record, but if boundaries are set less conflict will occur. There is nothing beneficial to a child having access to their phone all

throughout the night. It is an open door to problems. If students know they are being monitored then they will think twice before posting something mean or ugly towards someone else. We do not want to strip students of their privacy, but they are still children and children need rules and limits.



Ask Questions

Another way to help stop the spread of drama is to talk to your student and ask questions. Ask what went on that day. Ask specific questions about classes and classmates. Talk to them about the effects of drama. I am always asking students, "Don't you want to be remembered as the student that was nice to everyone and not be

remembered for being a bully or creating drama?" Their age eliminates their ability to always see things from another perspective, so as the parent it is your job to show them other sides to consider. This small act can make a big difference with how

they approach situations going forward.



When in Doubt...

...call your child's school counselor! Middle school drama can be a lot to handle. It can be overwhelming and confusing and hard to navigate. Mrs. Chandler and myself are here to help and

WANT to help, so if you feel like your child is wrapped up in a lot of unnecessary drama give us a call so that we can meet with them. We strive to work with students on the proper way to handle situa-

tions and teach skills that they can carry with them throughout their lifetime.



Questions?

Please reach out if you have any questions or would like more information about the support we offer here at Dan River Middle School to ensure success for all students.

Dan River Middle School- 434-822-6027

Frannie Vitto- frances.uitto@pcs.k12.va.us

Terieka Chandler- terieka.chandler@pcs.k12.va.us

Middle School Parenting Tip #8

What's the best way to diffuse drama? Model it! As the parent you are in a very influential position to show your children how to handle things. They are watching you when you do not even realize it, so when something goes wrong with another family member, or something at work, or something with a friend- model how to calmly respond to these situations. The more they see that type of response, the more they will naturally practice it on their own at school and outside the home.

≡ **KEEP CALM** ≡

