October 25, 2013

This Week In Social Group

\*thermometer illustration here\*

Group started this day as usual, by checking in to see if we had met our goals from last week. I am so happy to say that this week the boys met their group goal of twenty drops! They each chose a reward (two chose prizes from the prizebox, and one chose to have ten minutes to draw on the Smart Board). ☺

The boys are doing very well in our group with practicing our calming strategies, and talking about what to do and when to do it. However, when it comes to putting these strategies to use in real life (when they are upset and need to use them), they’re having a hard time. This was a big topic today; taking responsibility for our own actions and, at the very least, *trying* to maintain self control. We used an analogy in group that they seemed to understand – our bodies are like a thermometer. Somewhere in the middle is where we feel “normal.” Up at the top is our angry, or mad, level. Our frustration can rise, just like the mercury. The strategies that we use can bring that thermometer back to “normal” range, if we use them in time. If we wait until our mercury is at the top, we’ve waited too long! Each student made a notecard today that lists each of our calming strategies, with the thermometer illustration. These cards are already taped onto their individual desks in their classrooms (per their request). They should be a nice, quick, visual reminder to “keep their cool,” and a reminder of their own pledge to try. I also told them that while it is perfectly normal to get upset, they **are** responsible to try to maintain self control. It is not acceptable to refuse to try. They each also signed their agreement to do so. Some of the boys’ new goals are now to try to use these strategies before our thermometers reach that top level. It is a very necessary part of self-control.

We also watched a short video called, “Thomas Edison, Mistakes, and Me.” This is an inspiring video that explains how even very smart people make mistakes (Thomas Edison made over 600 mistakes when inventing the light bulb!). The best thing to do is to use those mistakes to help us learn more. When we do get frustrated, we use our strategies to practice our patience and persistence. They really liked this one!

Finally, we enjoyed about ten minutes of Uno! As I’m sure you all know, this game can be frustrating (+4 card!!!). I reminded the boys about keeping their cool and having good sportsmanship. They did a great job and had an absolute blast! Of course, I came in last… ☺