

Dear Family,

In Open Circle recently, we talked about nonverbal signals. A nonverbal signal is a way of communicating without using words. We tried out some nonverbal signals that we already use, such as signals for sitting criss-cross, taking a time out, and being quiet. We talked about why it might be helpful to have some nonverbal signals in the classroom that everyone agrees to and is clear about instead of using words. The class is currently using and responding to several signals. Ask your child to demonstrate the signals the class agreed to use this year. Ask your child to demonstrate some other nonverbal signals and have you guess what they mean. You and your child might want to notice and discuss nonverbal signals that you see depicted in newspapers, in magazines, or on television.

At another Open Circle meeting, we talked about giving and receiving compliments. A compliment is a statement that is true and describes something good about a person. We discussed the kinds of things we might compliment someone about: what the person does well, how the person treats others, what the person does to be helpful, a special trait that makes others feel good, or what the person does that shows special effort. Compliments make people feel special and appreciated, and they can help to improve the classroom atmosphere. We learned three things to remember about giving a compliment:

- It should be true
- It should be specific
- It should be positive

We also learned how to respond to compliments in school. We should:

- Look at the person and smile
- Say, "Thank you!"

At home, be sure to compliment you child often for doing something well being thoughtful, or being helpful. If your child gives you a compliment, remember to look at him / her, to smile, and to say, "Thank you!"

Yours truly,

Ms. Sullivan