

Wish Well and Welcome Back Rituals

Tip Sheet

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The Wish Well Ritual

We know children learn best when they feel connected to others in their School Family. The Wish Well ritual reminds all that they still belong to the School Family, even when they aren't present physically or are having a difficult time. The Wish Well ritual is also be used to show support for School Family members during difficult times at home (e.g. when someone dies) and at school (e.g. when someone has a hard time sharing). The Wish Well ritual is a valuable tool for connection and for teaching and modeling empathy to children.

For the Classroom and Center

- Materials Needed:
 1. Family Communication – to be sent out prior to starting the Wish Well Ritual (or before any major changes to its use)
 2. A Wish Well Board (is helpful if it can be a smaller tool that can be easily moved to different locations)
 3. Pictures of all students and adults in your classroom, school, or parent group family (headshots are best).

- Steps to Success:
 1. Send out family communication prior to starting or changing the Wish Well Ritual. Communicate in as many ways as possible: meetings, letters home, emails, phone, text, etc.
 2. As part of your morning circle or meeting, provide time for children to request well wishes (for themselves or others) and perform the absent student ritual (well wishes for students and adults that aren't in class/group today). The steps for Wishing Well are:
 - a. S.T.A.R. (Smile, Take a breath, And Relax)
 - b. Put your hands on your heart
 - c. Close your eyes and picture the person in your mind, thinking good feelings and thoughts to share with the person.
 - d. Open your arms and send the good feelings and thoughts to the person and those around you.
 - e. Optional – play the “Wish Well” song from the *It Starts in the Heart* CD.

The Welcome Back Ritual

We know children learn best when they feel connected to others in their School Family. The Welcome Back ritual reminds all that they still belong to the School Family, even when they aren't present physically.

For the Classroom and Center

- Materials Needed:
 4. Family Communication – to be sent out prior to starting the Welcome Back Ritual (or before any major changes to its use)
 5. A Wish Well Board (is helpful if it can be a smaller tool that can be easily moved to different locations)
 6. Pictures of all students and adults in your classroom, school, or parent group family (headshots are best).

- Steps to Success:
 3. Send out family communication prior to starting or changing the Welcome Back Ritual. Communicate in as many ways as possible: meetings, letters home, emails, phone, text, etc.
 4. As part of your morning circle or meeting, if a child/adult has returned to the classroom/center/group, take time to welcome that person back into the School Family – no matter the reason they are gone.
 - a. Sing a song, make a chant, send Wish Well if needed, whatever works for your group as a welcome back method.

Resources

- Creating the School Family: Bully-Proofing Classrooms Through Emotional Intelligence by Dr. Becky Bailey
 - Chapter 14 – We Care Center
- Wish Well Ritual
 - <https://consciousdiscipline.com/videos/wish-well-board/>
 - <https://consciousdiscipline.com/resources/wish-well-ritual-plan/>
 - <https://consciousdiscipline.com/resources/conscious-discipline-chants-wish-well-song/>
 - <https://consciousdiscipline.com/e-learning/webinars/getting-started-with-wishing-well/>
 - <https://consciousdiscipline.com/> for many videos, articles, and printables.
- Absent Child Ritual
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ad-xdm6vTA>
 - <https://cute766.info/we-wish-you-well-absent-child-rituals-and-conscious/>
- Welcome Back Ritual
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbdOf8wIBQ0>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHYQb0vw3Q8>