



## COUNSELOR'S CORNER



### 2010 is here: A New Year Matters!

Welcome 2010! We're back at Pepperell Elementary School for the beginning of a new "school year" – report cards, school-wide spelling bee, breakfast with Dads, and of course, the regular classroom and activity schedules – how busy we are here at PES!

In the 4<sup>th</sup> grade we are having classroom guidance sessions on cliques, stereotypes, discrimination, peer pressure, and the need "to belong"– teaching the students that everyone is special in their own way. In the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, we are having a visiting speaker, Shannon Bond, present a program in each classroom that centers on personal safety.



### Parents Matter!

**Do you know how well your child is doing in school? Take this quiz and rate yourself:**

The school year is about at the midway point. Do you have a good idea of how well your child is doing? Do you know where problems could occur (or perhaps already exist)? Answer yes or no to each question below to find out:

- \_\_\_ 1. Do you talk to your child about the graded tests and projects he brings home?
- \_\_\_ 2. Do you ask your child why he thinks he received certain grades (good and bad ones) and what he has learned?
- \_\_\_ 3. Have you contacted your child's teacher to learn more about subjects he has problems with?
- \_\_\_ 4. Do you check your child's report card when it comes home, paying close attention to conduct and behavior grades?
- \_\_\_ 5. Do you review the results of state tests with your child's teacher?

**How well are you doing?** Each yes means you are keeping up with your child's progress in school. For each no answer, try that idea in the quiz.



### Attendance Matters

"It's just one day, Mom," your child says as he begs you to let him stay home from school. "Missing one day won't hurt, will it?" In fact, it will and here's why:

- Students today are expected to learn more than students in the past. Since each day's learning builds on what was done the day before, if your child misses a day he has missed an important building block.
- Going to school regularly teaches your child important habits. He learns about responsibility and dependability. He learns how to manage his time. These are things he'll need to know as an adult.

#### **So what can you do?**

- You can help your child get organized. Kids are often late to school because they're looking for a lost sneaker or misplaced homework. Take five minutes every night to get ready and organized for the next day.
- Know school rules. What is the school policy on absences? Be sure you call the school if your child is going to be absent for any reason. Make school the top priority. Letting your child stay home from school because he's not ready for a test sends the wrong message.
- Remember that excused and unexcused absences take a toll on learning. Keep track of how often your child is absent or tardy. In general, if a child is out of school 10% or more of the year, absences are considered particularly serious.
- Keep the school calendar handy when making plans. Schedule appointments and trips when school isn't in session. If your child needs to miss school, talk with the teacher.
- Tell school officials about problems that lead to absences. Many families face challenges with health, transportation, child care and other issues. Community programs may be able to help.