

Dear Parents,

This week in our Yr 4 Circles program, we are looking at the topic: "It's OK to be Angry, It is not OK to be Mean". We are discussing the "Flipping the Lid" hand model of the brain (see image below) and how when our anger escalates to the point that we are out of control (flipped our lid), our "thinking brain" goes offline and we can no longer make balanced decisions and can often do or say things we regret (we've all been there, right!?). We discussed times that we have each "Flipped our Lid" and what we can do to calm ourselves early when we have a "loose lid". We practiced some muscle relaxation and "Triangle Breathing" that students can use to calm themselves.

The students appear to be really embracing the program so far and are opening up a lot about their internal worlds. Being able to share hard times and big emotions with each other is so powerful as it highlights that we are all human, all imperfect, and that emotions are not something that we need to hide from or make go away. They are something that can be talked about and embraced. In fact, in doing so, big experiences naturally become more manageable. The students have also come up with surprising and effective strategies of being able to calm themselves in the heat of the moment, as is their responsibility.

If you have time, perhaps you could ask your child to show you the muscle relaxation and triangle breathing.

Thanks,

Melissa

Flip the Lid (Hand Model of the Brain)

Make a **Fist** with your thumb tucked inside your fingers. This is a model of your brain.



Thumb = Midbrain (Stem & Limbic) = Emotional Brain. This is where emotions and memories are processed. This is where the fight, flight & freeze is triggered.

Fingers = Cerebral Cortex = Rational Brain. Houses our ability to think and reason.

Fingernails = Prefrontal Cortex = Problem-Solving

When something triggers us, we are prone to "Flip our Lid" which means the Prefrontal Cortex (Fingernails) have a very poor connection with the Midbrain (Thumb), and we're not able to access the logical, problem-solving part of our brain. Our emotions are overriding our ability to think clearly.



-Dr. Dan Siegal