A Bite of Health

Say What?

> This month, students are learning the importance of using respectful language when discussing health through a monthly campaign called *Say What?* Here is a summary of the learnings.

Why use inclusive language?

Everyone's mental, physical, and nutritional health needs are different, and we need to be respectful with how we talk to them about their health. Using rude or hurtful words can impact how others feel about their health and themselves, but we can combat that by using positive language. Using positive language about health can create a safe environment for students to practice their health habits.

Why inclusive language matters.

1 in 3 Canadian youth are bullied. Bullying can lead to depression, anxiousness, irritability and other serious consequences.[1] But practising inclusive language when it comes to health helps mitigate the use of harmful phrases and comments which may harm children.

How you can practice this at home	Examples
Comment on someone's process (how they played), rather than the outcome (whether they won or lost).	"Your catching skills are really improving, that's great!"
Use positive language when you are talking about your own body. This sets a positive example for your children.	"Not very many people have red hair like I do. That's one thing that makes me feel special."
Describe foods by the texture, colour, flavour or nutrients rather than using labels like "healthy" and "unhealthy" or "good" and "bad."	"Wow, all the vegetables in this pasta make it so colourful, it's like a rainbow!" "Apples have lots of fibre which help digest our food."
Share strategies you use when you feel down. This will help your child develop healthy strategies themselves.	"I like to talk to my friends when I am sad. They always listen to me."

References: [1]*Bullying*. (2021, February 18). British Columbia. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase/bullying

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