

# Culture COUNTS

## Active listening bolsters resiliency

By Dan Hesler

Research suggests the number one resiliency factor for a youth experiencing trauma is the presence and support of an unconditionally caring adult. One effective method to ensure you are truly present and supporting a student is the use of Active Listening. During an upsetting time or crisis, students often turn to trusted adults for support, understanding and protection (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) for Schools Reference Guide, R27). Active Listening is a quick intervention that can be used throughout the school day. Active listening means “to listen for meaning” and can often be used to understand both a student’s point of view and feelings.

\*More information can be found in your TCI Workbook page W29-W32.

“Students don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

— John C. Maxwell, American author and leadership expert

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### The Power of CIRCLES



Turn this page over to learn about a “check-in” circle.

## TIPS FOR USING ACTIVE LISTENING

### Nonverbal Techniques

- Use of Silence
- Facial Expressions
- Eye Contact

### Encouraging & Eliciting Techniques

- Tone of Voice
- Minimal Encouragements
- Open Questions
- Why Questions

### Understanding Responses

- Reflective Responses:  
“You’re really upset that your field trip was canceled.”
- Summarization:  
“OK, let me see if I understand what you are saying.”

### Get Social



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# Start your day with “Check-in Circles” to build community

**By Randi Downs**

Over the last couple of months, we have seen Restorative Circles taking place in our classrooms! As our 9-12 grade teachers get trained throughout this year, I’m sure we will be seeing more; however, you don’t need to wait for training to get started! Start class with a “Check-in Circle.” Be sure that all of your students are present in the circle, and that there are no obstacles or barriers between you. Use a talking piece so that all voices can be heard. Try some of these Check-in Circle sentence starters:

- My favorite part of last week was....
- I will help others by ...
- I enjoy spending time ...
- The thing I am most excited about right now is ...
- I want to improve on ...

Commit to starting class with a circle over the next few months, and see what happens to the community when you take time to build relationships!



Restorative Practice Tip for Administrators:

Start the day with a quick standing “Check-in Circle” with your staff. Perhaps they share a celebration or a concern, or even a funny story. This only needs to take 5-10 minutes, but is such an important part of building a caring and safe community!

*Ask your administrator about Restorative Practices training opportunities coming soon!*

# Rachel’s Challenge: Kindness chain fills the hall at Crown Road



**By Renae Montroy**

Throughout October, each program at the Crown Road Campus (CRC) created their own Rachel’s Challenge program chain. Students and staff were asked to create three chain links related to Rachel’s Challenge that designated their hope for themselves this year, their hope for our school, and one way they will show kindness. On October 26, all programs at CRC came together in the main hallway and connected the chains. Three Innovation Tech students joined the celebration and directed students and staff to raise the chain in the air and yell: “CHOOSE KIND!” The event promoted a true sense of belonging, collaboration and kindness throughout our building!

