

Seventeen years and many pounds ago, I used to pull fresh herbs and vegetables from Casa de Luz's garden for the cook to use in the meal that was planned for the day. Each day, Joe Bruno would stop and chat briefly with me on his way back to the children's world that he and Claire were quietly building right in our midst. One day, Joe smiled mischievously and said to me, "Pierce, I've got an intuition about you. How are you with kids?". My answer was short and to the point, "Kids are great, and I do great with them!". "Come with me then", said Joe, "There's something I want to show you. Something... wonderful!"

QuickTime[®] and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

After that day, I ended up managing Parkside's After School program, teaching P.E., and finally ended up being a fixture in the Upper El. True, I taught Parkside kids, but more importantly, the kids taught me. Through their authenticity and inspiration, I returned to school and received my masters in marriage and family counseling in 2003. Then I moved to Colorado where I became a certified mediator, program manager for at-risk youth and adults, and an organizational development trainer for The Conflict Center of Denver, Colorado. Upon acquiring my license in 2008, I moved back to Austin to call it home. These days, I have a private practice offering personal growth development, relationship guidance, and family support. I also serve part-time at a clinic facilitating several domestic violence reduction groups for the community. I feel privileged now to return to Parkside and share some of the knowledge that I have learned along the way. On that note, Reality In Perspective Productions presents Upper Elementary's...

Emotional & Social Intelligence Skills Building Workshop

Day 1: Rapport & Empathy building (the relationship comes first)

- A. What does Safe Space mean?**
- B. Reintroducing each other (dyads)**
- C. Have you ever...? (We have more in common than I thought!)**
- D. Penny toss (Are my words and actions really that powerful?)**
- E. Hands & Noses (Staying connected)**

Day 2: Emotional Recognition and Self-Management

- A. How the Brain feels our Emotions: (Avoiding the Emotional Volcano)**
- B. Recognizing our out-of-control signals**
- C. Recognizing thought distortions (generalizations)**
- D. Recognizing our early warning signs**
- E. Applying Techniques that calm our Emotions**
- F. The Stop, Challenge, and Choose model**

Day 3: Effective Communication is good medicine

- A. What does a human being need?**
- B. Ways we go about getting our needs met (Communication Styles)**
- C. Assertive Communication: (the artful I-message and its effect on others)**
- D. Active Listening (and you thought you weren't doing anything!)**
- E. Communication practice**

Day 4: Problem Solving is a skill

- A. What is a high-risk emotional situation? (eg. PE time, recess time, sharing materials, sharing friends, setting personal boundaries, etc)**
- B. The 7 things everyone does when solving a problem (seeing the road signs of conflict)**
- C. Connect the Dots (thinking outside the box)**
- D. Let's Plan Ahead (trouble shooting with the group)**