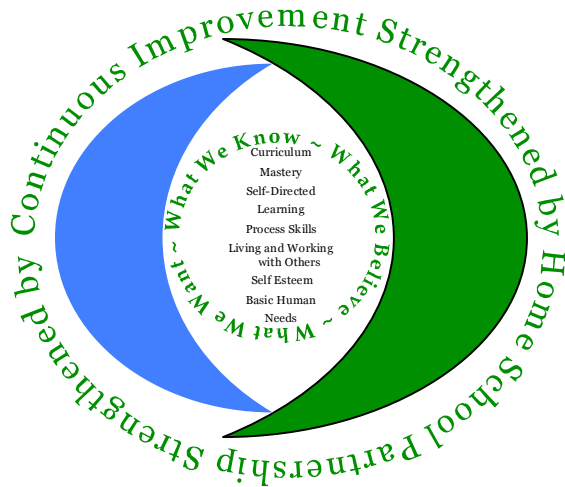


# NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# PARENT TOOLKIT

*A strong home-school partnership ensures that every child can succeed.*

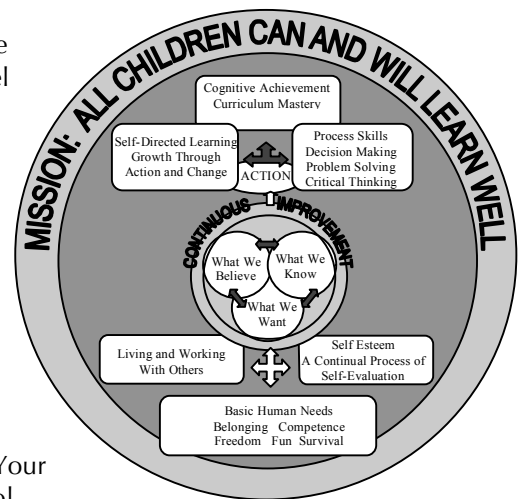
All  
Children  
Can and  
Will  
Learn  
Well



## Kindergarten and Grade 1

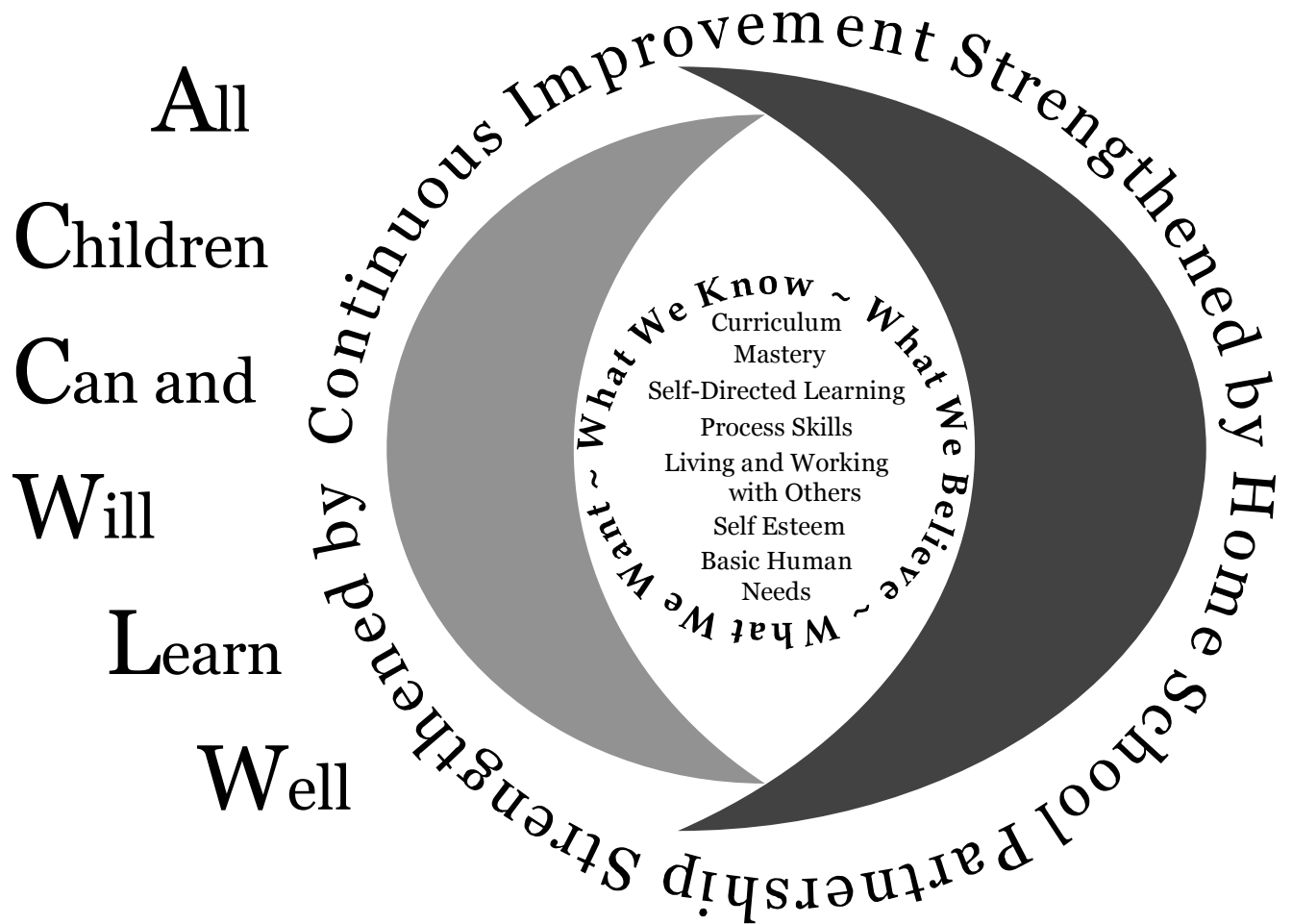
In 1995, the school district collaborated with parents and the community to develop the Newtown Success-Oriented School Model (shown to the right) to represent the core beliefs that are the foundation for nurturing successful learners. These core beliefs, which are based on Glasser's Model and the quality school movement, guide our decision-making in the school district as we work together to create a quality education for our students.

Parental involvement is key to our success in accomplishing this goal. Research has shown that when parents are involved in their child's education, there is greater likelihood of higher achievement. With this in mind, the model has been redesigned to be more "parent friendly" and emphasize our desire to collaborate with parents through a strong home-school partnership. Your involvement and support can make a difference in your child's school performance. This booklet was created to give you a greater understanding of the district's mission *All Children Can and Will Learn Well*. In it, you will find ideas and suggestions about things you can do at home to support your child's school experience.



Quality education is possible if we all work together towards the common goal of continuous improvement in the teaching and learning process. A strong home-school partnership insures that every child can succeed. Parents, teachers and administrators all share the same goal - wanting the best for our children.

## NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



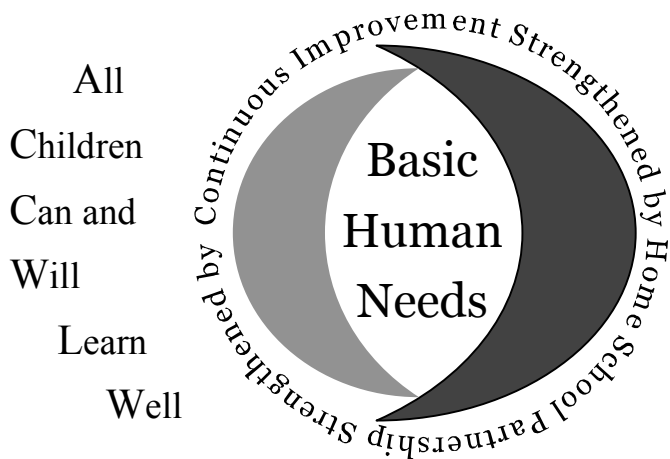
Our success depends on recognizing and understanding what we know, what we believe, and what we want. By meeting our children's basic needs in school and at home, while continuously working to improve the learning environment and curriculum, we will foster the development of students who are responsible, self-directed, and active participants in the educational process.

Together, we will make a difference for our children.

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## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

*Children want a close relationship with others, to feel important and able to do what needs to be done, have freedom to make choices, have basic needs satisfied and have fun each and every day.*

Parents and teachers can work together to provide an environment that meets a child's basic needs. There are so many things we can do at home and at school to give our children a solid foundation. Here are some ways to do that...

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### Children need to feel loved and have a sense of belonging.

*At home,*

- Talk at dinner with no outside distractions (TV off!).
- Share some one-on-one time as often as possible.
- Give lots of hugs and kisses and compliments, even for the little things (nice try, I'm so proud of you).
- Have family meetings to let them know their opinion counts even if they are little!

*At school,*

- Hold class meetings where students get a chance to share. Share things that went well and things to work on.
- Create school activities that encourage belonging to the school as a whole (name the school mascot, celebrate 100 days of school)
- Show off student work around the classroom
- Have discussions about things that may be troubling and work together to find a solution.

### Children need to feel competent...I can do this!

*At home,*

- Assign jobs (set the table, make your bed, pick up your clothes).
- Have your child pack his/her backpack for the next day the night before. If buying lunch, make his/her choice the night before.
- Display their artwork.
- Take time to talk about the day's events whenever it fits your schedule (could be before bed or in the morning).

## Basic Human Needs

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### Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

#### **Children need to feel competent...I can do this!**

*At school*

- Provide experiences at a variety of levels in each class so students feel successful.
- Comment on what the children are doing.
- Provide remedial teaching for students who are not progressing.

#### **Children need the freedom to make choices that are developmentally appropriate...I am responsible for myself!**

*At home,*

- Give choices within limits – two choices the parent can live with, for example clothing (the red dress or the blue dress), food choices or games.
- Provide freedom within structure. Freedom does not mean “no rules” – rules keep your child safe. Be clear about rules and a little flexible. Be proactive and teach boundaries.
- Provide clear expectations and consequences (not following through on the consequences sends the wrong message to your child).

*At school,*

- Offer choices from a set of options and guide students to use reasons for their selection (why did you choose this?).
- Describe their behavior problem as a “choice” and talk about what “choice” they might make next time.

#### **Children need to have fun! This can include the fun of making new discoveries or of learning something new and interesting.**

*At home,*

- Play games such as *Chutes 'n Ladders* or *Candyland*. Emphasize “having fun together” rather than winning.
- Take a trip to a museum or other educational places.
- Read together as a family.
- Play car games such as *I Spy* or “*I am thinking...*”.

*At school,*

- Play math games, cooperative games and spelling games such as “Sparkle”.
- Invite Fathers to come for breakfast.
- Teachers can play with students at recess occasionally.
- Take field trips.
- Add novelty by arranging for guest speakers and/or special visitors.

## Basic Human Needs

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### Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

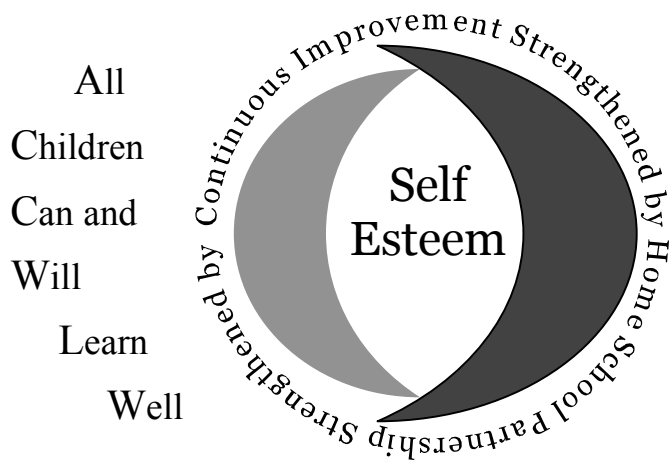
#### **Children need warmth, sleep, and good nutrition.**

*At home,*

- Teach good health habits, provide time for exercise and outside playtime, have a good breakfast before school and send healthy snacks (fruits and veggies) with their lunch.
- Establish a routine bedtime (7:30-8:30PM) and structure bedtime (brush your teeth, read a story, in bed, lights out, sleep).
- Discuss and role-play home emergency procedures such as where to meet if there is a fire and how to call 911.
- Talk about safety and strangers and give examples such as what they should do if lost in a store. Practice safety procedures.

*At school,*

- Make snacks available for children who don't have food and, handle free/reduced lunch discreetly.
- Have water available and encourage drinking it regularly.
- Provide safety procedures when blood is present, practice drills for fire, wind, and bus evacuations, talk about playground safety. The school nurse can provide information to staff about allergies and other medical issues.



## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

*Children with high self-esteem are competent, honest, responsible, compassionate and loving.*

A student who has high self-esteem is enthusiastic and shows a desire to acquire knowledge. They stay focused to complete a task and are accountable and responsible for their actions. A confident child demonstrates optimism when faced with challenges and works towards self-improvement. They have faith in themselves and their ability to meet challenges head-on. They value themselves.

---

Here are some examples of ways that parents and teachers can foster positive self-esteem and help children to become eager and successful learners.

*At home,*

- *Develop some family rituals.* It can be anything from having *Game Night* on Friday nights, to saying every day to your child as they leave for school, *"Have a great day, I love you. You can be anything you want..."*
- *Help your child feel competent* by giving small chores such as setting the table, making the bed, washing the counter in the bathroom, or putting toys away when finished playing with them.
- *Set aside fun days to learn.* Take a trip to a museum or attend a cultural arts event together (such as outdoor summer concerts at C.H. Booth Library).
- *Teach your child to follow through* with activities by encouraging as they work at a task. Proximity (being close) is key with kindergarteners. Work at a task of your own nearby so that you can look up to make warm comments about things they are doing right, followed by a simple suggestion about what they might do next. Then turn your attention back to your own task (load the dishwasher, pay the bills, read). If you sit right with them and help all along the way, the task becomes yours and makes them feel dependent.
- *Use sticker charts* at the kindergarten level, for things like tooth brushing, picking up clothes. Use the chart to help evaluate how well they are doing. Provide age appropriate rewards randomly, so they don't expect rewards every time they do something.
- *Remind them about previously learned accomplishments* (like riding a bike) to help them stick with something new until they master it.



# Self-Esteem

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## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

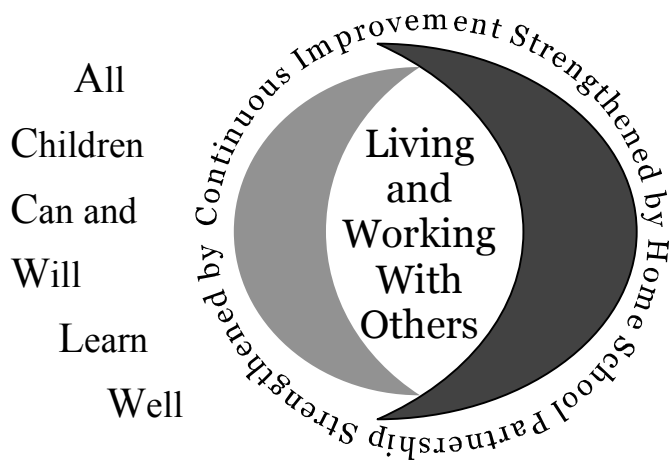
Some more ways to foster positive self-esteem in children...

*At home,*

- *Don't let them quit* or end something because they say, "I'm so terrible at this." Teach them to link achievement with effort and practice.
- *Together, review the teacher comments* from their progress reports.
- When they are faced with a challenge, *help them see the small steps* and get started.
- *Accept less than perfect* for things like bed making – don't go back and fix it to make it perfect yourself.
- *Make sure they have the tools they need* to do the job, such as pencils they can grip comfortably, erasers.
- At the end of the day, *ask how the day went* and what was best about the day. You will need to be more specific with your questions for the younger child.

*At school,*

- *Hold class meetings* to form goals and plan for the day such as those described in the *Responsive Classroom*.
- *Teach children how to give compliments*, receive compliments, and talk about how they can make something better (through using peer models).
- *Model for students* how to revisit their work and make it better. Actually "think aloud" to make changes to your own piece of writing or one written by the group.
- *Teach students just a little bit above their performance*. Offer "just a boost" lessons that are open to those who believe they need it.
- *Follow the motto "Think you can, work hard, get smart."* Find the part you can do and work out from there.
- *Provide challenges* and then help them along the way.
- *Develop fun ways* to express satisfaction such as three cheers (celebrations).
- Have getting ready routines such as FLASH time – folder, lunch, attendance, share, and home for dear-time book.



## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

*Children learn about themselves and others in everything they do. Parents and teachers can help them understand the value and importance of living and working with others.*

“During share time, I noticed that you were talking when it was Jason’s turn. How do you think Jason felt that you weren’t listening?” It’s often hard for a kindergartener to sit quietly and give their full attention to a friend. They’re just itching to tell their own story and they’d like to do it *now*. But learning to listen attentively and show respect for others is an important skill to master. With some gentle prodding and discussion, children begin to learn at an early age how to be a valuable member of society.

---

Home and school are the natural environments for our children to learn about themselves and each other. What are our goals? Parents and teachers can work together to help children consistently:

Learn to work and play cooperatively.

Show respect and concern for others.

Understand the impact of his/her behavior on others.

Understand and respect individual differences.

*At home,*

- Help your child learn to cooperate and take turns. Children five to seven learn this by playing board games with adults and older children. Through games they learn about taking turns, following the rules, and having fun with others. Be sure to celebrate the fun you had playing the game together and de-emphasize winners and losers. You can even talk about how much better the child is getting at cooperating and playing the game. Consider having a Friday night family game night every week.
- Encourage your child to respect other people and show concern appropriately. They can make cards to send to sick friends or relatives, make cookies for the old lady who lives up the street, or donate toys to a foundation. Praise them for their kind deeds and they will multiply.

# Living and Working With Others

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## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

*At home,*

- Help your child learn to listen and identify the needs of others. This begins by listening effectively yourself. The book, *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Your Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, can help you learn how to structure your conversations with your child. You can help your child by asking gentle questions, such as, "How do you think \_\_\_ feels about that?" Guide your child to recognize that there may be competing needs and help him/her to find compromises. If your child is in a disagreement with another child, sit both down and have each child describe what happened from his/her point of view. Ask the children to tell you what the other child said. Then help them come up with a resolution to their conflict.
- Have clear rules about appropriate behavior in your family. Children need to understand what's appropriate and what's not appropriate. Rules such as, "We respect each other in our family," can apply to hitting or teasing or making loud noises when you are on the telephone. It's important that you follow through with inappropriate behavior with consequences such as "time out." A reasonable time out is one minute of time for each year of age. Once the time out is over, discuss the inappropriate behavior in a calm voice with the child and reinforce their acceptance of the family rule.
- Help them recognize individual differences and learn to be considerate of the wishes and the rights of others. Getting along with others involves a lot of "give and take." Compliment them when they show consideration for another person's need or desire. Help them learn how to greet people appropriately and practice how to behave in public settings so they do not disturb other people.
- Integrate these lessons into everyday life. Take your children to a different neighborhood or town...how is it different from where you live? How is it the same? Go to an ethnic festival and taste new ethnic foods. Use books or videos to expose them to different types of people, cultures, and religions.

*At school,*

- During morning meeting have "share time". Review expectations for those listening and discuss how to ask a thoughtful question. Encourage students to listen attentively to each other during unstructured activities, as well.
- Be receptive to the needs of others. The classroom functions as a society. What are our responsibilities to each other?
- Communicate the rules of appropriate behavior and define the consequences, for example, "Take a Break". Talk about "restitution" and the school's Restitution Policy. Brainstorm goals in the beginning of the year and come up with rules that will help accomplish those goals. List these goals in positive terms.

# Living and Working With Others

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## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

*At school,*

- Follow the *Responsive Classroom* philosophy:
  - Hold class meetings. At “morning meeting”, students feel part of a caring community of learners. Teachers will discuss and model expectations. Children have the opportunity to share concerns and discuss resolution. This can be done with the group and in pairs, independent of an adult.
  - Using a chart, brainstorm how students can express a need: why do we have these needs and how should we act? Model through role-playing...how would you react?
  - Use books, film, and have students draw and write about ways to do this.
  - Create a trusting environment – take some risks. Explain that it’s okay to make mistakes because you can fix (rectify) the mistakes.
  - For more insight, read *Teaching Children to Care, Management in the Responsive Classroom* by Ruth Charney.
- Integrate these lessons into classroom activities. Invite visitors from different ethnic backgrounds to come in and talk to the class. Study customs from around the world – students can bring in different foods or share something from their culture/ethnic background.

# Living and Working With Others

## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade



### Bullying

Board of Education Policy 8-605 prohibits bullying in schools. Bullying among children is aggressive behavior that is intentional and is repeated over time. Bullying in kindergarten and first grade usually involves hitting or name calling or not allowing a child to play with the group. Bullying may cause children to feel lonely, anxious, or sick. Sometimes children do not tell the school or their parents they are being bullied.

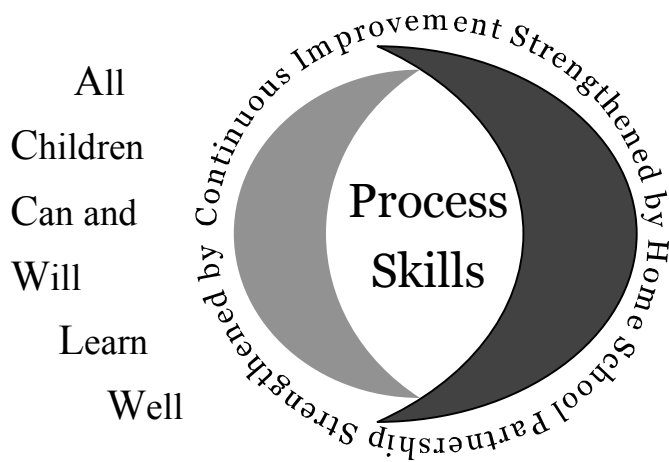
#### **If your child tells you he/she is being bullied.**

- Be supportive and gather information about the bullying. Never tell your child to ignore the bullying. Find out who was involved, what happened, and where it occurred. Do not encourage physical retaliation as a solution.
- Contact your child's teacher and/or principal. Keep your emotions in check. A parent's protective instincts stir strong emotions. Give the school person the basic information you have gathered. Expect the person from school to get back to you. If the bullying doesn't stop, contact school authorities again
- Help your child become more resilient to bullying. Teach him/her how to seek help from an adult when he/she feels threatened. Help your child to develop a sense of self-worth by developing talents or positive attributes. Encourage your child to make contact with friendly students in his class. Ask yourself, "Is my child being bullied because of a lack of social skills. If your child easily irritates, people, help him/her learn the social rules of his/her peer group.

#### **What if your child is the bully?**

Children who bully their peers tend to be impulsive, be easily frustrated, lack empathy, have difficulty following rules, and view violence in a positive way.

- Make it clear to your child that you take bullying seriously and that you will not tolerate this behavior. Develop clear and consistent rules – then praise and reinforce your child for following rules. Do not use physical punishment for discipline. Instead, remove privileges or add jobs around the house.
- Prove as much parental or adult supervision as possible. Put an immediate stop to any bullying you observe. Then have the child act in a more appropriate way.
- Emphasize praise and positive feedback. Reward the child for caring and appropriate behaviors.



## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

*When children grow as critical thinkers, problem solvers, and decision makers, they master the curriculum and become accomplished learners.*

Parents and teachers can work collaboratively to teach children how to think critically, solve problems and make decisions. What's the result? Children who can imagine, invent, elaborate, predict, reason, reflect, take risks and justify solutions.

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Here are some examples of how parents and teachers can provide ways for children to develop process skills.

### **Problem Solving**

When faced with a situation where no clear answer is evident, students recognize there is a problem, generate solutions and select one to try.

*At home,*

- *Encourage exploration.* Experiencing new things gives them knowledge they can use at a later time when a problem arises.
- Ask them how to "right a wrong". If they've hurt someone's feelings, how can they make amends?
- Don't solve the problem for them. Ask questions that allow them to think for themselves, such as "How do you think we could...?", "What do you think will happen if we...?".
- Ask questions about a book they are reading. "What would you do if you were the character in the story?"
- Play games or work on a puzzle together.
- Model how to solve a problem. Talk through your thought process when you are trying to find a solution to a small dilemma. Let them hear how you decided on the best choice.

*At school,*

- Facilitate between two students who have a disagreement to help them listen to each other's point of view and find a solution..
- Use *Apology of Action* – ask students to agree on a solution and then shake on it.
- Create an environment that motivates students to seek new knowledge. Encourage them to take risks.
- Encourage trial and error as a way to find a solution in math and science.

## Process Skills

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### Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

#### Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the analysis of various points of view, the evaluation of data, and synthesizing this with prior knowledge to move towards a conclusion.

*At home,*

- Talk about different points of view. Allow each family member to give his/her point of view or opinion about something that has happened or something that the family is trying to decide
- Gather data to make decisions. If the child says “everybody is doing it” conduct a survey of his/her friends to see what the data says.
- When you read stories, talk about the events from the point of view of different characters.
- Play at guessing how different family members or favorite characters would react to a situation

*At school,*

- Read stories and ask children to talk about each character’s point of view about what is happening
- Gather data and make real graphs (line up the shoes by color or type), bar graphs, and tally information.
- Teach children to listen to each other and tell what another person has said
- In reading, help children learn to support their opinion with evidence from the text.

#### Decision Making

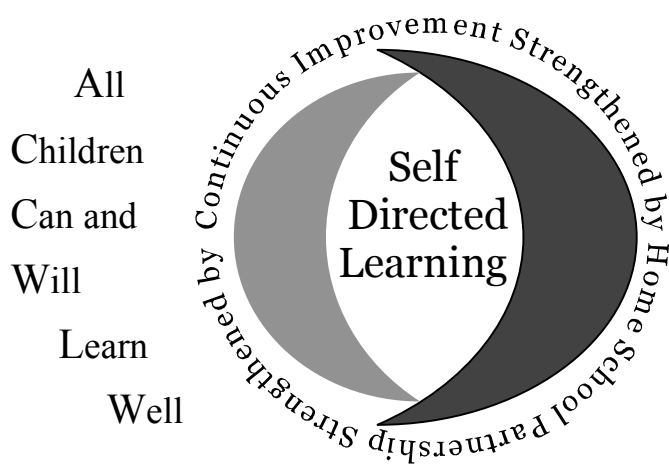
Decision-making is the process of considering alternatives in order to draw conclusions and make thoughtful choices.

*At home,*

- Offer choices, usually two options– it could be what to wear, to eat, a book to read, or a game to play. Then help your child weigh the positives and negatives of each choice before deciding.
- Talk about decisions that you are making and what you are thinking.
- Make predictions of what would likely happen next in various situations.

*At school,*

- As a class, brainstorm choices or solutions to a problem, then discuss the pros and cons of each
- Examine the decision-making of characters in stories
- Guide children to make predictions of what they think will happen next, then read on to validate/invalidate their prediction



## Kindergarten through 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

*Children become self-directed learners by actively participating in the learning process and taking responsibility for their learning.*

In order for students to learn, they must be actively engaged in the learning process. When this occurs, children become imaginative, open-minded, confident, curious and independent.

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The way you help your child in the early school years can affect his/her sense of competence and motivation in the later grades. It is instinctive for parents to notice that a child is doing something wrong, tell him, show him how to do it right, and then stand or sit there to make sure he does it right. Actually, these are the steps for developing learned helplessness. In order for your child to learn he/she must do the work – not you. It's normal and o.k. for new learning to be imperfect.

### **Some ways to help a child grow into a self-directed learner:**

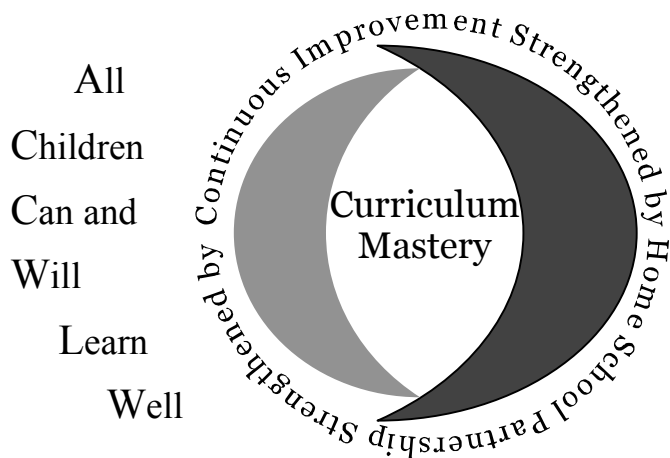
*At home,*

- Provide a comfortable setting and the materials they need to complete their daily assignments. Give them a work area free of distractions that is well lit and equipped with pencils and erasers.
- Help your child understand directions by reading the directions aloud and asking them to explain to you what needs to be done.
- Encourage your child's efforts to explore his world. Listen carefully to his/her discoveries and natural curiosities. Ask questions to help them make connections between what they just discovered to what they already know.

*At school,*

- Provide some opportunities for academic choice. Students might choose the animal to report on or have a choice of two centers to use.
- Provide students with opportunities to examine their efforts and accomplishments. Have them reflect on their work to say what they did particularly well and what they would do different next time.
- Introduce ways to find and use resources. Have them use the library to research a specific animal, look on the Internet for the daily weather report.
- Set goals and plans. During morning meeting, talk about one task that needs to be accomplished in class today and develop a plan to accomplish that task.





## Curriculum Overview

*Curriculum mastery, also referred to as cognitive achievement, results from quality instruction, an opportunity to learn, prior knowledge, and a willingness to persevere.*

Curriculum mastery is a continuous process that begins in kindergarten and continues throughout your child’s formal education. The essential knowledge and skills that your child acquires becomes the basis for new learning. Enduring knowledge is our shared goal. Standards and objectives are used in every subject at every grade level and aid in measuring progress. Mastery of the curriculum depends not only upon a student’s ability, but also by the effort and persistence of our children, their parents and teachers.

## Kindergarten Curriculum Overview

This table gives some general information about what is taught in the kindergarten program. The specific objectives are listed in the curriculum documents posted on the district website [www.newtown.k12.ct.us](http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us). Our district is committed to helping every child learn well through differentiating the curriculum whenever possible.

<b>Art</b>	The kindergarten art program is taught by the kindergarten teacher and integrated into all of the curriculum areas as students work to develop their fine motor skills through cutting, coloring, and drawing and their sense of rhythm and pattern through math.	
<b>Health</b>	Safety	Children learn safe school practices and develop strategies for when they are lost or approached by strangers.
	Social/Emotional	Children develop communication skills to get along with others.
	Substance Use/Abuse	Children learn to seek adult guidance before trying an unknown substance and to recognize the difference between helpful and harmful substances.
	Healthy Body	Children identify foods that are good for them and sort them into food pyramid categories.
	Disease Prevention	Children learn to wash hands with soap and water and not to touch bodily fluids of another person.

## Kindergarten Curriculum Overview

<b>Health</b>	Growth and Development	Children recognize that they grow and change.
<b>Information Literacy</b>	Gather Information for a Specific Purpose	Children ask questions and listen to information about a topic and become aware of the different kinds of resources for finding information.
	Analyze and Evaluate Information	Children identify the title and author of a book and learn to share information with others.
	Evaluate both the Process and the Product	Children look to see if all requirements are included and think of ways to improve future products.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Algebraic Reasoning: Patterns and Functions	Children learn to describe the attributes of objects, recognize, copy, and extend patterns, and organize information through systematic counting, listing and reasoning.
	Numerical and Proportional Reasoning	Children learn to match, order, label and compare sets, act out story problems, count to 30, count by 10s to 100, count backward from 10, recognize and name pennies, nickels, and dimes, identify the whole and half of objects.
	Geometry and Measurement	Children learn the language so that they can sort, order, and compare objects by length, area, and volume, recognize and name shapes in a variety of positions, sequence events, compare objects to see which is heavier, and tell time to the hour on an analog and digital clock.
	Working with Data	Children construct graphs using objects or pictures, and extend visual, auditory, and physical patterns.
<b>Music</b>	Children become aware of their singing voices, discriminate pitch and sing rhythmically together a varied repertoire of songs representing genres and styles from diverse cultures and songs using varying dynamics and tempi.	
<b>Physical Education</b>	Children develop physical fitness and motor skills, learn to play responsibly and respectfully with other people and develop awareness of the positive aspects of physical activity.	

## Kindergarten Curriculum Overview

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<b>Reading</b>	Read for Information and Understanding	Children learn to extract relevant information from text, retell stories including story elements, identify cause and effect, note similarities and differences in text, and discuss the theme or message of a story.
	Read for Critical Analysis and Evaluation	Children learn to sort statements by fact and opinion, listen to each other's opinions, give the feelings of characters, give their opinions about a story.
	Read for Aesthetic and Personal Response	Children express personal feeling about stories and illustrations and make personal connections to the text.
	Read Strategically	Children learn to apply strategies to construct meaning, develop phonological awareness, learn and use sound/symbol correspondence, learn some high frequency words, learn to use meaning and structure as a cue, and develop reading preferences.
<b>Science</b>	Children learn about the properties of matter, the similarities and differences in living and nonliving things, to recognize and record daily and seasonal weather, and explore materials used to build shelters.	
<b>Social Studies</b>	Children learn about themselves and explore their relationships to each other and to the world around them.	
<b>Technology</b>	Children learn to use and respect computer equipment, use the computer to support their learning, and make simple documents using technology (and software such as Kid Pix).	
<b>Writing</b>	Technical Practical Writing	Children learn to gather information and sort it into categories as well as using words, pictures, or numbers as evidence to support ideas.
	Range and Versatility of Writing	Children begin to write to communicate ideas and imitate the style of writing of a simple book.
	Reflective Writing	Children look at their work throughout the year and notice how they are changing.
	Writing Strategically	Children write daily to communicate ideas.
	Mechanics/Conventions of Print	Children learn to leave spaces between words, write from top to bottom and left to right, begin sentences with capital letters, and use some end punctuation.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Curriculum Overview

This table gives some general information about what is taught in the first grade program. The specific objectives are listed in the curriculum documents posted on the district website at [www.newtown.k12.ct.us](http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us). The district is committed to helping every child learn well through differentiating the curriculum whenever possible.

<b>Art</b>	Students in first and second grade attend art classes once each week. In these classes they explore line, shape, color, balance and pattern. They try out a variety of media and techniques. Students begin to explore what makes a piece of art effective, think about their responses to various works, and learn about a few artists.	
<b>Health</b>	Safety	Children learn to recognize inappropriate touching and what to do (say no, go, tell), become aware of the dangers of sharing foods, and report name, address, and phone number.
	Social/Emotional	Children learn to recognize and respect individual strengths and differences, interact appropriately with other children, practice appropriate coping skills for good and bad feelings.
	Substance Use/Abuse	Children learn to identify harmful substances and to take medicine only when given by a responsible adult.
	Healthy Body	Children relate to food as fuel and learn about the importance of a variety of foods as well as the need for exercise, water, and sleep.
	Disease Prevention	Children develop personal hygiene, tell an adult when they see a problem, and practice dental health.
	Growth and Development	Children recognize that all animal life begins as eggs – some are outside the body (like a bird) and some are inside the body (such as a cat).
<b>Information Literacy</b>	Gather Information for a Specific Purpose	Children ask questions about a topic, look for information in teacher-selected materials, and state information learned in their own words.
	Analyze and Evaluate Information	Children sort information into assigned categories and share information with others. Children identify the title, author, and illustrator of a book.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Curriculum Overview

<b>Information Literacy</b>	Evaluate both the Process and the Product	Children look to see if all requirements are included and think of ways to improve future products with teacher guidance.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Algebraic Reasoning: Patterns and Functions	Children learn to recognize, copy, and extend patterns, including counting patterns on the 100s chart. They begin to learn about equivalence using real life situations that involve addition and subtraction.
	Numerical and Proportional Reasoning	Children explore patterns with shapes, numbers, skip counting, doubles, and repeated addends. They represent two-digit number using place value models, develop a variety of counting and estimation strategies to build number sense, and begin to learn the basic facts in addition. They explore the fractions $\frac{1}{2}$ , $\frac{1}{3}$ , and $\frac{1}{4}$ .
	Geometry and Measurement	Children draw, sort, and build two and three-dimensional objects, explore symmetry, use positional language to describe the direction and position of objects. They use the calendar to identify days, dates, weeks, months, and to plan and sequence events. They tell time to the hour and explore time to the $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. They use common objects or body parts(fingers, feet) to make reasonable answers to measurement problems.
	Working with Data	Children pose questions, collect, organize and record data using tallies, tables, real graphs, picture graphs, and bar graphs. They begin to learn vocabulary to describe the likelihood of various events.
<b>Music</b>	Children become aware of their singing voices, discriminate pitch and sing rhythmically together a varied repertoire of songs representing genres and styles from diverse cultures and songs using varying dynamics and tempi.	
<b>Physical Education</b>	Children develop physical fitness and motor skills, learn to play responsibly and respectfully with other people and develop awareness of the positive aspects of physical activity.	

## 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Curriculum Overview

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<b>Reading</b>	Read for Information and Understanding	Children learn to extract relevant information from text, retell stories including story elements (character, setting, events, theme) and the language of the story, use background knowledge to identify cause and effect, note similarities and differences in text, and discuss the theme or message of a story.
	Read for Critical Analysis and Evaluation	Children learn to sort statements by fact and opinion, begin to talk about author's bias, begin to compare and contrast different points of view, and give their opinions about a book or character supported with a reason why they said it.
	Read for Aesthetic and Personal Response	Children express personal feeling about stories and illustrations and make personal connections to the text. They also begin to recognize unique cultural aspects represented in texts.
	Read Strategically	Children learn to apply strategies to construct meaning, develop phonological awareness, learn and use sound/symbol correspondence, learn many high frequency words, learn to use meaning and structure as a cue, expand their vocabulary, and choose a variety of materials to read for pleasure and purpose. They reflect on how they have changed as a reader.
<b>Science</b>	Children study forces and motion – pushing and pulling, the movement of the sun across the sky, the structure and function of plants, how animals obtain water, food, and move around, and about changes in organisms and life cycles.	
<b>Social Studies</b>	Children study their family and compare it to families in other cultures.	
<b>Technology</b>	Children learn to use and respect computer equipment, use the computer to support their learning, and make simple documents using technology (and software such as Kid Pix)	

## 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Curriculum Overview

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<b>Writing</b>	Technical Practical Writing	Children learn to gather information and sort it into categories as well as using words, pictures, or numbers as evidence to support ideas
	Range and Versatility of Writing	Children begin to write for a variety of audiences, using authors as models for writing. They learn to elaborate ideas with specific and descriptive language.
	Reflective Writing	Children look at their work at designated intervals throughout the year, note their progress, and set personal goals for improvement
	Writing Strategically	Children write daily to communicate ideas, learn how to generate ideas, and polish some pieces for publication
	Mechanics/Conventions of Print	Children learn to leave spaces between words and to proofread and correct introduced spelling words, capital letters at the beginning of sentences, and end punctuation.

District Quality Council is a committee made up of parents, teachers, administrators, and a Board of Education member who provide leadership for implementation of the Success-Oriented School Model. This document is a product of many hours of work by the following committee members:

Teri Alves, Teacher  
Kathy Boettner, Asst. Principal  
Lisa Chaloux, Parent  
Karen Craig, Parent  
Kristen Delgado, Teacher  
Stephanie Demore, Teacher  
Al Finelli, Teacher  
Michelle Hankin, Parent  
Alice Jackson, Asst. Superintendent  
Mark Mahoney, Teacher  
Paul Mangiafico, Board of Education member  
Helen Miller, Teacher  
Jeanetta Miller, Teacher  
Fran Peters, Parent  
Peg Ragaini, Career Center  
Michael Regan, Director Pupil Personnel  
Carla Tischio, Teacher

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Summer 2006



**NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**CORE BELIEFS**

**TRUST**

confidence in the actions of others

**RESPECT**

preservation of dignity and acceptance of individual differences

**FLEXIBILITY**

exploration of alternatives, adaptation to new situations  
acceptance of change

**RESPONSIBILITY**

accountability for individual and collective action  
self direction

**INCLUSION**

the opportunity to learn is an entitlement that will not be  
determined by individual differences  
high expectations and high standards for all

**INTERDEPENDENCE**

community, parents, teachers and students working together for success  
students, parents and teachers learning from each other

**COMMUNICATION**

open exchange of thought  
clear definition of goals and expectations

**SUCCESS**

continuous improvement and quality achievement

**RISK TAKING**

daring to take action  
the right to make mistakes