**Lesson One**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to introduce you to The SPARK Mentoring, Young Child Program – an evidenced-based social-emotional learning program your child is participating in for the next 10 weeks. Your school chose our curriculum because of the faith they have in its capacity to impact your child positively and because of our vision, mission, and values.

**Vision**

Everyone everywhere realizes their personal potential and achieves amazing things!

**Mission**

To cultivate human potential and resiliency locally and globally through education, mentoring, and coaching centered on an understanding of the mind that SPARKs innate mental health.

**Values**

We believe that no one is broken.

We believe that we are all in it together.

We believe in honoring diversity and inclusion.

We believe in seeing the potential in everyone.

We believe in respect and compassion.

We believe that possibilities are infinite.

We believe in transparency and communication.

We believe that Love Wins!

Today in the first lesson, your child was introduced to us and the program, including the characters we will use throughout the 10 weeks. The main character is Curious the Dragonfly, and he has several bug friends, including a Ladybug, Ant, Bee, and Damselfly. We hope this cast of characters will be a fun way for your kids to learn. After getting to know each other, the kids completed a pre-program survey, a tool we use to ensure we are achieving what we intend. We then discussed the concepts of dreams and goals, the children set a goal for the year, and we talked about steps to achieve that goal. For example, some of the goals included being a police officer, and the steps to achieve that goal are to follow the class rules. Ask your kids what goals and dreams they shared today!

Thanks so much for reading! We know communication can be too much sometimes, so we’ll try to find that balance between our desire to keep you informed and your very limited time.

We invite you to find out more about us here: [https://SPARKcurriculum.org/](https://sparkcurriculum.org/)

Feel free to reach out to us for any reason at: info@theSPARKinitiative.com.

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 2**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today was all about being able to identify different feelings like sadness, anger, frustration, joy, boredom, and confusion. They learned that feelings intensify and weaken and eventually “pop” like the bubbles we had in class today. We also learned that all feelings are normal and ok to have, and sometimes we even have 10 feelings in our head all at once! We sang a song about this called “10 Feeling in My Head”.

Ask your kids to sing it for you tonight!

Lyrics:

*10 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*9 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*8 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*7 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*6 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*5 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*4 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*3 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*2 feelings in my head, and the little one said, I’m crowded, roll over.*

*So, they all rolled over, and 1 fell out.*

*1 feeling in my head, and the little one said, I’m lonely!*

We hope that this lesson will help your kids through the big, hard feelings. The next time they are feeling them, you can remind them that just like the bubbles, the hard feeling will eventually “pop” all by itself. In these times, it might even help for you to sing the song (if they sang it for you) to help them remember what they learned today.

We’d love to hear of any experience with this! Feel free to reach out to us for any reason at: info@theSPARKinitiative.com.

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson Three**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

I’m sure you’ve all had the experience of your children being totally enamored with a toy one day and then refusing to play with it the next. We all know from this experience that it is actually not the toy itself that brings the child pleasure or displeasure, but it’s actually their thinking about the toy in the moment. That’s what your child learned today – objects don’t cause our feelings, our thinking does. We learned this is true for all feelings, including scary ones. When the scary thoughts go away, our feeling of being scared goes away too. When scary thoughts come back, we feel scared again.

As parents ourselves, it has been really helpful for us to remember this. While, in fact, it REALLY appears my child’s temper tantrum is causing my own stress, in reality, it’s me wanting it to stop (and it is not stopping) that is causing my stress. Keeping this in mind has allowed us to be much more effective parents and role models. We hope the simple knowledge that feelings are coming from our thinking will help ease any moments of tension in your household.

Feel free to reach out to us for any reason at: info@theSPARKinitiative.com.

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 4**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today, we talked about how we are all born with a SPARK or treasure inside of us that is the source of all good feelings, including confidence. To explore this theme, we read the first *Curious the Dragonfly* book, which is about searching for feelings. Curious looks all over for the good feeling treasure and finally realizes that what he was looking for was inside him all along! Much to the relief of Curious (and all of us), the treasure is still there even when we feel bad.

After discussing the book, we made treasure chests and put all the good feelings in them that we want to remember that we have inside of us. Once we made our treasure chests, we closed our eyes and imagined we were pirates burying the treasure. We then talked about how no matter where you imagined it to be buried, it is still within you, even if you forget! When you are feeling bad, you can remember that it is still there and enjoy the good feelings again. It can never be lost or broken, only forgotten. We also learned about how our SPARK, or treasure, is the source of common sense and is always there to guide us when we need it.

Ask your kids tonight what feelings they put in their treasure chest! Next time they are feeling bad, remind them that just like Curious, their treasure is inside of them, and see what happens! We’d love to hear about your experiences with this.

As always, feel free to reach out to us for any reason at info@theSPARKinitiative.com.

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 5**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today, we talked about making choices and how our SPARK or common sense helps us do this. We learned about how our actions are the result of feelings and thoughts. When we make good choices, we make them from good feelings and thoughts, and when we make not-so-good choices, we are making them from not-so-good feelings and thoughts. We call this the Thought Chain. We also learned about how we can break the chain when we are in a grumpy mood by checking in with our SPARK about what is the best choice to make. We used the characters, the *Bubbly Boo Hoo Grumps,* to make this point. Luckily, even the Bubbly Boo Hoo Grumps have a SPARK or a treasure and can make good choices when they are feeling grumpy. We practiced making good choices when we are grumpy through an imaginary scenario involving someone breaking their favorite toy. Next time your kiddo is down in the dumps, ask them if they remember the Bubbly Boo Hoo Grumps!

Finally, we talked about how we cannot control the choices of other people, only our own choices. We listed different choices others make that we might not like and discussed how we can make good choices in response to them. For example, we can’t control if someone doesn’t share with us, but we can control if we listen to our SPARK and make a good choice in response.

To help reinforce this at home, you can point out when others make bad choices and remind them that in these times, it’s important to check in with our SPARK to see how we want to react.

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 6**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today, we learned about our amazing power of creativity! We learned that the human mind has up to 90,000 thoughts a day, which is what provides us with endless opportunities to create something new. To help the kids grasp the concept of their unlimited capacity to create, we showed them pictures of an endless galaxy filled with stars representing their ideas.

We also talked about what is going on when it appears like we don’t have any ideas, can’t solve a problem, or in other words, when we are frustrated. We played a game to demonstrate that sometimes, access to our 90,000 thoughts is blocked by *blocker thoughts* like*, I’m not creative, I can’t solve this,* or *I’m bored.* The game demonstrated that when we get blocked, if we keep trying, we will get connected to the flow of ideas again and return to the creators that we are! Next time your child is having a *blocker thought*, remind them it's temporary and there are so many creative thoughts behind that one, waiting to come to him/her again. When the phrase, *I’m bored*, is being used, remind them they have as many ideas about how to entertain themselves as stars in the sky, they just need to listen for them.

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 7**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today, we picked up on the idea of frustration and helped the kids be able to identify this feeling. We had fun showing each other our frustrated faces and playing the game *Frustrated* or *Not*, which is basically charades but the only two guessing choices are *Frustrated* or *Not Frustrated*. Once we could clearly identify a frustrated person, we used Alka Seltzer tables to demonstrate how situations look different when we are frustrated – they are fuzzy, nebulous, and less clear.

Finally, we showed pictures of real-life situations and demonstrated that when we are frustrated, these situations look dark and gloomy as opposed to the same picture looking clear and normal when we are not frustrated. The kids then drew their own pictures of how the world looks when they are frustrated vs. happy. Have a look to get a glimpse of their frustrated worlds.

To help reinforce the learning points at home, next time your child is frustrated, let them know you understand the situation looks dark and gloomy, and when their minds settle down, just like when the Alka Seltzer fizzles out, the world will look clear again. ☺

Finally, we revisited how all feelings are ok, and we don’t have to be afraid of or try to get rid of them. This is generally something very new, surprising, and a relief for our students. We also like to remind ourselves of this!

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 8**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today, we learned about how we all have our own views and preferences based on our thinking. We have different opinions about the same things, and that’s ok! The facilitator got silly and did different things inexplicably, like jumping jacks, giving the kids an opportunity to guess why the facilitator was doing them. This showed we all have our own ideas of what’s going on.

We also got to smell lots of different scents to demonstrate we all have our own preferences, none of which is right or wrong. Finally, we played a game called *Which Planet Do You Live On,* where those with certain preferences, such as liking unicorns, lived on Planet A, and those with other preferences, such as not liking unicorns, lived on Planet B. This was a fun way to show the kids how we can mentally live on different planets and still be friends.

To pick up this learning at home, the next time your family disagrees about something, you can note some people are living on Planet A, and others are on Planets B, C, or D! We are living on these planets only because of our thinking, which can easily change but does not have to for us to still feel love for one another.

Wishing you a great week!

Until next time,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 9**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today was all about friendships and connection. We started with reading the second *Curious the Dragonfly* book, which is about him being sad with no friends, his adventures to find them, learning he can be ok regardless of whether or not he has friends, and finally making them! We learned that the connection and friendships happen naturally when we are feeling our SPARK/treasure that we talked about in previous lessons. The kids should now understand that when people are being mean, it’s because they are not feeling their SPARK/treasure. We played a game to help them know what to do when this happens. If you ever find your child yelling, REMEMBER YOUR TREASURE! you will know the game left an impression on them. ☺ This is one of the things we can do when friends aren’t being very good friends – remind them to connect with their good feelings.

Finally, we played a game involving a big ball of yarn to demonstrate how we are all connected. Through this, the kids saw how much we have in common.

If you’d like to reinforce these concepts at home, next time you see your kiddo not being a good friend, sibling, or offspring, tell them to *Remember Their Treasure*! Hopefully, that will SPARK something in them, and they’ll know they can make another choice.

Next week is the 10th lesson and the last week of our curriculum. We’ll be holding a simple graduation ceremony for the kids and would be delighted to see you there. Please join us at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Wishing you a great week and hope to see you next week.

Warmly,

The SPARK Team

**Lesson 10**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today was the 10th lesson and last week of our core curriculum with your child. We were delighted to see some of you at the graduation ceremony today and share with you the wonderful achievements of the kids.

We were also grateful for those of you who filled out our surveys, which will help us continue to improve the impact that we are having. For those who haven’t filled out the short, five-question survey and would like to help us in this endeavor, please find a link to the survey here\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

We really enjoyed getting to know your wonderful children over these last weeks.

Wishing you well in your critical role of raising your little, amazing humans. We’re always here if you have questions or want to get in touch for any reason!

Feel free to reach out to us for any reason at info@theSPARKinitiative.com.

Warmly,

The SPARK Team

**Leadership Module: Being A Good Neighbor**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to share with you what your child/children explored today in the SPARK Mentoring program.

Today was about understanding what community means, the value of it, and how we can contribute to it. We feel this lesson is important because, according to research done by the National Assembly on School-Based Health Care and the SDM, a feeling of connectedness within the community was a protective factor in reducing the risk of anxiety, depression, disruptive behavior, dropout, and substance abuse.

**In the lesson today, we identified different communities that we are a part of (school, sports, maybe religious) and how sometimes our communities help us, and sometimes we help them. This is what makes a community strong and valuable. The kids were also given an opportunity to unleash their creativity to think of ways we can support different community members who regularly make important contributions, like the mailman, nurses, and delivery drivers.**

**We hope your child will feel the importance of their communities and neighborhoods and show signs of connecting to them. Anyway, that you can support them in doing this will be a win, win, win (for your kids, you, and the community). ☺**

Wishing you a great week!

Warmly,

The SPARK Team