

GRINBERG RECEIVES TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Goddard Teacher Developed Anti-Bullying Initiative

By Daniel Hubbard • May 24, 2011



Kindergarten teacher Jennifer Grinberg shows students a hand out for a lesson about colors Tuesday at The Goddard School. Credit Daniel Hubbard

Jennifer Grinberg is ahead of the curve when it comes to bullying.

Grinberg was recently named one of Goddard School's Teachers of the Year.

Grinberg teaches kindergarten. She developed an anti-bullying initiative designed to teach children how to kind, considerate, and uplifting to others through positive reinforcement rather than by punishing negative behavior. When children say something or perform a kind act toward a classmate they are rewarded with a small prize. If an entire class earns enough rewards they are rewarded with a movie day or pizza party.

"Every time I saw the children do something good, I wanted to reward that," Grinberg said. "I want them to understand that being kind toward others should be normal."

Grinberg leads by example. During a recent lesson about colors she acknowledges the students' correct answers quickly and thanks them for putting forth a genuine effort to learn.

"While being kind is nice and the right thing to do, the children don't receive a reward every time they perform an act of kindness," Grinberg said. "That's not how it works in the real world. It should just be something they do and not even think about it."

Kimberly Pierson-Scott, owner of the Goddard School's Wayne location, said that Grinberg has instituted programs designed to teach students about community and the need to help others. Students donated Christmas presents to an underprivileged child last year. They gave change during the Pennies for Pets program for the Ramapo Animal Clinic. Students also made bags of candy for children at St. Joseph's Hospital.

"She brings a sense of community and family to the classroom," Pierson-Scott said. "Having children develop a sense of community early on in their lives is so important in today's society. It's very important to lay that foundation while the children are young."

There are more than 9,000 teachers who work at more than 360 Goddard Schools throughout the United States. Goddard Schools are privately owned and operated institutions focusing on early childhood education.