

BUCKET FILL-OSOPHY 101

Weekly words of wisdom to keep your bucket filled

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Making a Difference

Music to our ears



Late last year, Jennifer Grabot, of Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, wrote to tell us that she had purchased *Have You Filled a Bucket Today* for her three-year-old daughter and four-year-old son.

"They love it," she told us. She was amazed by their understanding of the bucketfilling concepts.

"At night we talk about whose bucket they filled that day and whether or not they dipped into any buckets."

Jennifer was so enthused about her children's response to bucket filling that she talked with her middle school band class about bucket filling on a day that they had given a substitute teacher a "hard time."

"We've started using the concepts and terminology to make our classroom a better place to be."

She talked with the other band director at her school, and together they made a classroom bucket for each band class. They've based their program on kindness, respect and working hard and have successfully filled the buckets every week.

Jennifer didn't stop there. She presented her idea to her associate principal who loved it.

Thank you, Jennifer, for your enthusiasm and dedication to bucket filling.

You've certainly filled our buckets.

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*Bucket Nuggets from Carol McCloud,
The Bucket Lady*

Music to her ears

We begin the new year with a Nugget from Asha M. Epp, an assistant teacher at Parchment Schools in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

As an educator I know the importance of positive behavior and empowering students to discover that they can correct their own behavior and reach out to others.

I am a teacher's assistant in our Preschool Early Readiness Program; a program that works with at-risk or high-risk young children. I've had the opportunity to introduce the concept of bucketfilling to my preschoolers. I used a small tin bucket to help teach the concept. "Mr. Bucket" has a smile on one side and sad face on the other. When my students review bucketfilling with me, Mr. Bucket changes his face based on their examples of bucketfilling and bucket dipping.

Most of the time, my preschoolers have been able to self-correct their own behavior with one reminder, "Are you being a bucket filler or bucket dipper?" If the situation is more extreme, the student and I discuss their behavior and explore better bucket filling choices. My students also use bucket filling to modify one another's behavior.



When children learn to treat one another with kindness, it can transform a classroom. Parents and students tell me stories of filling and dipping at home. In the case of one student, I just have to look at her and touch my heart (where I told my students their buckets are) and she corrects her behavior.

This after-school conversation with Chandler, one of our students, demonstrates the power of bucket filling.

As we talked about the school day, I said,

"Well, Chandler I am just kind of sad today."

Chandler put his book aside with a concerned look and said,

"Ms. Epp, which one of my friends has been dipping in your bucket?"

"Oh, none of your friends . . . sometimes days are very busy and it just is sad."

"Yes, Ms. Epp sometimes we all have those days."

Special Announcement

As the Bucket Fillers team traveled to hundreds of schools last year, we met many enthusiastic educators who were eager to share their bucketfilling programs and ideas.

These creative lessons have resulted in improved classroom behavior in the schools we visited and lively excitement about filling buckets.

At some point I realized that through our newsletters, we could share these wonderful ideas.

And so, in the week of January 11, 2009, our first *Bucket Lessons* worksheet will be launched with a bucketfilling idea in time for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, January 19.

Bucket Lessons will replace two regular newsletters each month. We encourage you to adapt these lessons in your classroom and share your own ideas with our readers.

