

## Maggie's Civics Corner

### Lesson #32 – Building Community



#### Maggie says ...

*In these difficult times, as our nation and the world pull together, it is more important than ever to understand our role as a citizen.*

**Today's lesson is about BUILDING COMMUNITY.** There are always people and new animals moving into our community. I especially like it when a new dog arrives. It might take us a little time to become friends, but it always seems to end up that way. Let's all think of ways we can make new people and animals in our neighborhood feel welcome.

**Sticky Situation:** New families move in and out of our neighborhoods on a fairly regular basis. Some families move in because they have changed jobs and need to move closer to where they work. Others might move because they want to be closer to their other family members.

Imagine that a new student has just arrived at your school and is placed in your classroom. The student comes to your community from another country; they have an unusual name; and, they speak with a very noticeable accent. During lunch, you overhear some of your friends making fun of the new student both because of their name and their accent. You have choices about what you can do. Things to consider:

Is it a good thing to join your friends and make fun of this new student?

Do you think that your friends are saying unkind things about the new student?  
If you do, what would you say to them to help them understand their unkindness?  
What else might you do to get your point across to them?

**Activity:** It is never just new families in a community who are teased for one reason or another. To build a strong community it is important that **everyone** in the community **feels welcomed and valued**. Think of an activity that you might plan that would bring all the different families in your community together. Take the following steps to **Create a Plan of Action** that would bring lots of people from your community together to have fun:

1. Brainstorm ideas that would bring many families in your community together to have fun.
2. Pick one BIG IDEA from your list and put it in writing so that others know what you want to do.
3. Develop a way to encourage others in your community to read your plan, then volunteer to help you make it happen.
4. Identify the funds for supplies you will need to implement your plan.
5. Identify those you might need to ask for permission to implement your plan.