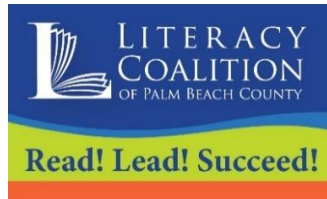


READ and THINK before you ACT.



## *Leading through Reading*

### Being Different is Okay (6-8)

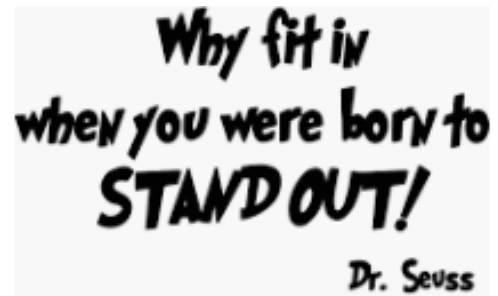
#### READ

The need to 'fit in' is at its peak in the middle school years. At different times, we all have wished that we could be what we think is 'normal.' Some of us are afraid to stand out because we are afraid of being bullied for being different. At this time in your life, you may notice yourself working to being less like your family and more like people who are your own age. This is how we think when we enter our teen years. We all want to know [how to be a normal teen](#).

It may seem ideal to be identical to others, but it is also important to take time to find out how you are different in order to know who you are. Chances are that you have many things about you that make you like your family members and some things that make you like your peers. There are also a few things about yourself that are not like anyone else. You may not be sure what makes the perfect mix and what mix makes you uniquely you.

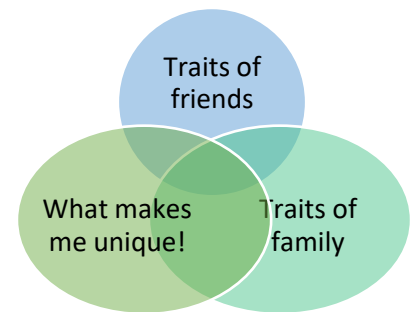
Whatever your traits are, it is important to accept yourself as you are. When you are ready, you will embrace all of what makes you who you are. It is true. As you move beyond the middle school years, it will be easier to accept individual differences in yourself and in others.

While there is a break from school, and there is less pressure to 'fit in,' it may be a good time to work on accepting that it is okay to be different. It may have been a long time ago that you heard the quote from Dr. Seuss on the right, but it is worthy of repeating and never forgetting!



#### THINK

- What traits do you have in common with your family?
- What do you have in common with your friends?
- What are the traits that make you unique?
- How can you show others that being different is okay?
- How can you practice being accepting and respectful of differences in looks, ideas and opinions?



#### ACT



**Schedule a Family Chat Session-** Discuss ways members of your family might sometimes feel different from each other. Talk about how this diversity can make your family stronger.

**Embrace Differences with this Simple Exercise-** Watch a movie, tv show, or read a book with a group of family members or friends. Then, talk about it with the group. Take note of diverse opinions. Embrace how everyone has a slightly different point-of-view. Accept that some people like one character or another, or some like one scene and others prefer another. Practice understanding the differences.

*This at-home educational activity is from the Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County's literacy-based social emotional learning program.*

*Read! Lead! Succeed! is made possible with support from Prime Time Palm Beach County, Inc., which receives significant funding for its overall operations from the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County.*

*Sharing is caring! Send us a picture of you and your Read! Lead! Succeed! projects to [nbirardi@literacypbc.org](mailto:nbirardi@literacypbc.org)*