

Dear Parents,

We are writing to you regarding our son, Robert, who is in Mrs. Smith's class with your child. Your child may have questions about Robert, so we thought it would be helpful to tell you a little bit about him.

In many ways, Robert is a lot like other second graders. He loves to go swimming, play on the computer, and take his dog for walks. However, Robert is non-verbal and learns differently than most children. Therefore, he spends part of his day in a special education classroom and the other part of his day with Mrs. Smith's class. Because Robert is non-verbal and has limited social skills, it is more difficult for him to make friends.

Recently, Mrs. Johnson, Robert's special education teacher, and I read the class "All About Me," a book we wrote about our son. The book served as an opening to talking about differences and set the stage for any questions the children might have had. We hope that you will take this opportunity to re-read the book with your child and have your own discussion. Some possible questions to ask your child are:

- How are you and Robert alike?
- How are you and Robert different?
- Besides using your words, what are some other ways to ask Robert to play with you? (i.e. take him by the hand, motion for him to come over, etc.)
- Do you think it's easy or hard for Robert to make friends?
- How do you know if Robert is having fun playing with you? (i.e. he is laughing or smiling)
- If you don't understand what Robert is saying, what could you do? (i.e. ask him to say it again)
- What can you do when Robert keeps saying "Hi, how are you? (i.e. respond once and tell him to ask you another question, ask him a question, change the subject by saying "Do you want to play with ____" or "Do you want to sit next to me?")
- What are some activities you could do with Robert during recess?
- How could you include Robert during lunch time? (i.e. ask him to sit next to you)
- What are some activities you could do with Robert during a play date?
- Why is it important to be a good friend?

We hope this helps you and your child understand that while Robert is different in some ways, he enjoys friends just like everyone else. We know that South School is committed to creating a supportive and cohesive environment for all the children in the Glencoe community. We feel confident that you will welcome the opportunity to endorse this message as you review the book with your child. Please feel free to call us at (555) 555-5555 with any questions. You can also contact Mrs. Smith at (555) 555-5555. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Sue and John Jones