

CONFLICT RESOLUTION



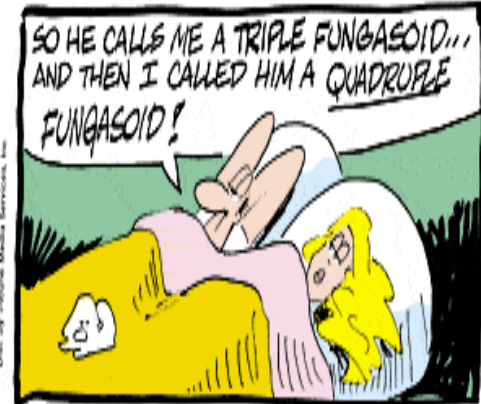
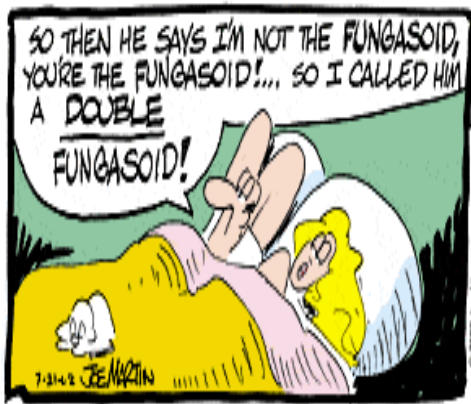
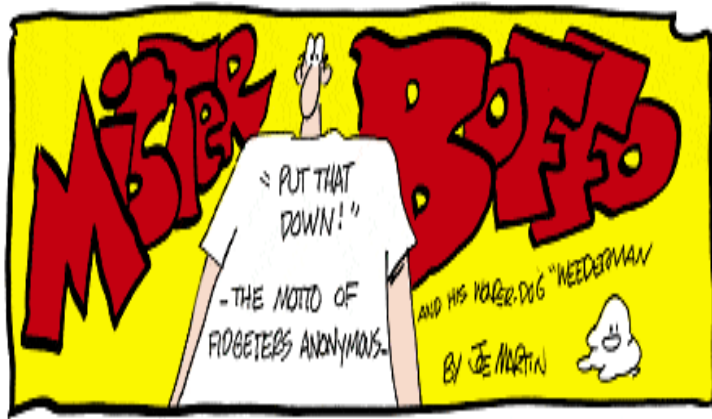
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CEP 841 Classroom & Behavior in the Inclusive Classroom

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Everyone faces conflict in their lives on a daily basis. It is an accepted and expected part of life.

In the words of William Kreidler, well-known author of *Creative Conflict Resolution*,
"If you take time to teach conflict resolution, you'll eventually have more time to teach."

(Porro)

Students are arriving at school **less prepared** to meet the daily social challenges they must face in the classroom. Teachers, from Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade, have reported an increase in the amount of time they spend dealing with behavior problems on a daily basis.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

- Impulse control
 - Shouting out answers
 - Grabbing items
 - Assaulting other students
- Communication skills
 - Expressing needs
 - Expressing wants

NEEDS



- Student
 - Develop interpersonal skills
 - Techniques to foster communication
 - Reinforcement of social skills
 - Safe Environment
- Teacher
 - Class on task and orderly

In the early to mid 1980s the concept of Conflict Resolution (CR) was developed. It was initially designed to resolve conflicts in the workplace. Over the years these theories were refined and implemented in the school setting.

Conflict Resolution education models and teaches, in developmentally relevant and culturally appropriate ways, a variety of processes, practices, and skills designed to address individual, interpersonal, and institutional conflicts, and to create safe and welcoming learning environments. These skills, concepts, and values help individuals to understand conflict dynamics, and empower them to use communication and creative thinking to build healthy relationships and manage and resolve conflicts fairly and nonviolently.

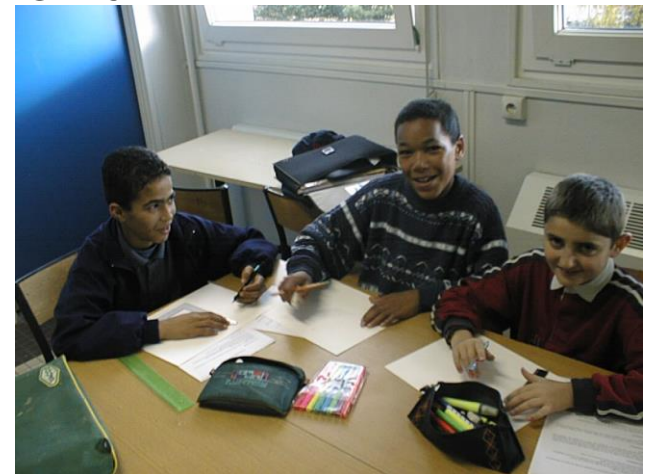
(Carter)

Conflict resolution is designed to provide students with a neutral, yet safe, environment where they can express their point of view and discuss issues in a mutually satisfactory manner.



There are three levels involved in CR

1. Negotiating - two individuals sit down and work out a resolution together
2. Mediation – a third party assists individuals in finding a solution
3. Arbitration – involves a third party and is instituted when negotiations and mediations fail





Over the last ten years there has been a significant increase in the number of schools that are implementing CR Programs.

Said a fourth grade mediator from Wilmette, Illinois, “*We help kids who are fighting talk about their problems. Some people think kids can’t help other kids solve their problems. But we can.*”

(Education World)

The goal of this program is to have students progress

FROM

- control or permissiveness
- power over
- retributive discipline/punishment
- teacher-centered learning

TO

- collaborative problem solving
- power with
- Restorative/positive discipline
- Student-centered learning

The facts are that CR



- Creates respectful and caring surroundings by formulating a safe school environment
- Provides students with control over situations
- Uses PBIS techniques to modify a child's behavior by focusing on the positives.
- Promotes shared learning experiences

In May of 1998, Metis Associates of Atlanta conducted a study of three elementary, one middle, and one high school to determine if CR was successful.

It was determined that:

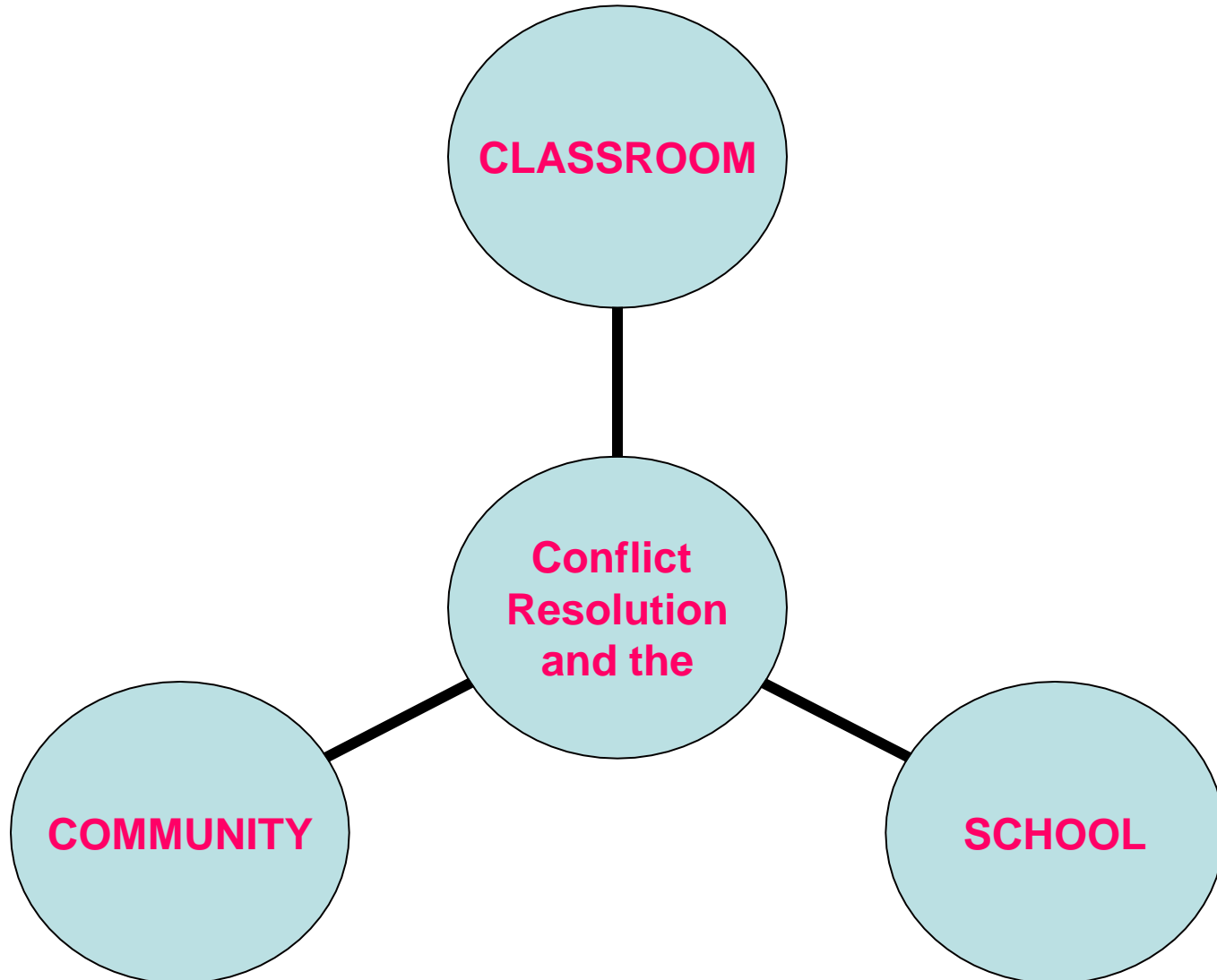
- 64% of teachers reported less violence in the classroom
- 75% of teachers reported an increase in student cooperation
- 92% of students felt better about themselves
- Over 90% of parents reported an increase in their own communication and problem solving skills
- The in-and-out-of-school suspension rates at the middle school **decreased significantly**, while non-CR middle school rates increased during the same period
- The dropout rate at the CR high school **decreased significantly** while non-CR school rates increased during the same period

(ESR National)

Ways to implement a Conflict Resolution Program

- Construct a set of circumstances in the curriculum, integrating conflict resolution and a variety of subjects to amplify the lesson
- Construct a multi-disciplinary teaching approach that utilizes central themes as the focal points
- Instill conflict resolution strategies into every aspect of the day to day working of the room
- Teach a course solely dealing with conflict resolution strategies
- Teach conflict resolution strategies within one subject area
- School policies should include principles and practices of conflict resolution

Where does CR apply?





Strategies to apply CR in the Classroom

- Class meetings
- Design posters with CR slogans
- Conflict Resolution Corners
- Collaborative decision making
- Curriculum Infusion
- Curriculum Integration
- PBIS-Positive Discipline
- Modeling and skill training
- Visible reminders (posters, quotes, student work)

Strategies to apply CR in the School for Staff

- Involve all staff members: teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, Cafeteria workers, and bus drivers
- Use as a tool to help students realize negative behaviors in suspension situations
- Develop an Information packet for all students
- Work with students to develop the new program
- Provide teachers ways to incorporate one new strategy into the classroom at every staff meeting
- In-services on bullying, communication skills, understanding conflict, etc.
- Staff Coordinator who is available for support and monitoring of CR Program
- Develops a CR library for students, staff and parents
- Align strategies with Standards and Benchmarks

Strategies to apply CR in the School for Students

- Involve all staff members: teachers, administrators, secretaries, custodians, Cafeteria workers, and bus drivers
- Bulletin board showing students caught being polite
- Cultural Awareness Programs
- Peer Mediation
- Alternatives to suspension
- Healing circles
- Cooperative Grouping
- Journaling
- Paired sharing
- Role-playing
- Creative controversy
- Service learning projects
- Case studies
- Community Service Programs





Strategies to apply CR in the Community

- Infuse Conflict Resolution principles into Mission Statement
- Provide Speakers at P.T.O. Meetings
- Organize a Peace Party
- Train school volunteers
- Parent training

It can take years for students and teachers to fully understand and integrate conflict resolution strategies on a daily basis. The time and effort put into such a program, enables teachers to, "empower children to use problem solving skills."

(Colorado)

"Conflict is the gadfly of thought. It stirs us to observation and memory. It instigates invention. It shocks us out of sheep-like passivity, and sets us at noting and contriving conflict is a 'sine qua non' of reflection and ingenuity."

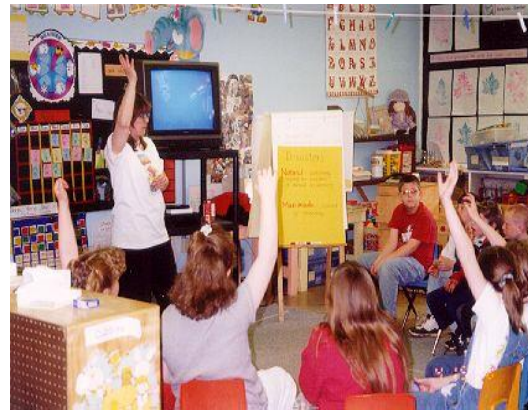
John Dewey

Remember, results from the Conflict Resolution Program can be seen immediately or over a period of time.



Final Thought:

At a time on our country where violence, either at school or in the workplace, is seen as a national problem, why are more schools not adopting Conflict Resolution Programs? What other strategies, if any, are they employing? How do alternate programs compare to the Conflict Resolution strategies?



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