

Practicing Nonviolence for Faculty and Administration



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Critical Concern: Nonviolence.

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It is common to hear that the school is a cross section of society, where behaviors, thinking, and ways of relating to others can be seen. In a way, the school keeps open the channels of mutual dialogue between individuals that very often evaporates in other places where people gather. For a long time, we as professionals in the field of education observe various ways of relating to one another, where there are different styles of communication in which the interpretations are varied and can often generate conflict.

Every conflict deserves to be addressed and possible solutions sought out. We are convinced that dialogue is the very best way to deal with them.

After doing the work of close observation, we agreed that VIOLENCE was filtering in to any number of areas throughout our educational community:

- ✚ Lack of respect for the parking regulations of adults in the vicinity of the school.
- ✚ A tone of haughtiness appearing in communication memos
- ✚ Differences in preferences for sports that led to calling out insults / or actual fights
- ✚ Recesses without any possibility of a variety of game options
- ✚ Social media where aggressive messages are being used
- ✚ Lack of adequate space in our institutions for having meetings with one's peers
- ✚ Making assumptions based on what is not said

After having identified these areas of deficit, we understood that we should be looking at the overall direction that we are headed in as a community and trying to rethink those aspects that are still not allowing us to have a positive community experience including giving greater participation and then encouraging us to avoid that which gets in the way of our daily efforts.

Using the input of a variety of groups, we thought that the motto of Mercy in 2018 should be connected to NON-VIOLENCE. From there we successfully developed the motto: For Making Peace, what am I able to do? We reflected together with all those members of our community who are involved and designed the following projects:

- Proposal for recess including a variety of options: jump ropes, light rubber kick balls and group games, playing cards, mandalas, varieties of items from nature for building (twigs, leaves, stones), Payanas (Argentine game with stones), marbles, open library with board games and books.
- Where there are notes written with a haughty tone, to meet individually with the person to have a conversation and oral exchange, to find a way to come to an agreement about what we hold in common and what is different.

- Explain to the varying parent groups by means of memos or meetings the challenges created by their not respecting the traffic guidelines and the difficulties that this is creating.
- Strengthen the design for gatherings and mediation programs. To make it easier to hold meetings for dialogue, to give access to professionals from within the community, and to give training in mediation and conflict resolution to teachers and students.
- To raise consciousness concerning the rules that apply for social media and the divulging of information/communication.
- Hold meetings with professionals where there is a discussion of the current themes: bullying, cyberbullying.
- Hold formal and informal meetings with co-workers in which we get to know one another and become closer knit.
- Spend time with others: small children and the elderly: games, visits, reading, etc.
- Give recognition when others are treated well
- For 20 years in this institution we have been addressing the issue of conflict resolution by means of a “mediation program.” Although it began with the idea of proposing and improving our coexistence in school, it is currently one of the projects with greatest importance and exigency in the school.