



A School Climate Approach to Bullying Prevention

Information for School Staff

Issue 3

Classroom Meetings

What are Classroom Meetings?

Classroom meetings are used in conflict resolution, character education and bullying prevention. They are a way to get your class actively involved in solving issues.

How will they benefit my classroom?

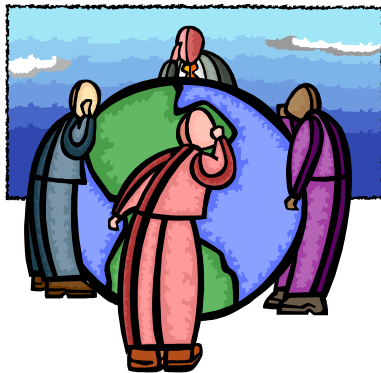
- Decreases discipline issues in classroom
- Covers aspects of language, health, social studies and history curriculum
- Helps create an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding
- Helps build a sense of belonging
- Empowers students to work together to find solutions
- Creates ownership and pride in class
- Generates excitement and energy

In getting started, your students may need to learn how to:

- Give and accept compliments
- Encourage each other
- Express feelings using "I" messages

Ideas to get you started:

- Prepare students by teach lessons on encouragement and problem solving.
- Practice putting chairs in a circle formation quickly - desks to the outside and chairs into a



- circle. This allows for eye contact and inclusion.
- As the teacher, model how to conduct meeting e.g. call to order, compliments, old business, new business, "thank you's", & conclusion.
- Schedule meetings weekly if possible.
- Once students are comfortable, rotate students as group leaders. You join the meeting as a participant and coach the student chair as needed, for example letting someone know if they are out of order, keeping discussion on topic, and ensuring everyone has a turn to speak. This builds valuable skills for students.
- Teacher coaches, takes minutes, is group member, maintains positive tone, states non-negotiables e.g. no daily parties
- Ensures everyone has chance to share ideas, ask questions; take turns going around circle with option to "pass" Discuss issues and create a solution
- Determine and monitor fair and effective consequences for misbehaviour
- Be accountable for their behaviour in the classroom
- Work together cooperatively





Imagine Newsletter

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Students can develop skills in:

- healthy relationships
- personal safety
- respect, understanding and empathy
- listening skills
- expressing/clarifying thoughts, feelings and opinions
- participating in group discussions
- conflict resolution
- organization, leadership
- problem solving, decision making
- brainstorming
- recognizing non-verbal communication cues



Now you're a pro, where else could you go?

What if your class has: 1) developed skills, 2) meetings going smoothly, 3) everyone participating in creating / following classroom expectations and 4) students (and you) are enthusiastic, involved and empowered to do more?

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How about extending these skills to other areas?

Your class could use their skills to:

- Create committees to plan events and fun activities e.g. winter play day
- Plan a class project - field trip, service to school or community
- Plan a school project - e.g. playground clean up, gathering used books to donate
- Create a campaign e.g. bullying prevention week
- Volunteer - e.g. raise funds / gather materials for a charity, buddy with a "grandparent" at a local nursing home
- Make a class video to show other schools how to conduct a class meeting
- Mentor younger students - reading buddy, playground monitor

Resources Available

The Imagine Manual - see p. 85-94 available at www.region.waterloo.on.ca/bullying

Book - "Class Meetings: Building Leadership, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills in the Respectful Classrooms", by Donna Styles

Video - "Bridgette: The Power of Class Meetings"

Also Check with your Board's Resource Centre for resources on classroom meetings and classroom behaviour management.