

PeaceBuilders Program Implementation



case study – pre-teen

MS 145 Arturo Toscanini School Diffuses Violent Situations with PeaceBuilding Techniques

Problem:

In 2000, gang activity was prevalent at MS 145 Arturo Toscanini School in the Bronx, New York. Serving youth in fifth through eighth grades, intervention teacher Eleanor Ferguson says that “looking at someone the wrong way or wearing the wrong color” could result in violence putting all the children and adults on campus at risk and forcing her to involve law enforcement.

Solution:

Site staff was trained by PeaceBuilders professionals to recognize a hostile situation as an opportunity for discussion before it escalates into a fight. By appointing student PeaceCoaches™ as peer leaders on campus, young people use the common language of PeaceBuilders to communicate effectively with each other and with the adults. There is a new-found level of mutual respect.

Results:

MS 145 has reported a dramatic decrease in violent activities and an increase in positive social behavior. Ferguson says that by using PeaceBuilders techniques and removing the “audience”, most conflicts are managed peacefully and without law enforcement. The highly-coveted PeaceCoach positions provide an avenue for peer mediation and conflict resolution. One young girl was constantly angry, fighting and performing poorly in school. She attended a PeaceBuilders leadership program, made a 180 degree turn around, improved her grades, and is now one of the most enthusiastic PeaceCoaches on campus! The PeaceCoaches of MS 145 asked to share this message with their principal Robert Hannibal, “Give Mr. Hannibal a BIG thank you for letting us be important!” Ferguson added that it is important for kids to come to school and feel safe. If they feel safe, they will graduate.

results:

- Peer leadership group drastically improves student behavior.
- Fighting and violent episodes significantly reduced.
- Improved student communication skills.
- Decrease in criminal behavior and law enforcement involvement.

“Our PeaceCoaches are trained to use the PeaceBuilders Principles as a guide to deflate minor issues. They engage in conversations with their peers and seek wise people for guidance during challenging situations.”

About PeaceBuilders:

PeaceBuilders is the science-based, research-validated character education and violence prevention youth program approved for the federally funded Safe and Drug-Free Schools Act. It is a culture/curriculum hybrid program that shifts the entire climate to a peaceful, productive and safe place for children, parents and the community. Our experienced corporate team manages the PeaceBuilders program to work seamlessly with any organization seeking peaceful solutions.

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