

Beyond Classroom Conflict

Family Edition

Supporting your child through conflict

A new school year may not always be smooth. There may be a variety of emotions. Dread and curiosity. Excitement and fear. Surprise and disappointment. He may be happy to go to school one day and beg to stay home the next. Your child will begin to face different kinds of problems. Here are ways you can support your child as he works through these conflicts and emotions.



A conflict with SELF: Your child may want to go to school but still feel afraid. Create a calendar so your child can draw a happy face when he comes home. As the smiles fill the calendar, this feeling of accomplishment can help him win the battle with himself.

A conflict with a CHILD: Keep a sheet of paper at home and write a sentence each day about school. Write names as your child mentions them. When problems happen, allow your child to discuss the issue. Later, draw her attention to a happier time. "Remember when you played on the swings with..."

A conflict with the TEACHER: Your child may feel the teacher was unfair. Listen to your child but keep in mind that you may need more information. As soon as possible, approach the teacher and ask for details. It is better to ask the question than have doubts. In most cases, your child either misunderstood the situation or you can help your child better understand why the teacher made a good decision that helps the classroom run smoother.

A conflict with YOU: If you are taking your child to school against her will, you may be the problem. Make school a special part of your day together. Have a goodbye routine with a special wave or hug. Write a note or draw a picture and slip it in her pocket to save for later. Create a routine when she returns home such as sitting in a chair together for three minutes to talk about the day. Over time, the routines may become the focus instead of the separation.

A conflict with CONFLICT: Your child may be unsettled because he has negative emotions. Remind him that emotions are normal. Talk about your emotions. Explain that feeling sad or afraid is normal. The concern lies in how he acts when he is sad and afraid. Allow your child to draw a picture to express his emotions until he learns to talk about them.

You can help your child grow through the conflicts he feels with himself and with others. Communicating to your child and his teacher will help you support him emotionally during this time of learning.

Volume I, Issue I

August 2009

An experienced teacher and administrator, Nancy Nicewonger has a desire to help children and families gain skills in conflict resolution that will stay with them for a lifetime of use.



After testing an approach to conflict resolution in both private and public school classrooms, Nancy created Beyond Classroom Conflict as a method of helping children of all ages deal appropriately and effectively with conflict.

Her goal is that children and families will learn how to respond to conflict in a way that promotes growth and health rather than allowing it to damage relationships.

Nancy has a degree in elementary education as well as a Master's Degree in Conflict Resolution.

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