

Peace in School & Family

Peace, whether in your school or family, begins with mutual respect and a large dose of tolerance.

For our communities to be peaceful places, administrators, teachers, staff personnel, and parents must work together to create a culture of peace. The first and foremost item is plain, old common courtesy—treating each other with respect and professionalism.

One thing that hurts the peace of a school community is gossip. The topic of gossip needs to be addressed publicly by teachers with parents. Remember the old adage that teachers used to tell parents? *“I won’t believe half of what I hear from your child about you and your family, if you promise to not believe half of what you child says about me and my classroom.”*

One can go a long way toward making your school peaceful if you publish in big letters on a poster or other communications that on the school grounds, (such as the office, parking lot, playground, cafeteria, etc.) that the teachers, students, other parents, administration, and staff do not want to hear anyone bad-mouthing or gossiping about anyone else.

If that person has a problem, he or she should go to the other person one-on-one and talk to him or her in a calm, precise, yet determined manner about the issue of concern. As another old adage has it: *“Go to the horse’s mouth to hear for yourself.”*

Most of us equate peaceful settings like the mountains, forest, or countryside with stillness. So for our families to have peace we could try to find some periods of time where we are not always doing something or talking. Remember that the Lord says: *“Be still and know that I am god”* (Psalm 46.10). Yet even if you sit quietly in a national park and listen, it is not quiet. What makes it peaceful is that you are present to your surroundings. In our families, we need to stop and be present to each other. We need to teach and practice the “art of conversation.” Talking to each other with the TV and other distractions off—being present to each other can relieve tension, solve problems. and maybe bring peace.

It will only happen if you, as a family, plan for it. It will only continue to happen in your school community if you have a plan to stop gossip, stop disrespect, and make a positive plan of how people are to be treated. We can no longer rely only on common sense. We have to teach our parents and our students how to tolerate our differences and treat each other as we would like to be treated.

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