

Conflict Resolution in the Classroom and Beyond

By Hayley Neal





Dr. Seuss The Zax - YouTube (360p).mp4

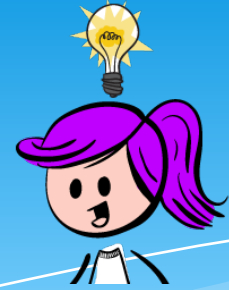
3 Areas

1) Why is this important in our role as a teacher?

2) Understanding the root causes of conflict and how this understanding can help us in our response.


3) Resolving conflict- strategies to help young learners develop conflict resolution skills to help them both in and outside of the classroom.

Reflection time!



1) Write down as many situations you can think of that often lead to a conflict in the classroom.

2) Share your list with a partner and write down the number of situations that you both had that were of the same or a similar nature.



**Circle the ones on your own list
that occurred in your
classroom during the last few
weeks.**

1) Why is this important in our role as a teacher?

Help children become **aware of the different strategies** they could be using

Neglected area of the **curriculum** (not proportionate to how much we NEED these skills in every day life)

Self-regulation- (so one can focus on learning, control emotional responses/ impulses etc.)

Future (tools for future conflict in relationships, with family, in the community, at work etc.)

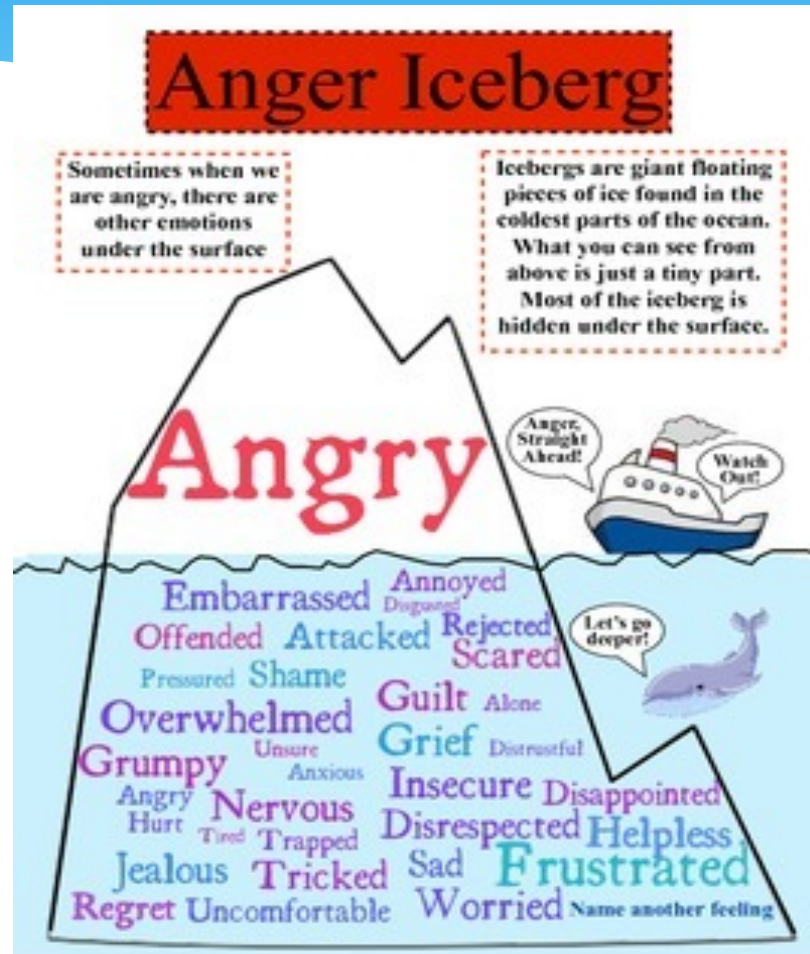
Unresolved conflicts at any and all stages in life can lead to psychological and physiological health problems in the future (Dr. John Sarno- The Mindbody Prescription)

2) Understanding the root/ underlying causes of conflict and how this understanding can help us in our response.

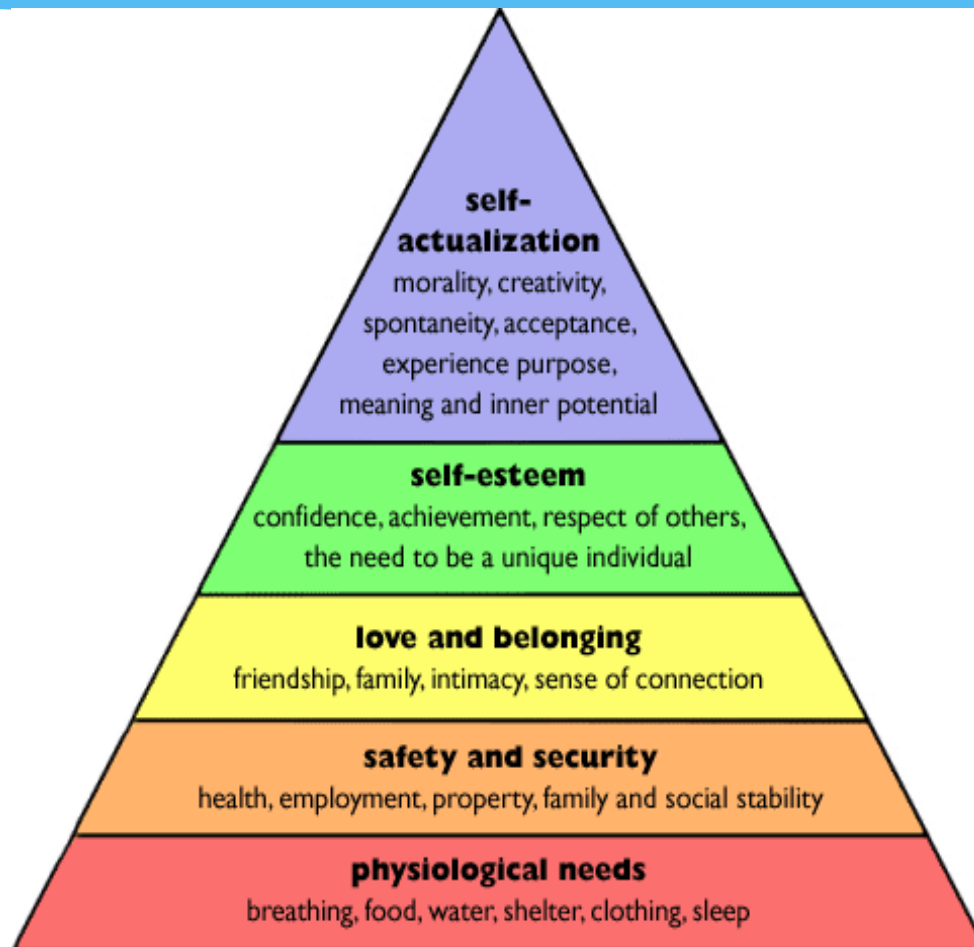
Over 5000 children were PERMANENTLY EXPELLED from preschool in one year (Prekindergartens Left Behind (2005) Walter S Gilliam, PhD)

<http://fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/ExpulsionCompleteReport.pdf>

Underlying causes of conflict



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Children's Psychological needs

- 1. Safety**
- 2. Freedom**
- 3. Belonging**
- 4. Self-esteem**
- 5. Recognition**

Underlying causes of conflict

4 'Goals of Misbehaviour'

1. Attention
2. Power
3. Revenge
4. Inadequacy

3) Resolving conflict- strategies to help young learners develop conflict resolution skills to help them both in and outside of the classroom.

“Conflict resolution is an art rather than a science, because each situation presents so many unique variables. Each individual’s temperament, perceptions, baggage, etc. all come into play” (Janet Lansbury).

Resolving Conflicts

Avoid:

- 1. Resolving conflicts for them**
- 2. Neglecting to protect**
- 3. Shaming or lecturing by pointing out the obvious**
- 4. Speaking in an angry tone or expression**
- 5. Taking sides**

Resolving Conflicts

Try to:

- 1. Anticipate** and see the signs of conflict early. De-escalate if/ when necessary.
- 2. Remain neutral.** Acknowledge both sides ([sportscasting](#))
- 3. Protect children** by preventing hitting, pushing or repetitive toy taking calmly and confidently, and shadow a child who seems to be having a difficult day
- 4. Don't assume** that when infants and toddlers take toys/ resources from another that it's 'bad behaviour' that needs reprimanding, because this is on their short list of "playing together" possibilities. Only intervene when safety is at risk, when an elaborate project is about to be destroyed or when a child seems stuck in a pattern of toy taking or distressed
- 5. Keep an open mind** – This means allowing children to do it their way, which will be different from our way most of the time. Trust is our biggest challenge and we too often make assumptions that could be wrong
- 6. Wait,** rather than putting a time-limit on conflict. If no-one's getting hurt, it is healthy for children to release their own feelings (not just 'quickly say what we want them to') and work out solutions without being rushed

Resolving Conflicts

To build **resilience** we should aim to teach children-

SENSE OF AGENCY- knowledge that they are in control of their actions

SELF-EFFICACY -the belief that they are competent and capable.

Developing a '**growth mindset**'- an attitude that allows for possibilities and promotes progress and problem solving (Dweck 2006)

Resolving Conflicts

5 Steps to Solving a problem:

- 1) **Identify** the problem
- 2) **Brainstorm** 3 ways to handle it
- 3) **Choose** one way to try first and decide on a back-up plan
- 4) **Try out** the strategy
- 5) **Evaluate** how well the strategy works (could simply be a comment from the teacher such as “Wow! You worked hard to come up with three ideas, and you found one that solved your problem. It seems like you both grew your brains today”.)

Pawlina, S and Stanford, C. *Preschoolers Grow their Brains. Shifting Mindsets for Greater Resiliency and Better Problem Solving*

Resolving Conflicts



I Message

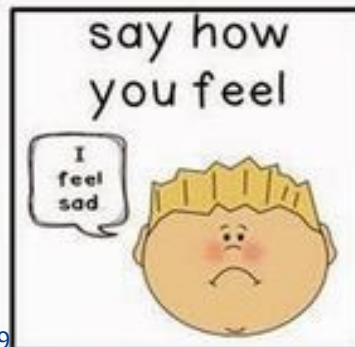
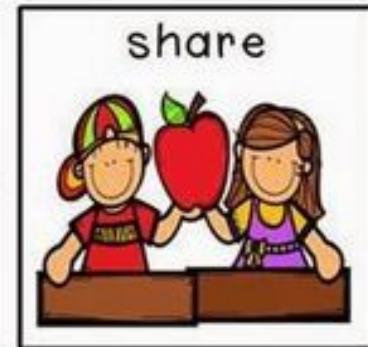
I feel _____

when you _____.

Please _____.

Problem Solving Techniques

- Posters to Support Problem Solving -



PEACE PATH



YOU FEEL...
WHEN...



I FEEL...
WHEN...



I FEEL...
WHEN...



YOU FEEL...
WHEN...



WHAT'S THE
SOLUTION?



WHAT'S THE
SOLUTION?



ARE WE OK?



ARE WE OK?



PEACE PATH

Follow the arrows. 1: Blue Feet go first. 2: Purple feet repeats back what they heard Blue feet say. 3: Problem solving together. 4: Ask each other "Are we are ok?" Yes?: Shake Hands. No? Go back to step 3 and problem solve some more.

Other strategies you can offer in class to support.

Morning meetings/ regular circle-times

Buddy System

Comfort Corner

Journal Writing

Write a letter to/ do something nice for the person you have had a conflict with

Feelings book

Problem-solving table,/conflict resolution, mediation table.

“What I learned today” tree/ board



Sesame Street_ Robin Williams_ Conflict - YouTube (360p).mp4

Some useful resources

Helping Toddlers Resolve Conflicts (Rules of Engagement)

<http://www.janetlansbury.com/2013/09/helping-toddlers-resolve-conflicts-rules-of-engagement/>

Safety From the Inside Out. Rethinking Traditional Approaches.

<http://www.alfiekohn.org/article/safety-inside/>

Dweck, C. 2006. *Mindset*. New York: Ballentine

Pawlina, S and Stanford, C. *Preschoolers Grow their Brains. Shifting Mindsets for Greater Resiliency and Better Problem Solving.*



Thank you! 😊

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