# REFRESHING RECESS NEWSLETTER WEEK #3
## Teamwork & Conflict Resolution
### (For Recess Supervisors)

## Teamwork

Teamwork is important for groups of people to work together for a common goal (e.g. playing a game, completing an art project or group assignment). Children and youth of all ages need to develop social and emotional skills to help them work as a team and resolve conflicts, such as: cooperation, responsibility, empathy, communication skills, assertion and self-control. Knowing how to work as a team and resolve conflicts contributes to the development of a positive school climate.

## Teamwork Involves:

- Sharing a common goal (e.g. during recess, the goal is to get along and have fun)
- Each person contributing to the goal; collaboration; working together
- Mutual respect and trust
- Appreciation of differences and diversity (diversity is present in many ways – skin color, religious beliefs, nationality, size, and varying levels of ability)
- Interactions that sometimes lead to conflict

## CHECK THIS OUT!

- Conflict resolution education: http://www.creducation.net/
- Conflict Resolution. Kids Health in the Classroom (Grades 3 - 5). Teachers guide and activities.
- 5 Steps to Having Kids Resolve Conflicts. Sunshine Parenting (Audrey Monke). Download the Conflict Resolution Wheel.

Creative Response to Conflict
www.crc-global.org

## Conflict is a Reality

Conflict between people and disagreement is a normal part of human interaction. How we respond to conflict can make a big difference in how long the conflict lasts and how tense the interaction is.

## Peace is our Goal

Everyone feels better when we and the people around us get along. Creating a peaceful environment is everyone's responsibility.

## Respond in a Mature & Peaceful Manner

When conflict occurs, our goal is to respond in a calm and peaceful manner so that we don't say or do things to hurt the other person or ourselves.

## Recess Supervisors

Recess supervisors and any adult in a school setting should develop some basic skills for how to interact with students who are having a conflict in order to de-escalate the situation and help them resolve the conflict.

How recess supervisors, teachers, and any other school staff
assist students who are experiencing a conflict?

## STEPS TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

● **Step 1:** Cool off. Breathe and regain focus in order to choose a good response. Sometimes conflicts lead to intense emotions (e.g. feeling angry) making it difficult to solve the problem. At this point, it's best to ask the students to take a step back, breathe deeply, and gain some emotional distance before trying to talk about the issue. Encourage them to physically separate for 5 minutes. During that time, encourage them to do deep breathing or take a walk.

● **Step 2:** Talk about what's bothering you using 'I messages'. After the students 'cool off', bring them together talk about the issues using 'I messages' to express their feelings about the situation. Have one student share first while the other listens and repeat with the second child.  Make sure each student has had an opportunity to share his/her feelings. Example: 'I feel hurt when you talk to other people at lunch and turn away from me.' Instruct them to: speak softly and slowly and tune into body language (use appropriate body language - eye contact, arms uncrossed, sit/stand at eye level).

> Here is a sample 'I statement' sentence that you can have the students use: "When you _____ , I feel _____ , because _____ , so what I would like is _____ ."

> • To ensure that each person has listened, have them complete Step 3, and restate what the other person expressed.

● **Step 3:** Each person restates that the other person said.
This requires good listening skills and encourages empathy. State what the other person said, 'You said that you were having fun getting to know Kristen and didn't realize you were leaving me out.' Start with, 'It sounds like you ….' 'I think I heard you say….'  Avoid using words that may escalate the conflict (never, always, can't, don't) and use words that tend to de-escalate (I think, sometimes, what if, I feel, it seems like).

● **Step 4:** Take responsibility.Generally, both people involved in a conflict have some degree of re-sponsibility. Have each students think about how he/she may have contributed to the conflict. 'Maybe sometimes I expect Sarah to only play with me. That's not fair to Sarah. She would like to play with other people too.'

● **Step 5:** Brainstorm solutions and agree on one. Resolving conflict takes creative, open thinking and a willingness to make compromises. Think of 3-5 solutions and agree on one. 'When I play with other friends, I can make a point of including Lucy so she doesn't feel left out.'

● **Step 6:** 'Make up' – Affirm, forgive or thank. Give closure to the agreement with a handshake, hug or kind word. Forgiveness provides closure and promotes a sense of peace. Say 'thank you for working this out with me'. This sends a message to the other person that you respect them and value your relationship.

**Adapted from:** Drew, N. (2002), Learning Peace website and Creative Response to Conflict (Ways of De-escalating Conflict)

## Types of Conflicts and Solutions

- Physical arguments — Separate/cool down; mediation using 6-steps; if no agreement, send to principal
- Verbal arguments — Listening/distraction; Separate/cool down; mediation using 6-steps
- Put-downs — Apologize, hear view of others (e.g. 'That hurts my feelings when you…), affirm the other person (e.g. say what you appreciate about the person)
- Friendship disputes — Listening to feelings; affirmation of each other and the relationship
- Value disputes — Agree to disagree; listening to other's view; paraphrasing

(Adapted from Creative Response to Conflict at http://crc-global.org)

Denton, P., & Kriete, R. (2000). A conflict resolution protocol for elementary classrooms. Retrieved from https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/article/conflict-resolution-protocol-elementary-classrooms

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