

Tolerance in schools essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Schools today have a responsibility to educate our children. This also means to teach students respect and tolerance. This does not always happen at home and we cannot count on their parents teaching their child to respect all things. Students today have a bigger diverse group of people and cultures that they need to respect. It makes sense that as educators we help them to discover a world that is bigger than themselves. Tolerance to me is being mindful of people and creatures around you, respecting yourself and others, being open minded. There is what many people call “ narrow minded people” in this world.

People, who think their race or culture is above all, or the color of their skin or where they are from, how much money they have, are better than other people. When these people have children and they are going to pass on their beliefs to them. Hate breeds hate. As an educator I feel that it is my duty to help open the minds of my students and allow them to think for themselves. Show them a world that is bigger than their own. There is so much more to life than right now in their small town or big city. Students deserve to dream big and feel that they will make a difference.

In order to do that, they need to understand that everyone comes from a different background and different culture. Activities that we like to do ourselves may not be okay to do in another culture. Things that we eat some, cultures are not allowed to eat. This is okay and we need to respect that. We need to teach our students to be well rounded individuals and this means to understand and be tolerant of other people and cultures. Recent studies have shown that young children, ages 4 to 9 years old show that tolerance education is the most effective with this age group.

Children are like sponges, they want to learn they thrive to learn something new. This is a great way for us to reinforce different cultures and the diversity of the cities, states and world (Strategy: Diversity and Tolerance Education in Schools, 2013). Sending home a class newsletter stating what is being taught in the classroom, what is coming next, what the students have already finished and special project and field trips can be published in the newsletter. This is something the parents can read and go over with their child. Hopefully, bringing the parent into their child's world and getting them involved.

Parental involvement is the key to the education of our students. There could be some resistance with some parents or guardians, especially if they believe something that we are teaching goes against what they believe. Sending home the newsletters will help the parent to stay in the know about what is going on in the classroom and if they have questions or concerns they can direct their questions to you and hopefully not their child. Keeping parents on the same page and letting them know what is going on in the classroom will help them understand and they may even learn something from their child.

According to the National Crime Prevention Council, “ understanding ultimately leads to greater tolerance. Instilling critical thinking, creative role-playing, and cooperative learning have proven effective teaching tools. ” (Strategy: Diversity and Tolerance Education in Schools, 2013). Teaching tolerance in elementary schools reduces the incidence of hate crimes, racism, discrimination, and bigotry (Strategy: Diversity and Tolerance

Education in Schools, 2013, para. 1). Students look up to the teacher and they need to see equality from us as well.

I cannot stand in the front of the class and teach my students one thing just to show them by my actions another. This will confuse them and they will never learn the meaning to equality. Actions speak louder than words. Giving the students my respect and listening to what they have to say will show them that I care about them as a person in turn with show them how to treat people. How I treat other students and teacher and even parents that I talk to. Showing your students is a great lesson than telling them what to do.

Discussing these issues can be difficult but it needs to be done to help students understand their classmates, get the students involved. Students in the U. S. have the most diverse group of people in the world. At the beginning of this century, one-third of the students in the nation's schools were young people of color. They will make up 40 percent of the school population by 2020 and half of the population by 2050 (Pearson Education, Inc, 2005, p. 46). Many people feel that the diversity of this country and the differences will lead to a divided society and others celebrate the differences these cultures have.

Sometimes the differences are misunderstood and that is where we can get stereotypes for certain cultures. Many of these cultures share very similar characteristics and we have some things in common. These are the things that we need to be teaching our students. Teaching them as early as possible that everyone is different and comes from different backgrounds makes us who we are and that's ok. We need to develop common interests

and appreciate the value of our differences (Pearson Education, Inc, 2005, p. 47).

As educators we must look at the big picture and view all aspects of education, including, staffing, curriculum, discipline and extracurricular activities, through a multicultural lens. This will ensure that all students needs will be met (Pearson Education, Inc, 2005, p. 112). Doing this will include everyone in your community and help to eradicate some of the prejudices surrounding that culture. If they are involved in the community, other people will get to know them and hopefully make friends and learn from each other.

Barbara Joan Grubman, a speech specialist for Los Angeles Unified School District in Grant High School in Van Nuys, California says “ It is how your father treats the neighbors. It is how your mother welcomes the world into your childhood home. It is the words they use to talk about others, the words they help or heal, that allow you as a child to develop a sense of tolerance” (Pearson Education, Inc, 2005 p. 116). I agree with Mrs. Grubman, tolerance starts at home but what if the father is not around or the mother, what if the parents think they are superior to others, there is still racism in this Country.

As a teacher I feel it is our job to open the minds of our students and show them the world all around us. Sometimes we are going to meet resistance from students because of what was taught or not taught in the home. Bettie Sing Luke, a multicultural trainer for the Eugene, Oregon, schools. She states that “ School is the only common institution, where all students can be

touched and prepared to survive in our society's marvelous and sometimes maddening diverse mix. " (Pearson Education, Inc, 2005, p. 116).

In school they can see and speak with other students from different backgrounds and cultures. They can learn and ask questions, build relationships with other students. Education and understanding will bring tolerance. This is not always taught at home, parents are busy two working parents or one working parent with more than one child at home. Lives are a lot busier than they were 20 or 30 years ago. Teaching Tolerance, A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, state that there are 13 principles that should be followed when teaching tolerance to reduce racial and ethnic prejudices.

These principles of strategies are (Hawley, 1995):

1. Strategies should address both institutional and individual sources of prejudice and discrimination in the contexts and situations in which the participants in the program or activity learn, work, and live.
2. Strategies should seek to influence the behavior of individuals, including their motivation and capability to influence other, and not be limited to efforts to increase knowledge and awareness.
3. Strategies should deal with the dispositions and behavior of all racial and ethnic groups involved.
4. Strategies should include participants who reflect the racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the context and should be structured in such a way as to ensure cooperative, equal-status roles for persons from different groups.

5. Strategies should have the support and participation of those with authority and power in any given setting.
6. Strategies should involve children at an early age, and new enterants to organizations should continually encourage and reinforced.
7. Strategies should be part of a continuing set of learning activities that are valued and incorporated throughout school, college or other organizations.
8. Strategies should examine similarities and differences across and within racial and ethnic groups, including differences related to social class, gender, and language.
9. Strategies should recognize the value of bicultural and multicultural identities of individual and groups, as well as the difficulties confronted by those who live in two or more cultures.
10. Strategies should expose the inaccuracies of myths that sustain stereotypes and prejudices.
11. Strategies should include the careful and thorough preparation of those who will implement the learning activities and provide opportunities for adapting methods to the particular setting.
12. Strategies should be based on thorough analyses of the learning needs of participants and on continuing evaluation of outcomes, especially effects on behavior.

13. Strategies should recognize that lessons related to prejudices and its consequences for any particular racial or ethnic group may not transfer to other races or groups.

Incorporating these methods in the classroom lessons can help to ensure effective lessons to help improve the relationships and reduce stereotypes and bring understanding between different cultural groups. School is the best place to implement this because this is the one place that everyone can come together and learn the same things. School is neutral territory for all students. A quote from author Melody Beattie: “ Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos into order, and confusion to clarity.

It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. ” (Macioci, 2013, para. 13). I think this is an amazing quote and says a lot. Today students have so much available at their finger tips. Gratitude, respect and tolerance sometimes take a backseat and we have bring that back to the front of their minds and help weave this in and out of what they feel is important. Instilling this in our students at a young age will grow with them into adulthood and hopefully they will carry it on with their own children.