

CRESST News

May/June 2007

For Heads,
teachers and
support staff

For everyone
interested in
social
transformation

Conflict Resolution Education in Sheffield Schools Training

CRESST
Scotia Works
Leadmill Road
Sheffield
S1 4SE

☎ 0114 241 2745

email:
admin@cresst.org.uk

FAX
0114 241 2746

What is Conflict Resolution Education?

Conflicts are arguments or disagreements. Everyone experiences conflict at some time: conflicts that can change lives forever and small disagreements that are soon sorted out and forgotten. Conflict is not always a bad thing to be avoided: some things need to be addressed and resolutions found so that real improvements can be made for everyone involved. If conflicts are not resolved, it can lead to great unhappiness and suffering. Many conflicts start over small, trivial things but become something major because they have not been dealt with properly.

Conflict Resolution Education is about teaching the skills needed to manage and resolve conflict quickly and in non-violent ways. It develops an understanding of why people behave the way they do and also teaches the skills to communicate, co-operate and problem solve.

It's important that we give young people the training they need to resolve conflict and also the opportunity to practise the skills. Too often adults will intervene and make quick decisions that don't allow young people the chance to sort things out themselves.

The role of mediation

Mediation is a process in which people in conflict are supported by a neutral third party to find a mutually acceptable way forward. Mediators do not take sides or tell people what to do. Adults and young people who have training in mediation can offer their support to others in conflict.

A whole school approach to conflict resolution plus a good **peer mediation** service in a school (or college) lowers the numbers of unresolved conflicts and helps to nip bullying in the bud. It's good for the young mediators because it gives them a great sense of worth, it's good for pupils because they learn to sort out their own problems, it's good for teachers because it enhances their behaviour management skills and it's good for the school because it develops a more positive, caring ethos and helps to address the challenges of the Every Child Matters agenda.

Want to know more?

See CRESST –the movie!

Come along to the launch of the CRESST DVD at the

Showroom Cinema

Monday 21st May at 5:15

Meet the new Lord Mayor and have a glass of fruit punch

Tickets are free and can be ordered from the CRESST office

Good luck to the new peer mediators at Newfield Secondary School !

Peer Support . What's that all about?

Peer support systems aim to enhance the social and emotional well-being in schools by enabling students to offer help to fellow students. Peer support systems can take many forms but the main purposes are to

- offer a different or additional form of support to students who are in need
- develop for some students a sense of purpose and personal worth whilst learning to respond to the needs of others.



Peer Mediators at Hunters Bar Junior School

The hurly . burly of school life often erodes children's confidence and self esteem. Many hide their vulnerability by teasing, bullying, playing the clown, bragging or just not being bothered. All roles provide an identity in which to express oneself and a social niche in which to succeed. Even the dunce, joker, bully or victim enjoy success of sorts. Providing children with positive roles, through peer support schemes, reduces the need to take on negative roles or belong to exclusive groups or gangs.

Peer support schemes need to be well planned, supported by enthusiastic adults and the student volunteers properly trained. In some schools the pupils also have to be educated to respect the help of their peers although in most cases and if given a choice, children prefer the support of someone their own age or maybe a little older as long as they can be trusted. Some schools have developed a one stop peer support scheme that assesses the needs of the client and then provides the necessary support. from a mixed team of trained supporters.

Learning partners used to provide mutual support and encouragement.

Proctoring, where more advanced pupils help others.
Paired reading between pupils of different abilities or age groups.

Homework helpers where older students are trained to tutor younger pupils.

Peer listeners are pupils trained to listen to the concerns of others.

Playground Friends help to make playtimes more enjoyable by befriending others and organising games and equipment.

Peer counselling is a long term intrapersonal process where students are helped to understand themselves and improve their ability to solve their problems.

Mentoring is a learning partnership between a more and a less experienced person. The mentor provides a sympathetic and mature sounding board and may offer advice and support.

Peer Mediation

The mediators will help two people in dispute negotiate the terms of a mutually satisfactory agreement. They do not tell people what to do.

Call CRESST for help to set up and support your
Peer Support Scheme

Preventing conflicts is the work of politicians: establishing peace is the work of education+ *Maria Montessori*

Got a problem in your class?

Try a whole- class problem solving activity.

Ms Jones didn't like the way many children in her class spoke to each other. She felt that many comments were putdowns+ and insulting and stopped a lot of people from expressing their thoughts and feelings or asking questions. She got the whole class sitting in a circle and explained how she saw the problem. Many people in the class agreed with her while a few people expressed the view that it was just how people spoke and that you didn't have to take it seriously. Ms Jones accepted this view but asked if they could have a trial week without any putdowns in the classroom. The class agreed and she asked for suggestions as to how this could be achieved.

These included:

- *if you can't say anything nice don't say anything at all*
- *say something else instead*
- *keep a record of who gives the most putdowns and they miss break as a punishment*
- *saying sorry if you do a put down*

Ms Jones asked the class to come up with some usual putdowns and alternative things to say.

These included:

That's a stupid idea..... I'm not sure that will work

That's a lie I don't see it that way

You're wrong ... There might be another way of looking at that

Loser I don't think you got that right this time

The following week the class agreed that things had been a bit better but some people admitted that they found it really hard to stop giving put downs. The class decided to work on how to react when you are on the receiving end of a put down; such as saying loudly and confidently, *"That's a put down and I don't like that"*.

Ms Jones says that after a few weeks of tackling the problem together as a whole class the children began to find new ways to communicate with each other and this improved relationships and led to a much happier working atmosphere.

PeaceJam

What do Nobel Peace Prize Laureates get up to after they win the award?

Some of them work with teenagers and pass on their vision and commitment to non-violence.

PeaceJam is an international organisation that aims to inspire a new generation of peacemakers who will transform themselves, their local communities and the world.

What does it do?

- educates young people in active citizenship and builds self esteem
- helps teenagers choose non-violent solutions to their problems
 - helps them say no to bullying and fighting
 - gives them alternative role-models

What does PeaceJam offer?

- A free full programme of activities
- A free PeaceJam DVD which explains exactly what it's all about
- A PeaceJam Youth weekend in March 2008 attended by a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Are you interested in setting up a PeaceJam group in your secondary school or organisation?

Want to find out more? Come to a Meeting.

Wednesday 13th June 4:30 to 6:00 at Scotia Works.

Ring the CRESST office to register your interest.

The ability to resolve conflict peacefully is fundamental to survival as never before ... it is difficult to argue that there are more important things that children need to learn+. Cremin, 2002

**Conflict
Resolution
Education in
Sheffield
Schools
Training**

**Peer Mediators Conference for Primary Schools
13th July 2007 9:30am to 2:30pm
at the Quaker Meeting House**

The conference will offer young mediators the opportunity to reflect on the work they are doing, learn from each other and will also be lots of fun - a reward and thank you for all their hard work.

If you have a peer mediation scheme make sure your school is represented!

Places are free but limited so please contact the CRESST office if you haven't already heard from us.

Would you like to support work which helps children and young people deal with conflict in their lives?

We are looking for new trustees with experience of conflict resolution, education, youth work, fundraising, publicity and networking, charity administration or finance.

Interested? Contact the CRESST office.

Changes at CRESST

On the first of April 2007 the CRESST project officially transferred its business to CRESST, a company limited by guarantee with UK charitable status (no. 116794) This marks an important milestone in the development of CRESST - now an independent organisation with a Board of Trustees. Thank you Sheffield Quakers for your continued help and support

**CRESST
Scotia Works
Leadmill Road
Sheffield
S1 4SE**

☎ 0114 241 2745

email:

admin@cresst.org.uk

Fax: 0114 241 2746

Training Day

**For Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools,
PSHE/Citizenship co-ordinators, Behaviour Support staff,
Form tutors, Learning Mentors.**

This one day course explores the nature of conflict, the key skills of self expression, empathy, cooperation, problem solving and mediation (including peer mediation). The day will address your conflict resolution awareness and develop the skills needed to successfully manage your own conflict and also provide ideas and activities to educate and support young people.

Date: Monday 11th June 2007 9:30 to 3:30

Venue: Scotia Works, Leadmill Road (near the station)

Cost: £50

To book a place contact the CRESST office

TRAINING THE TRAINERS

CRESST is looking to increase its use of free-lance trainers A four day course is offered for suitable people interested in training others in Conflict Resolution Education and Peer Mediation. For more information contact the CRESST office.