

Creating Respectful Classroom Environments

Journal Response

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Introduction to Early Childhood

Professor Eastman

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Respect is a fundamental human value that forms the basis of character and personality. We all know what respect is, and it is very important to teach respect in the classroom. When we were younger we were taught by our parents and others that we need to respect everyone, especially our elders. We do not always have to like everyone, but we must respect them. I feel that through the generations children are being raised under varying conditions in varying environments that might not teach them about respect. Parents do not always take the time to teach what respect is and what it means, and that is where the teachers part comes in, and why we should teach respect in the classroom.

Alderman (2000) states that many children today do not know right from wrong and that this imbalance has led to many of the world's problems. Parents themselves do not always practice good respect, so therefore they are not demonstrating respect for their children to follow. When this occurs the students do not know how to properly have respect in the classroom with other children as well as respect for the teacher. According to Benninga and Wynne, respect is one such habit that exemplifies courtesy and brings out proper behavior and civility towards others. Examples are; students are nice to each other, and there is no name calling, teasing, or pushing. Teachers are respectful to students, and students are respectful to classmates and their teachers. If teachers are respectful towards their students, then the students in return will be respectful, just out of courtesy and because it is the correct thing to do.

Wessler (2003) defines a respectful classroom as a place where all students feel physically and emotionally safe and valued for whom they are. He also goes on to state that students who do not feel safe and valued will find it impossible to focus on academics or relationships with others. The teacher's role is imperative to successful teacher student interaction and creating a positive classroom climate. The teacher needs to always make sure that their communication is in a positive tone with empathy and sincerity, so that the students know that they are always welcome to ask questions and that you will give them positive feedback. We should always keep in mind that teachers are models for the children they teach, because every one of our students will look up to us, and we will be their mentors.

The teacher has a main role in having an effective respectful classroom. In order to have a respectful classroom the teacher must self-reflect. Teachers have to be open to new people, cultures, and experiences. Everyone is valued in the classroom, and everyone is equal. As teachers we must demonstrate respect for everyone, so that the children will practice respect as well. Being open to these concepts will help with respect for different kinds of school surroundings. To create a respectful classroom it is very important for the teachers to take action when they notice something unusual or harmful is happening. This way the students then know that it is wrong, and they should not do that again. If something like this occurs respond immediately and send a firm message that they will not tolerate or accept disrespect in their classroom. Teachers and students should have a relationship so the teacher can model respect for the student. In a respectful classroom students and teachers portray these signs; use of respectful words, language conveys a respectful tone of voice, actions are respectful, and actions demonstrated are respectful. These skills can not be turned on and off, they should be practiced and supported everyday.

In conclusion, respect is a very important part in the learning process. We are taught at a young age what respect is, and how we should perform it. Teachers should always be practicing it so that way their students will follow their lead. Respect is an important value that we all carry throughout our lives, and it is not something to take lightly. Since, it is not always practiced and taught at home it is our duty, as teachers, to practice it in our classroom. Respect is a fundamental human value that forms the basis of character and personality.

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