

peace notes

PREVENT
EDUCATE
RESTORE



A publication for Friends & Supporters of CCR

Winter 2019

Student success comes, not in the absence of conflict, but in ability to find resolution in respectful ways.

Principal Lori Forté can already see the difference.

Since faculty and students at Raytown Success Academy started participating in conflict resolution training sessions, discipline problems and discipline referrals have decreased. Student empathy and active listening have increased.

The school, which originally opened as Raytown Alternative School, provides opportunities for students who have not previously found success in a conventional classroom to learn, grow and succeed.

"Our students and teachers are working through conflict, often before it even has a chance to escalate," says Forté. "Center for Conflict Resolution (CCR) first provided training to our faculty, allowing us to recognize and manage conflict ourselves in order to best respond to the students."

CCR then began working with students, helping them develop the skills for responding, coping and managing conflict. "As our students are better equipped to regulate their behaviors," says Forté, "they gain the resilience to overcome challenges and make healthy choices."

It's not surprising that conflict at home and among students filters into the classroom. "Social media, unresolved trauma, family dynamics - these are all powerful influences on students," she says. "With CCR's help, we're building a culture of restorative justice in an education environment," says Forté, "a place where students learn to be open to differing perspectives."

"Relationships are big here. Our students can feel safe in telling us when things are getting tense. It gives us the opportunity to learn about the conflict and pursue it with all parties before it escalates,"

- Principal Lori Forté, Raytown Success Academy

The restorative conference process among students often involves Forté, a social worker and a teacher. As students are better able to self-regulate, conflict can be managed with respect and dignity instead of with anger and negative behaviors. "They have the awareness to stop and think of another way to respond that isn't offensive to the other person," says Forté.

"We know that kids take so many things to heart, but we're here to help them through their pain," she says. "We remind them that if they are in a bad situation, it is only temporary - that they can overcome. They can write their ticket to a bright future."

To learn more about conflict resolution training in schools, businesses or organizations, visit CCRKC.org or call 816.461.8255.

Principal Lori Forté (third from right) leads the Raytown Success Academy.



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FROM ANNETTE LANTZ-SIMMONS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends of CCR -

It's never too late to be who you might have been.

- George Eliot

In the case of our young people in schools today, it's never **too early** to learn what it takes to become the very best version of themselves. That begins with the respect and understanding that is essential to positive relationships - with family, with teachers, with friends, and even with people who may not be likable or easy to deal with.

This issue of *Peace Notes* has a focus on Center for Conflict Resolution's (CCR) work in local schools - places that too often reflect the problems of our larger society. With fighting, bullying, acting out and retaliating when tensions escalate and go unresolved, now more than ever, CCR's expertise is needed, appreciated, and making a difference!

The National Education Association (NEA) cites three decades of studies that show the majority of teachers feel that academic achievement would improve significantly if these issues were remedied. The research goes on to show that the skills lacking in people most apt to display violent or aggressive behaviors include impulse control, problem solving and anger management.



As we share some of our experiences in the Hickman Mills and Raytown, MO, school districts, we see hopeful parallels to what program evaluations repeatedly show: that programs which address these issues not only reduce aggression and violence in communities and schools, but also provide life-long decision making skills (*U.S. Dept. of Justice*).

School-based conflict resolution programs are key to improving students' ability to problem solve, make positive decisions and cooperate. Best of all, that cooperative spirit goes beyond the classroom.

Not surprisingly, like so many worthwhile school programs, funding is always a challenge. This is where parents, administrators, the grants community, and local and state leaders can make life-changing, and even life-saving efforts. By advocating for expanded funding for conflict resolution training for our youngest citizens, we'll ensure safer schools and a more peaceful community.

Our team of conflict resolution experts is ready to serve in any way that we can.

With gratitude for your continued support,

Annette

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TOGETHER

Just and peaceful solutions are possible as we work together to Prevent, Educate and Restore.

GIVE

Your gift in any amount helps sustain the vital mission of CCR. Mail a check or visit CCRKC.org to contribute. Thank you!

OUR MISSION

Building bridges of communication and understanding in our community.



Working it out: empowering students in the classroom and beyond

Too many young people are caught up in conflicts every day - teasing, jealousy and physical aggression - that they are not prepared to manage.

Want to know what makes Jacqueline Buycks' day? When a middle school student stops her in the hallway to share that they worked things out with their mother, a friend, or a teacher. It's not only an affirmation of the positive influence conflict resolution training has on young people, it's one of the best feelings in the world. "Hearing things like that," Jacqueline says, "makes our work so worthwhile!"

Jacqueline, a veteran restorative justice coordinator and mediator, dedicates much of her time in classrooms, most recently with students at Smith-Hale Middle School in the Hickman Mills School District.



"The conflict resolution skills we teach students open their minds and hearts to respect and understand differing perspectives...that everyone deserves dignity. They learn it's possible to make good choices even while in conflict."

Jacqueline Buycks on the benefits of conflict resolution training with middle school students.



In CCR's classroom sessions, students learn about sharing empathy, withholding judgement, and coping in difficult situations. Best of all, the conflict resolution training works. Mediations offered to the students have proven to be exceptional in alleviating violence in the schools.

"Students now come to us when they need help resolving an issue, saying, 'I need to talk to you about something that happened at school, or at home,'" says Jacqueline. "With permission from all students involved, we facilitate the mediation which, 9 out of 10 times, is always successful."



CCR's presence in area schools provides students with the skills to manage conflict effectively and with greater confidence.

"Most students really want to work things out with their peers," Jacqueline says, "they just need a safe place to do the mediation, allowing all parties the opportunity to be heard," Jacqueline says. As students learn these skills, they feel more comfortable working out things with their peers, via mediation, a one-on-one coaching session, or on their own.

To learn more about our conflict resolution services in educational, corporate, neighborhood or organizational settings, contact CCR at 816.461.8255 or visit CCRKC.org.



**“say
hello”**

to Katrina Poppett

*Graduate Intern at
Center for Conflict Resolution*

The Center for Conflict Resolution is excited to welcome Katrina Poppett to its team. A Master's candidate in the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, VA, Katrina is serving an internship with CCR this semester, a role she embraces wholeheartedly.

"Healing justice is something I'm really passionate about," says Katrina. "It is revolutionary in that it is not punitive in nature like many current systems."

"I'm excited to learn from the professionals at CCR - not only to acquire new skills," says Katrina, "but to also help guide the pathways for my career after graduation."

With advanced fluency in Spanish conversation and translation, Katrina has an avid interest in community organization, inter-sectional justice and advocacy work.

Aside from navigating her way around a new city, Katrina says she feels right at home at CCR. In her free time, she enjoys being active, crocheting and reading.

LEADERS • ADVOCATES • CHANGE AGENTS

Meet the community leaders who are working for a more peaceful community as the newest board members at CCR.



Fournier

At left are our board members beginning their first term of service with CCR.

Kim Fournier is Deputy Chief of the Labor Section at the Missouri Attorney General's Office.

Robert Hughes is President of Overland Resource Group, a firm dedicated to organizational transformation through collaboration and engagement.

Sterling Stanford is Senior Vice President/Director of Associate Relations at UMB Bank.

Sister Rose McLarney, SCL, co-founder and president of Journey To New Life, is succeeding Rik Siro as President of the Board of Directors.

Other board members serving the organization are **Bill Cordaro**, **Darrell Fields**, *Treasurer*, **Dan Jeffers**, *At-Large*, **Shannon King**, *Vice Chair*, **Claresta Lewis** and **Rik Siro**.



Hughes

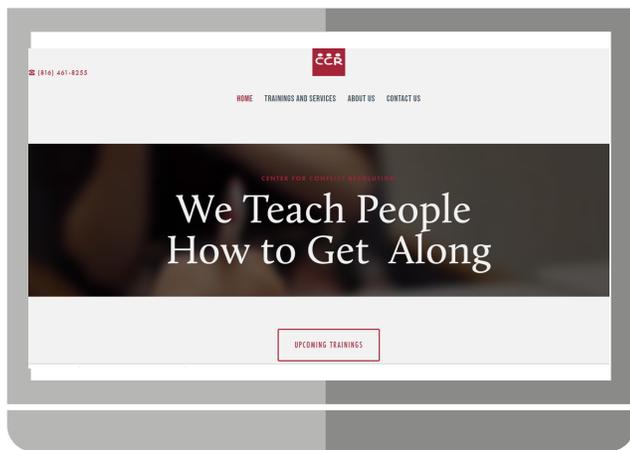


Stanford

HOW CAN CENTER FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION HELP YOU?

Check out our all new site • CCRKC.org

Meet our Team • Trainings and Services
• Upcoming Opportunities • Share a Gift



CCRKC.org

JUST AND PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS ARE POSSIBLE AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO PREVENT, EDUCATE AND RESTORE.

WAYS TO HELP

SHARE A GIFT

Donate online at CCRKC.org or mail your check to Center for Conflict Resolution, 6285 Paseo Boulevard Kansas City, MO 64110



ENGAGE CCR

Utilize our services at your work place, neighborhood association or school. CCR guides groups toward peaceful and collaborative outcomes with customized trainings and professional facilitation.

Topics include trauma awareness and resilience, skills for conflict resolution, building group cohesiveness and problem solving. Please contact gwinship.ccr@gmail.com or call 816-461-8255

ADVOCATE

Share our mission with others. Connect CCR to people and opportunities for greater funding and community impact. Advocate whenever possible to build bridges of communication and understanding in our community.

Save the Date
March 25-29, 2019

Interpersonal Conflict Resolution (ICR)
and Mediation Training

Call 816.461.8255 to register or to learn more.



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Conflict Resolution

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