

trouble with math. What could you do to help him?” Liam says, “Once we get my paper clean, I could help him with the problems.” “Both solutions would be helpful,” responds Mrs. McGhee, “I will check on your progress as you both follow through on your commitments. You can do it.”

- What is your image of Liam? Would you want to sit next to him and continue being friends?

- What is your image of Mason? Would you want to sit next to him and continue being friends?

- What conflict resolution skills did you learn?

- Who do you think had control of the situation?

- Would you go to Mrs. McGhee in the future if you had a problem?

Negative intent unconsciously labels and defines children as bad, mean, selfish or inconsiderate. Children usually accept these labels over time and become aggressive, withdrawn and/or exhibit bullying behaviors. Their peers quickly learn who the bad children are, and either exclude or befriend them. Those who choose to befriend them are generally other “bad” kids. With negative intent, we are leading kids to define themselves as bad, and helping the bad kids find each other and bond. Our negative intent promotes the formation of cliques and builds gang readiness. Offering positive intent to challenging children keeps them in an executive state so they are willing to learn how to solve problems and remain members of the School Family.

Bully Prevention Must Start Young

A meta-analysis of bullying intervention programs across a 25-year period from 1980 through 2004 showed the majority of programs evidenced no meaningful change (Merrell, Isava, Gueldner, & Ross 2008). Another study of 7,000 sixth through tenth grade students from 195 schools led researchers at Michigan State to conclude that bullying prevention programs actually contribute to an increase in bullying: “Contrary to our hypothesis, students attending schools with bullying prevention programs were more likely to experience peer victimization compared to those attending schools without bullying prevention programs (Jeong & Lee, 2013).”

Traditional bully prevention programs – often full of handy slogans and zero tolerance approaches – have no effect or actually increase bullying. Conscious Discipline approaches bullying differently, so our results are different. In Conscious Discipline, bully prevention begins with seeing both the victim and the bully through the Power of Love, embracing their calls for help, and bringing both back into the school community.

Bullying is a specific form of aggressive behavior that is intentional (designed to be physically and/or psychologically hurtful), threatening and persistent. It occurs within relationships where