POSITIVE CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP

Creating Reclaiming Environments for Students At-Risk
• "teachers possess the power to create conditions that help students learn a great deal— or keep them from learning much at all.

Teaching is the intentional act of creating those conditions, and good teaching requires that we understand the inner sources of both the intent and the act."

Parker Palmer
Each Day In America - 2011

2 mothers die in childbirth.
5 children are killed by abuse or neglect.
5 children or teens commit suicide.
8 children or teens are killed by firearms.
32 children or teens die from accidents.
80 babies die before their first birthdays.
186 children are arrested for violent offenses.
368 children are arrested for drug offenses.
949 babies are born at low birth weight.
1,204 babies are born to teen mothers.
1,240 public school students are corporally punished.*
2,058 children are confirmed as abused or neglected.
2,163 babies are born without health insurance.
2,573 babies are born into poverty.
3,312 high school students drop out.*
4,133 children are arrested.
4,717 babies are born to unmarried mothers.
18,493 public school students are suspended.
*Based on calculations per school day (180 days of seven hours each).

Children's Defense Fund
“Kindness is the emotional coat that we wrap around a troubled student to provide human warmth and hope.”

Nick Long
Education is always a vocation rooted in hopefulness.

-B. Hooks
The student is infinitely more important than the subject matter.
~ Nel Noddings, Caring
Students don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care....
“Our society does not need to make its children first in the world in mathematics and science. It needs to care for its children—to reduce violence, to respect honest work of every kind, to reward excellence at every level, to ensure a place for every child and emergent adult in the economic and social world, to produce people who can care competently for their own families and contribute effectively to their communities.

In direct opposition to the current emphasis on academic standards, a national curriculum, and national assessment, I have argued that our main educational aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people. (Noddings, 1992)
To begin, observe—but on an intuitive level. No checklists, no notes, no histories—just watch him. Watch him watching his world. Go silently behind his eyes to see his world. **When you see what he feels, you will have learned all that you need to know... Then begin!**

( L. Tobin)
The misbehavior of troubled children is seldom what it first appears to be. Understanding this, I believe, is the only place to start. No child has a need to create a life of conflict. (L. Tobin)
If you are drawn to education, and if you enjoy a challenge, there is no greater challenge than to walk alongside a troubled child and to help her see a better world. (L. Tobin)
• He’s Violent, you say. Perhaps. But imagine what it takes for a child to strike an adult—his only source of survival. Imagine the depth of terror behind this bravado—Imagine the depth of hurt. (L. Tobin)
• I’ve yet to meet a troubled child who wasn’t, above all else, terribly lonely. I presume loneliness even before I see the child. (L. Tobin)
Troubled kids are distinguished by their regrettable ability to elicit from others exactly the opposite of what they really need.

( L. Tobin )
• One of the greatest benefits in working with troubled children is that you get to live at the edges of your competence and discover that they are not fixed.

• ( F. A. Fecser )
• There is something about the eyes of abused children - a depth, a darkness, an absence of spirit. Scan any classroom and you will find those eyes. Scan any classroom and they will find you.

(L. Tobin)
At times, so much of what I learned in education classes seem so irrelevant. Huddled on the floor before me is a terrified ten-year-old----- ten years of joys, discoveries and fears, now in a state of total dysfunction.

I hold her to keep her from falling apart. I know how to teach her math, and someday I will.

But can I teach her to believe that her life will be better?

( L. Tobin )
• The hurt that troubled children create is never greater than the hurt they feel.
  
  ( L. Tobin )
Troubled children do not conceal their emotions well. They have a raw and disconcerting honesty. Perhaps that’s why we call them difficult.

( L. Tobin )
• To recognize and meet the needs of troubled children, you must recognize and meet the needs within yourself.
  
  (L. Tobin)
There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.

—Nelson Mandela
• CONSISTENCY is the key component when working with troubled kids. But consistency is far more than just a rigid application of rules.

What troubled children need consistently is to feel your openness and caring, your heart touching theirs.

( L. Tobin )
Most adults have little appreciation for the tremendous power they have to create an enduring impression on a child.

( F. A. Fecser )
Think Differently......

If the only tool you have is a hammer...

...then everything looks like a nail!
We are helpful to troubled students only when we can help them move beyond their suffering.

( N. Long )
It is important for a child to find joy in each day....
And equally important for her teacher.

( F. A. Fecser )
We must view young people not as empty boxes to be filled, but as candles to be lit.

( Robert Shaffer )
Talking with an aggressively student is like toasting a marshmallow over an open fire. You have to control the intensity of your confrontation or he will burst into flames and you will have a sticky situation to manage. (N. Long)
The universe is made up of stories, not atoms. (Muriel Rukeyser)
A little unlearning goes a long way.

( Richard Kehl )
There is no student crisis that is too complicated, too painful and too destructive that it cannot be listened to with respect.

( N. Long )
The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

( Marcel Proust )
How do I know if I have connected with a student in crisis?

You know you have connected with this student when you look into his face and see your own.

( N. Long )
We teach who we are.
( Parker Palmer )
Teaching, like any truly human activity, emerges from one’s inwardness, for better or worse.

( Parker Palmer )
As I teach, I project the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject, and our way of being together.

( Parker Palmer )
Good teaching requires self-knowledge:
it is the secret hidden in plain sight.

(Parker Palmer)
In our rush to reform education, we have forgotten a simple truth: reform will never be achieved by appropriations, restructuring schools, rewriting curricula, and revising texts ... if we continue to demean and dishearten the human resource called the teacher on whom so much depends. (P. Palmer)
Education is not the piling on of learning, information, data, facts, skills or abilities— that’s training or instruction— but is rather making visible what is hidden as a seed.

( Thomas Moore )
At present there are differences of opinion... for all people do not agree as to the things the young ought to learn...

( Aristotle )
Any culture which, in the interest of efficiency or in the name of some political dogma, seeks to standardize the human individual, commits an outrage against man’s biological nature.

(Aldous Huxley)
Everything should be as simple as it is, but not simpler.

( Albert Einstein )
One of the greatest benefits in working with troubled children is that you get to live at the edges of your competence and discover that they are not fixed.

( F. A. Fecser )
A man’s mind, stretched by a new idea, can never go back to its original dimensions.

( Oliver Wendell Holmes )
It is not enough to be busy, so are the ants.

The question is: What are we busy about?

( Thoreau )
Reclaiming Environments....

CIRCLE OF COURAGE

BELONGING
MASTERY
INDEPENDENCE
GENEROSITY
"Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her."
--Urie Bronfenbrenner
Resiliency......

Circle of Courage Research Foundations

- Resilience Research
  - Attachment: Motivation to affiliate and form social bonds
  - Achievement: Motivation to work hard and attain excellence
  - Autonomy: Motivation to manage self and exert influence
  - Altruism: Motivation to help and be of service to others

- The Circle of Courage
  - Belonging: Opportunity to establish trusting connections
  - Mastery: Opportunity to solve problems and meet goals
  - Independence: Opportunity to build self control and responsibility
  - Generosity: Opportunity to show respect and concern

- Self-Worth Research
  - Significance: The individual believes “I am appreciated.”
  - Competence: The individual believes “I can solve problems.”
  - Power: The individual believes “I set my life pathway.”
  - Virtue: The individual believes “My life has purpose.”
I’ve come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It’s my personal approach that creates the climate; it’s my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture, or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated or a child humanized or dehumanized.” (Haim Ginott)
BE KIND

FOR EVERYONE YOU MEET IS FIGHTING A GREAT BATTLE.  PHilo oF ALEXANDRIA
Dreams are maps....

"The visions we offer our children shape the future.
It matters what those visions are.
Often they become self-fulfilling prophecies.
Dreams are maps."

-Carl Sagan
The mediocre teacher tells.
The good teacher explains.
The superior teacher demonstrates.
The great teacher inspires!

William Arthur Ward
From John Goodlad's A Place Called School (1984)

After finding an "extraordinary sameness" in our schools,

Goodlad wrote......

"Boredom is a disease of epidemic proportions. ...

Why are our schools not places of joy?"
Education does not make us educable.
It is our awareness of being unfinished that makes us educable.

-Freire, Pedagogy of Freedom
While quality teaching might mean many things, when student's, the ultimate consumers of quality teaching, are asked what this means to them, they are unequivocal in their answer:

a caring teacher who accepts "no excuses" and who refuses to let them fail.

(Wasley, Hampel & Clark 1997; Wilson & Corbett, 2001)
"Bureaucratic solutions to problems of practice will always fail because effective teaching is not routine, students are not passive, and questions of practice are not simple, predictable, or standardized. Consequently, instructional decisions cannot be formulated on high then packaged and handed down to teachers."
Linda Darling-Hammond
• Don’t ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive.

And then go and do that.

Because what the world needs is people who are alive.”
Howard Thurman
"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder without any such gift from the fairies, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in."

Rachel Carson
"Good teachers are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves.

The methods used by these weavers vary widely: lectures, Socratic dialogues, laboratory experiments, collaborative problem solving, creative chaos. The connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts—meaning heart in its ancient sense, as the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self."

- Parker Palmer....
The problem with schools isn’t that they are no longer what they once were; the problem is that they are precisely what they once were.” (R. Barth)

“Over long periods of time schools have remained basically similar in their core operations, so much so that these regularities have imprinted themselves on students, educators and the public as essential features of “real schools”.

( Tinkering Toward Utopia, David Tyach & Larry Cuban )
• You cannot teacher-proof a curriculum any more that you can parent-proof a family.

Bruner, The Culture of Education
Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.

- Bishop Desmond Tutu
The “BE” Choice.....