

Conflict management in the school context: Revision on the practice

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Abstract:

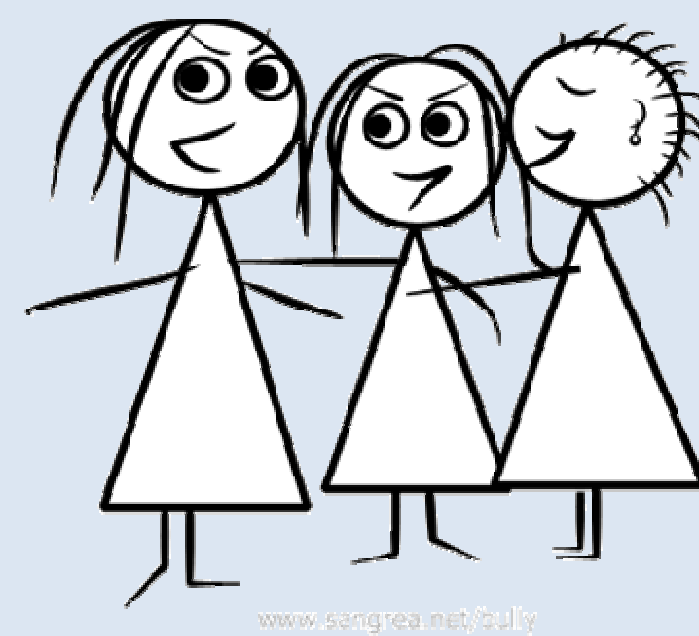
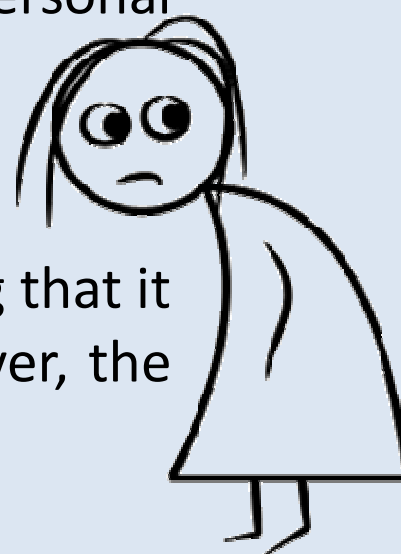
Conflict is perceived differently in the literature. On a negative light Bilhim (1996) presents conflict as a process in which subject A tries to purposefully hinder subject B's efforts towards the achievement of their goals and the development of interests, using any way of opposition that results in subject B's frustration. On the other hand, Ferreira, Neves and Caetano (2011) understand conflict as necessary and positive, stimulating innovation and creativity in regards to behaviors, attitudes and cognitions.

Torrego (2003) presents conflict mediation as a process in which a third person helps mediate the conflict resolution between two sides. In this way, and highlighting the advantages presented by Uranda (1998, cit. by Torrego 2003) in the school context, this poster summarizes strategies (Perrenoud, 2000), benefits and agents in this specific intervention area.

Based on Piaget's studies, Telma Vinha (1999, cit. by Leite & Löhr, 2012) refers that conflict is present on daily life. When conflict arises in the classroom it gives us clues about what the students need to learn. Because of this it becomes relevant to ponder the strategies that we can use in this context, so that children experience conflict as an opportunity for reflection and self-improvement.

Among the **10 teaching competences** that Perrenoud (2000) presents, some focus on avoiding conflict in the school context and finding the best strategies to solve them:

1. Team work (knowing how to manage crisis or interpersonal conflicts);
2. Informing and involving the parents;
3. Tackling duties and ethical dilemmas of the profession;
4. Taking part in the creation of rules in school, considering that it is important to negotiate these rules with the students (however, the adult should only assume a role of authority when necessary).



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Mediation

Benefits of School Mediation according to Uranda M. (1998, cit. by Torrego 2003):

- Promotes a more relaxed and productive environment;
- Contributes to the development of interest and respect for others;
- Helps to recognize and value feelings, interests, needs and values in themselves and others;
- Stimulates the development of cooperative attitudes in regards to conflict – the intervenients try to find solutions together, so that they can all reach solutions that are satisfactory for all parts involved;
- Promotes the ability to solve conflicts in a non-violent way.

- Promotes dialogue and communication skills, especially the ability to listen;
- Contributes to the betterment of interpersonal relationships - favors self-regulation, through the process of searching solutions that are autonomous and have been negotiated;
- Diminishes the number of conflicts, as well as the time and resources spent in their resolution;
- Reduces the number of sanctions and expellings;
- Diminishes adult intervention, leading the students to be the mediators themselves.



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