

hiddensparks
without walls

Creating Socially Healthy and Welcoming Classrooms

The Best Bully-Buster!

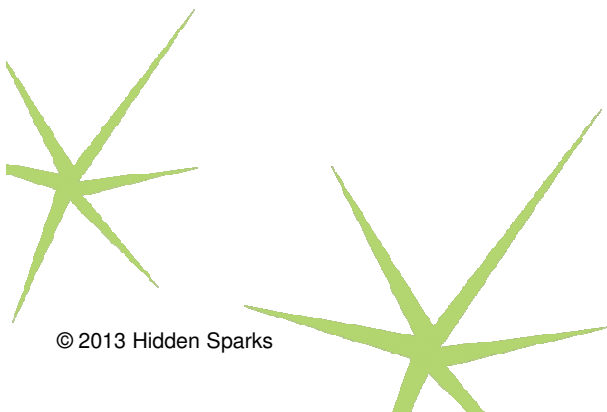
With Rona Novick,
PhD

November 5, 2013
 hiddensparks®
helping children reach their potential™

Our Guest:



- Rona Novick, PhD is the co-educational director of Hidden Sparks, Director of the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Doctoral Program at the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education at Yeshiva University and a member of the voluntary attending staff in Child Psychology at North Shore Long-Island Jewish Medical Center. While serving as director for the Medical Center's Alliance for School Mental Health, she authored the BRAVE bully prevention program for schools.
- Dr. Novick is the author of *Helping Your Child Make Friends*, and editor of the book series *Kids Don't Come With Instruction Manuals*. As the mother of three sons, Dr. Novick credits much of her knowledge and skill to on the job training.



Overview of the Session

- Bullying is a major concern in today's schools . . . But it is a symptom of a more complex challenge.
- The best remedy for bullying is prevention, and the best prevention comes with building socially healthy and welcoming classrooms.



Session Goals:

- *Briefly consider the problem of bullying and the role caring classrooms play in decreasing the incidence*
- *Consider what contributes to and what interferes with caring classrooms*
- *Consider the power of teachers and specific strategies they can use to impact class culture*



Bullying is . . .

- The deliberate
- Abuse of power
- To harm another
- Repeatedly
- Can be physical, verbal, social
- Happens at all ages and all settings
- **It is a way that someone/group with power acts as if others with less power have no rights or value.**



Vote for Which You Think Is Bullying

- Moshe arrives at the playground and sees no swings left. He pushes Yoni (the smallest boy in the grade) off the swing saying “I want to swing”.

- Shira, a strong student with lots of friends sits in class next to Tovah. When Tovah answers questions, Shira usually laughs and/or rolls her eyes.

Vote yes, if you think only Moshe is bullying. Vote No if you think only Shira is bullying. “Raise” your hand if you think both are bullying.

Can Students and Faculty Make it Worse?

Teachers can:

- See it but ignore it
- Tell students to “solve own problems” without building skills
- Inadvertently indicate some students are more valued than others

Students can:

- See it but ignore it
- Join in
- Ostracize victims
- Hide it from adult discovery
- Spread rumors about it

Does Definition Matter?

- Aggression and cruelty are NOT acceptable or healthy, whether they are bullying or another form

BUT

- How do you address Moshe's situation?

Create rules for “swing” time, create a rotation/schedule, teach turn-taking, problem solving, etc.

- How do you address Shira's situation?

Will rules be helpful? Scheduling? Changing seat?

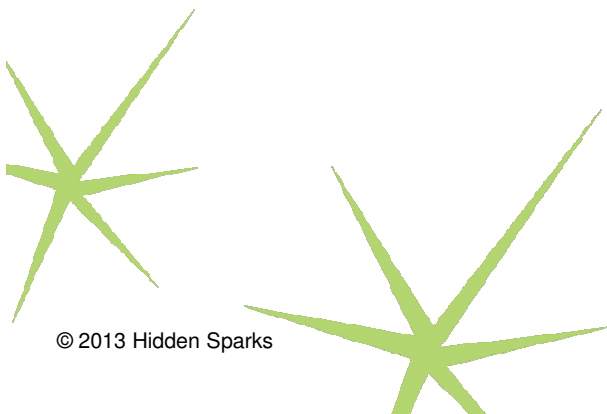
What is the best bully-buster?

- If bullying is: **a way that someone/group with power acts as if others with less power have no rights or value what is the best antidote?**
- **Create a classroom where everyone has equal rights and everyone feels valued.**



What Does it Mean to You?

- When you think of a caring classroom, what does it mean?
- Use the chat room to share an example of what you would want to see in a caring classroom.



How Have You Experienced Caring Hosting?

- Consider a hotel stay, a Shabbat at a relative's home, a visit to another city or country.
- What experiences or actions made you feel comfortable? What communicated that this was a caring place?
- Who created that sense?
- The role of the host/hostess
- Who are the host/hostesses in schools?



Is There Cause for Concern?

- Using the chat room, share any observations you have had, any interactions you have seen, that lead you to wonder/worry about the level of caring in your classroom or school.



How Caring Matters

- Direct component of our “Jewish” curriculum (halacha, chumash, midot, mussar)
- Impacts secular learning
- Valuable life skill

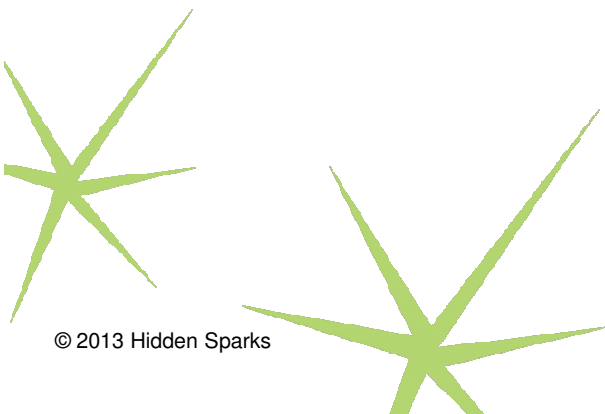


Keys to 21st Century Skills





Teachers Set the Tone



Mrs. Levy's "Chatty" 5th Grade Chumash Class

- The student desks are arranged in rows.

On each desk is a personalized note, using students' names and offering words of connection/encouragement.

- There are weekly quizzes.

Students have rotating "study buddies" and students get bonus points when a study buddy improves from prior quiz scores, or maintains their performance level. Each quiz is returned with a note from Mrs. Levy.

- Learning groups meet every tues/thurs for ½ the class

Mrs. Levy carefully composes groups, gives lessons on group roles, and a rubric for scoring collaboration as well as group product. Students rate themselves on their group skills.

- Mrs. Levy walks around the room as she talks.

She leans down at various desks, uses students names, seems excited about their work. Occasionally, she shakes a students' hand. She often says "let's show respect to our fellow student who is speaking."

Mrs. Levy's Systems

- Reads stories about social interactions and leads students in discussions about how to deal with real-life problems, and how to address peers who are bothering you
- Uses role playing regularly
- Has weekly “class meeting” to discuss how the group is doing, and teaches class appropriate ways to discuss social issues
- On rotating basis has personal conversations over “lunch n learn” with Mrs. Levy – inviting 2-3 students to join her



What Interferes With a Caring Classroom

- Intense competition for limited resources
- Poor physical plant, poorly met biological needs
- Focus on individual over group
- Non-caring adult role models
- Non-caring peer role models
- Impersonal, or cold “climate” – all business





CONTEXT, CONTENT, PROCESS

**FACTORS TO CONSIDER
BUILDING CARING CLIMATE**

THE ROLE OF CONTEXT

- Host/hostess with the most-est!
- Warmth
- Student temperaments
- Expectations for caring



Which Space Says Caring? Warmth?



Content – what do you need to do

- Research on literature, emotional literacy
- Understanding, accepting, celebrating difference
- Direct lessons in empathy
- Defining it with the help of Sesame Street
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM
- Shoe activity
- Books, videos, and life opportunities – teachable moments
- In-vivo practice with empathy



THE PROCESS – IT CENTERS ON TEACHERS

- Recognition of caring – how will your students know you value caring
- Being an exemplar – how will your students learn by watching you
- Intervention of some type when caring does not occur



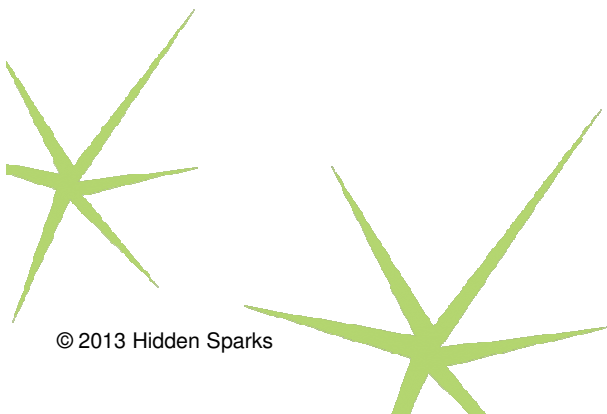
Additional Material

- Hear me speak at an ELI talk on Social Intelligence at: <http://elitalks.org/social-intelligence-foundation-jewish-living>
- Read blog posts I have written on Life's Tool Box blog: www.lifetoolbox.wordpress.com
- Read stories at www.storybird.com search for people "drronovick" and you will find my "storybooks" – some of which deal with bullying and friendship issues
- Currently collating a "storify" at www.storify.com on teaching empathy – a collection of materials about building empathy in children

Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

Tuesday 11/19/13 8:00-9:00pm	For Parents: <i>"Nobody Wants to Be My Friend"</i> with Zipora Schuck
Wednesday 12/11/13 8:00-9:00pm	For Teachers/Parents: <i>Children and Screen Time: A Practical Guide to Media Use with Young Children</i> with Jeannie Crowley

For more information visit: www.hiddensparks.org



About Hidden Sparks

Hidden Sparks is a nonprofit whose purpose is to help children with learning differences reach their full potential in school and life. Hidden Sparks develops and supports professional development programs for Jewish day schools to help increase understanding and support for teaching to diverse learners.

Guided by a philosophy that helping schools meet the needs of children with learning and behavioral differences will ultimately benefit all students, Hidden Sparks programs combine professional development in learning and positive behavioral support, guided classroom observation and one on one coaching.

The Hidden Sparks program is currently in 23 schools in the New York metro area and, with the support of a Covenant Foundation Grant, in 7 schools in Baltimore (in partnership with SHEMESH), and in 2 schools in Chicago (in partnership with JCFS).



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Contacting Hidden Sparks

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