

SCHOOL MEDIATION PROJECT

REPORT

The purpose of the school mediation project for the first classes of the Secondary Schools in Vasto and San Salvo was to promote mediation among the students as a means to resolve conflicts non-violently.

The project was divided into modules, each one with a specific purpose. During the first meeting a questionnaire was handed to students in order to find out if they had conflicts with their families, the school, the teachers and their friends. It emerged that they were able to manage their relationships quite peacefully.

Then, an entry test was handed to the students. It was composed of three questions useful to analyze their behaviour in a conflict with other people of their age.

This questionnaire showed that most of the students think it is useful to react or ask for help in case of general threat. On the contrary, a minority of them think it is better to act as if nothing has happened and escape from the conflict.

When the reason of a conflict is their behaviour, half of them want to speak about it and make the situation clear. Nevertheless, if the other party doesn't want to talk they are ready to let fly.

After this preliminary analysis of the situation, the following topics were clarified: positive and negative aggressiveness, violence, constructive and destructive conflict, bullying.

Then, the conflict was analyzed on the basis of its elements, according to the scheme: person/process/problem.

- Elements related to the people: the protagonists, power inside the conflict, perception of the problem, emotions and feelings, points of view, interests and needs, values and principles.
- Elements related to the process: the mechanism of the conflict, relationship and communication, different styles to face the conflict.
- Elements related to the problem: the heart of the matter, types of conflict.

Finally, we developed the topic of mediation as a different “style” to face conflicts, in particular at school, pointing out the elements which are common to all the meanings of the word “mediation”, the function of the mediators, the importance of the process, the purpose and the positive aspects of mediation.

At the end of the project an exit test was handed to the students in order to assess the quality of the project itself and analyze the students’ new behaviour towards the conflict.

The entry and exit tests are useful for an informal assessment and were drawn up for situations which need a mediation because every party has got its responsibility. They make it possible both a qualitative and quantitative assessment, in order to check if the students improved their competences and their capacity to see the conflict in a different perspective.

In most cases, it emerged that the students begin a conflict apologizing and trying to make it clear. A minority of them stand firm in their resolve.

A further questionnaire for the assessment of the whole project pointed out that, in most cases, the students are very interested in the topics of the project, and they understand the importance of mediation, expressing their need of a mediation office at school.

Chairman of Ce.S.S.Co.M.
Stefania Massetti