

Letter received during the aftermath of the Columbine shootings. All identifying information has been removed as per the request of the author.
paxUnited® received numerous emails and letters sharing that their school had been made a safer place in the weeks that followed that tragedy.

Dear Susan,

I've just had a really scary conversation with another student at my school. He asked that I not tell anyone because he doesn't want to get him or his friends in trouble and I am honoring that because it follows our guidelines "if something might be harmful to you or to someone else" because they are not going to do anything. He told me that if our mediation team had not done what it did for him and his, our school would have been the one on the news like Columbine in Colorado. I am asking that you respect our promise of confidentiality with this information because the person who told me these things asked that I keep it confidential. And besides, I don't want my school to become the target of the media. I know you and so I trust you because I know you are a person of honor.

We have the "goths" in our school. We also have a group of "neo-nazis" and other kids who are different in an unpopular way. Of course, we have people who make fun of people who are different. They were in our school when we were in elementary school, middle school, and they're here now. If seeing adults on t.v. and hearing my parents' friends and some of my teachers talk when they get together, they'll still be around when I get out of college. Anyway, there were some kids in my school who were really angry with some other kids in another group who were dissing them. The angry kids (there were 5) would sit around in class and talk about what they'd like to do about it. They made threats to the other kids. Susan, I know you will be disappointed to hear this, but our teachers knew and heard and they didn't do ANYTHING. Anyway, we discussed the situation in our peer mediation team meeting and decided that we could do something and that we should do something. We weren't thinking about doing it because we thought the goths would really kill anyone. We just knew that there was too much anger and pain happening at our school and thought that we could help. After all, it was a conflict. So, we wrote referrals the next time we heard one of the jocks dissing one of the goths, and another one the next time, and another one, etc. So two at a time, we brought the groups together and let them talk it out. It turns out that they all had a lot in common! They are not friends, but they don't diss each other. One of the jocks gets help in his chemistry class from the goth he used to make fun of. PEER MEDIATION WORKS. ALL SCHOOLS NEED IT.

I thought you should know about this. Who knows how many other schools have not had a tragedy because of a mediation that calmed kids down.

Thank you for working so hard for us. No one will know the real difference it made at my school but everyone will agree that my school is a better place to be because of it.

Thanks so much,

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