Helping youth transition after a "cruel summer"

Return to Respect

This summer was filled with traumatic events. In Orlando, the LGBTQ community was targeted in a mass shooting. Nationwide police shootings killed more boys and men of color. In Dallas and Baton Rouge, police officers were struck down. Meanwhile, at least one presidential candidate insulted Muslims, Mexicans, women and those with disabilities. Terrorists acts continued globally. It’s no surprise, students may need support to navigate their pain while being expected to turn up their “learning brains” when they go back to school. Youth influencers can help by fostering safe and trusting relationships, modeling self-respect practices, and connecting versus “correcting” if youth are “acting out” or shutting down.

Boost protective factors

1. Caring
   - Card #18
   - Card #s refer to the Respect 360™ Toolkit

2. Understanding
   - Listen to youth at Respect Level 2 to show interest and care.
   - Card #14

3. Respect
   - Use positive discipline. Be clear about boundaries by creating a Respect Pact. Request what you’d like to see. Avoid focusing on what you “don’t” want.
   - Card #13

4. Compassion
   - See the needs underneath any “disrespect.” People’s known or undiscovered needs drive their behavior. Ask: What are you needing right now? Co-design next steps.
   - Card #89

Level 1: It’s About Me
I’m listening to myself. I’m thinking of what I want to say or judging.

Level 2: It’s About Understanding
When you’re talking, I’m listening to you. I’m listening with my ears and heart. I sense what’s important you. I don’t give unwanted advice or criticize. I ask questions to understand you better.

Respect Circles
Respect Circles build relationships, foster empathy, and help youth feel heard and seen. To facilitate:

- Complete Respect360.org eTraining.
- Take steps on Card #5 to create a safe space.
- Choose a topic, such as #blacklivesmatter and the summer shootings. Once the circle is formed, use a talking piece (object or stick) so each person gets a turn to answer the questions* including you.

Ask:

1. What did you think when you heard about the events?
2. What impact have these events had on you and others?
3. What has been the hardest thing for you?
4. What do you need to feel safe at school or in our community?

* Modified from IIRP.org. Read: "Restorative Circles in Schools: Building Community and Enhancing Learning."