

## The Drama Cure- Working with quarrelling students in a group, differently.

Getting to the bottom of things with adolescent girls can often backfire on you, as they will probably continue their bantering no matter what any of them say. And, I don't think you need to get to the bottom to do some good. So, here are some ideas you might consider:

1. When school starts, before any drama begins, gather them all together and let them know you have thought about each of them and are going to try something new this year. Begin by asking each of them about how they want this school year to go. If anyone says (and they probably will) what they don't want, ask, "instead, what DO you want? Get everyone to give you their goal. Write them on a white board or paper that you can copy and give to each of them when you are finished.
2. When you see some similarities in the list, ask the group to pick one goal for the week. Ask each one to tell you what she will do just for a week to stay on track and leave "last year's chapter behind." Get very specific. Answers like "just don't get into fights" won't work. Ask: "So, what will you do to avoid the fights? What else? What else? What else? Write these down.
3. After everyone has told you what she will do, ask the whole group what OTHERS outside of the group will see or notice about them for the next week that will tell them that things are going better. Get lots of detail here too. Adolescents love to be noticed. Let's get them noticed...differently.
4. Lastly, I really, really encourage you to take one last step: Let the girls know that you are going to make copies of their new goals and strategies and give each of their teachers a copy. Tell them you want to do this to show the teachers how amazing they are in coming up with such good ideas. Tell the girls you are going to ask the teachers to watch out for what they are doing well.
5. Check with the teachers through email at the end of the week to see what's gone better. Let the girls know what you learn.

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