



OVERVIEW

As experienced educators (over 40 years of teaching experience between us, grades K-8), it is our belief that empathy, respect and kindness are among the most important elements of human development, and that when school communities commit to creating a culture that incorporates these principles into the curriculum student learning will increase. We do, however, recognize that busy schedules, special attention to the core curriculum, and an urgency to facilitate test preparation make dealing with behavioral and social issues, such as bullying and victimization, a daunting and often stressful problem to tackle. That's where we can help. STICKS AND STONES has, to date, helped thousands of students, teachers, administrators, parents and other members of society come to an agreement that the second half of the old adage—sticks and stones may break my bones but words (or names) will never hurt me—is a fallacy worth expunging. No longer can we tolerate the notion that 'kids will be kids.' The data show that a young person's brain does not fully develop until they are well into their twenties. Therefore it is our duty as educators, parents and community members to assist our youth in understanding that words DO matter! Cuts, scrapes, bruises and broken bones eventually heal and will most likely be forgotten. Mean words on the other hand can steal away our confidence and cause inner pain, an emotional and

psychological pain, that may take months, years, and in some cases a lifetime to reconcile. STICKS AND STONES aims to increase the confidence level of the youth who participate in the program via self-reflection, by taking healthy risks, and through the process of preparing a multimedia extravaganza that we promise will exceed your expectations. When kids feel confident and have the skills they need to safely stand up for themselves and for others who are being victimized, school becomes a safer place for all. And feeling safe at school means that students will have fewer things to distract them from what they are there to do: Learn.

Our approach is proactive. It addresses the problem of physical and verbal aggressiveness among our youth by placing attention *not* on what NOT to do but rather on what TO do. Through thoughtful facilitation by the artists, participants will better understand the significance of KINDNESS—not just as an admirable trait but also as a force to be reckoned with—and begin to integrate it more and more into their daily lives. During a STICKS AND STONES residency, students are taught how to take personal responsibility for their own behavior and decide what they can do to bring about positive change within themselves before expecting change in others. For some, this may mean taking a stand for what they believe to be right and true, while for

others it may mean comparing the short-lived 'advantages' of being unkind to the many long-term benefits of practicing kindness.

We are not so naïve as to think that our program alone can bring about permanent change. However, we are confident that STICKS AND STONES will provide a framework and language base that schools can use to carry on what we started. The places where STICKS AND STONES has made the greatest impact are in schools where everyone gets on board and makes a concerted effort to get involved. STICKS AND STONES is designed to benefit the entire school community. We therefore highly encourage faculty, staff, parents and volunteers to get involved. Again, we understand the time constraints inherent in the field of education, but remember that no flame, no matter how hot it may burn, will last very long without someone there to feed it.

AGE APPROPRIATENESS AND SET UP

All workshops and activities are chosen and modified based on age-appropriateness (grades K-8) and may include song writing, singing, drumming, 'live' painting, writing, puppetry, role-playing, silhouette storytelling, movement and dance. Audio & visual technologies are used to assist in the learning process and to enhance the culminating performance. Ideally, all workshops will occur in the same space as where the final performance(s) will take place. The process of setting up our gear, instruments, props, set, lighting and audio equipment can take up to 3 hours. To strike everything, move it from one place to another, and set it back up again can take up to 5 or 6 hours, precious time that we would rather spend with the kids.

Thank you for consideration in bringing Sticks and Stones to your school or district. We promise that the experience will be well worth the investment!



MEET RALPH: The black paint represents mean words while the colorful paint symbolizes kind words. Lesson learned? Even when showered with kindness those mean things that were said to Ralph still remain. Words DO matter!

BIOS

For more information about Jeff Erwin and Skip Brunette please visit our website and click on *Meet The Artists*

PRICING

For current pricing and more info about Sticks and Stones please visit our website and click on *Programs* and then *Sticks and Stones*

CONTACT

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PRAISE FOR STICKS AND STONES

Hi Jeff and Skip, We are still in awe of our Sticks and Stones experience at Central School. Thank you very much for coming to our school and getting us all talking about the importance of kindness and how one person can make a difference. Thank you!

Megan Zottoli-Breen, classroom teacher

Hello Jeff and Skip!

I want to tell you how much you made and impact on my self-esteem. I never and I mean NEVER had sung out of the shower other than with my friends. I am a very shy person. I play many sports and I know my abilities, but I even get very nervous before games and meets because of people watching me. No one in my class other than my best friends knew I liked to sing and if it were not for you guys I would have never even imagined myself to do something like what you guys helped me with! You made an impact on our school and all of our students, staff, and parents. I am no longer scared of what people think of me and I know I can do anything if I take healthy risks. Thank you for all of your hard work, positivity, and all around amazingness!

Jennie, student

You do amazing work. Thank you! I am in awe! **Shawna Coppola, parent**

I was really nervous when our class went up [on stage], but when we were playing I got confidence. And when we finished and the crowd was applauding I felt a huge sense of pride in what we had done. Sincerely, **Caitlin, student**

What an amazing experience for our students and staff at the Rollinsford Grade School. Skip and Jeff you certainly know how to motivate both students and adults. Thank you for making the start of this school year so positive and uplifting. I know that your message will carry throughout the year. **Rita Connolly, classroom teacher**

Dear Skip and Jeff, Thank you for coming to RGS and teaching us. You inspired me and now I'm going to make the world a better place with my own two hands because I believe there's a better way! **Jayden, student**

Dear Jeff and Skip, Thank you for teaching kids in school about bullying...you did it in a way that all kids will understand it...through music! I really liked it when everybody went wild at the end of the performance! Thank you, you couldn't do more to change this school in a better way! Sincerely, **Miles, student**

There are no words to describe how powerful the performances were today. Skip and Jeff, you helped us start our school year with such excitement and positivity. THANK YOU! **Julie Person, school counselor**

I am in love with this program, and all the outlets it turns kids towards and I will probably say this 28 million times more, but what you guys do is amazing, and I wouldn't trade anything to have been apart of this experience! **Samm, student**

I am proud and privileged to say that Samm is my daughter, and I can attest that in just the past weekend, she's lauded the Sticks and Stones program at least 2 million times...LOL Thank you guys for the great work you do!!! **Christi Morgan, parent**

I was so moved and impressed by the performance today. All students will have a special message and memory to take with them for the future. It was beautiful. **Tara Moran, parent**

Dear Skip and Jeff, Thank you for coming to our school. I learned that you have to be careful with your words because sometimes [saying] sorry doesn't always fix it. Thanks so much,
Riley H., student

Thank you Skip and Jeff [for] teaching us about how to be kind to others...and how to be better people. Sincerely,
Aiden, student

Dear Skip and Jeff...It's definitely cool to be kind! The message we learned I hope taught everyone! I think the audience LOVED it! I hope you enjoy a bully free holiday! From,
Ryan, student

Wanted you to know one of my students had their last day with us today because he is moving and my students wanted to send Ralph with him as a reminder of filling buckets. They didn't think twice about it and they made him cards to remind him of us and what you introduced in your residency - "upstander, teamwork, self-confidence, power in numbers, etc..." My students wanted to send him with reminders of how he could be the best he could be in his next school. Thank you!
Aimee Krauss, teacher

What a BLAST it was working with you guys! Heading back to school tomorrow, and I wish you guys could have been here for a 2nd week. Some other time, for sure!
Brian Gagnon, music teacher

Dear Skip and Jeff, Thank you sooooo much for the awesome opportunity to do that concert. I love to sing but had stage fright. But not any more! Love,
Charley, student

Dear Skip and Jeff, Thank you for teaching me to take a healthy risk! Sincerely,
Makayla, student

Jeff and Skip, Thank you for changing the way I feel about my singing. Sincerely,
Sierra, student

Dear Skip and Jeff, Thank you for coming to our school. I think Sticks and Stones was the best thing I ever had in school. Also thank you for expelling the myth "Sticks and stones will break my bones but words will not hurt." Rock on,
Jon, student

Dear Skip and Jeff, Thank you for coming to our school and teaching us it is cool to be kind...I learned a lot from you guys but the main thing I learned was to help people who need it, to be nice, and to be a friend to everyone. Thank you,
Riley K., student

Dear Skip and Jeff...I know lots of people including me will definitely be nice to others even if [others] are mean to them. Thank you!
Sarah, student

Dear Skip and Jeff, I want to know how thoughtful it was to put this whole performance together. I think that the bullying in the school has really gone down. Hope you have a glorious Halloween. Love,
Mary, student

*Dear Skip and Jeff, Thank you so much for coming to our school and working with us. It was so much fun! This is turning out to be the best school year ever. Thank you for giving me a singing part in the performance. It was exiting getting to do that. That song is stuck in my head and I don't want to get it out...I can't get that phrase out of my head "Words Do Matter."
Sincerely,*
Samantha, student