

NO EXCUSES FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE AND DRUGS FREE

Saint Joseph Calasanz School CARACAS (Venezuela)



The student population of Saint Joseph Calasanz School, in Caracas, lives in a high-risk area, our students learn to live with the distribution and use of drugs, with insecurity, with violence at home and in the community. Catia is a populous and convulsed area west of the capital city. On a day-to-day basis it is common to respond violently to violence and dismiss dialogue as a means of achieving peace.

At school, a reflection of this disjointed society, this normalized violence is filtered out and one's own violence is also generated, group rivalries arise, taunts, insults, threats, fights in breaks over a ball or dominance of a court space. Drugs also walk through the door, into the yard, into the toilets. Liquor, vaper and razor are mixed with pencils and notebooks inside school bags. The game is the perfect explanation for anything that happens, "we weren't doing anything wrong; we were just playing." In this environment the culture of clearing is being developed, in which behavior becomes increasingly lax in the face of a belligerent and permissive attitude, individualism is imposed, and excuses arise justifying the unjustifiable.

Faced with this reality what to do and how to do it. Faced with this reality what it does and how a school does it. The footsteps of the Founder, of the Patron Saint, initiator of the preventive method, according to which "it is better to foresee than to repress", in Calasanzian Pedagogy "discipline must be based on firmness and gentleness". The attitude of attentive listening to reality must be constant, it is necessary to make the problematic situation conscious and clear.

In the 2007-2008 school year the Educational Project focused on an institutional and communal diagnosis, involved the entire collective that made up the educational community at the time. In the same year, a teaching team developed to implement a social action program that envisages justice, peace and non-discrimination as cross-cutting axes. Partnerships are established with CECODAP, an organization dedicated to the protection and participation of children and adolescents. Teachers and students participate in training days to promote good treatment. From the 2008-2009 school year the project "Transiting the Route of Good relation" is developed, the school has the Passport that is sealed as the journey along the path of universal values is made. In the following years this project is continued.

At the beginning of each school year a special program is developed with dynamic and playful activities, the initial weeks are dedicated to the reflective analysis of reality, diagnosing and prioritizing needs, remembering the calasanzian vision and mission, renewing the commitment to the cohabitation agreements of the institution,



POR UNA CULTURA DE PAZ Y CERO DROGAS

building the coexistence agreements of each room, developing the manifest of rights and duties , formation of student councils and representative committees. Year after year the update of the Educational Project is the product of the participation of all staff, representatives and all students from the youngest to the elderly.

From the 2012-2013 school year, the alliance was established with *La Cátedra Libre Anti Drogas* (CLIAD) created and developed by Professor Hernan Matute in the Pedagogical of Caracas. For the first time the problem of drug use and distribution becomes visible, we focus on the solution, we transform the crisis into the best opportunity to improve. We made the declaration of our school as a territory free from the consumption and distribution of drugs, we declared our College as a Community of Good Relation, free of violence. From this year on, every first civic event in which the new school year officially begins, we imposed the blue ribbon, a symbol of our struggle for peace and zero drugs. In full, all together, students, staff and representatives say: "Yes to life, not drugs. Yes to Peace, not Violence." This day and every day we build the white flag with the blue ribbon next to the national flag.

The Educational Project is being updated and enriched while retaining the essentials and adding renewing elements. The Handbook of Cohabitation Agreements was revised and updated with the advice and accompaniment of the Support Network for Justice and Peace. He has participated in Diplomas for The Prevention of School Violence and Positive Discipline. We incorporate into the project the compass of shared values, dedicate the activities of each month to a value, create the decalogue of the calasanzian game / player, the older students integrate and share with the smallest students through academic and recreational activities. In learning projects from initial education to 5th Year of General Media, faith and culture are integrated, the cross-cutting axes are self-esteem, self-concept, self-care, environmental conservation, value education and good treatment.

Each school year we assume the motto of the Pious School adapting it to our context and complement it with our *leitmotiv*: "No Excuses, For a Culture of Peace and Drugs Free". The permanence of the motto, the iconography that complements it and the symbology allows the message to be transmitted year after year without altering its content, so that students, representatives and staff, not only know it, also manage to internalize and live it.

With this project we have learned to seek pedagogical solutions to conflicts, through teamwork and lifelong learning we keep all staff in tune, we manage to transform violent behavior and attitudes into peace behaviors, which are evident in respect for the environment, colleagues and all members of the educational community and neighboring the campus. While raising motivation, interest and academic performance. We have a collective interest in improvement in acting, for positive social relations and for training in values. It is important to educate meaningfully for personal and social change, fostering the learning of solidarity through strategies that generate meaningful experiences of service.



Marirrosal Carrera Rivas
Directora
Colegio San José de Calasanz Caracas

Testimonies



Eri Reis, 5th Year Student: "I have always seen school conflicts take place with intermediaries present who ensure effective communication between the two parties seeking at all times to solve problems from respect and reason, therefore from this example most students are able to solve the problems between them in the best way. I arrived at school just the year when this culture of peace and zero drugs was implemented. That is why I grew up seeing both symbols (blue ribbon and flag) daily and I strongly link it, for me it means a free environment where expressing myself without fear, where being yourself is not a conflict if not a source of joy, a harmonious environment where you do not have to fear; for me it means a home. I believe that the presence has a very harmonious atmosphere, the fact that regardless of your age or time there makes you feel as a family is in my opinion its greatest strength. Always seek to help and be agents of change from a single unit. I find no weaknesses in school coexistence; I sincerely believe that the presence in general provides a very welcoming atmosphere. "

Maria Fernanda, 3rd Year Student: "The school promotes a peaceful environment through talks, posters, social media posts and at the time of conflict, all staff are acted upon to calm such eventualities in the best way... The greatest strength is the union and collaboration of staff together with representatives to organize events that promote helping for people in need, whether they are institution staff, representatives, students and the community. "

José Castelo, 4th Year Student: "Teachers are here by vocation, they guide us from the heart to the good and have always taught us that drugs destroy. Teachers are always watching for us; Parents and Seminarians are always waiting to listen to us and help us if necessary. With the blue ribbon we remember that we are against drugs"

Sebastian Regalado 7 years: "The teacher tells us that we should not be violent and that we must respect our peers. He tells us in class and in the yard that we have to respect others. When friends fight, the teacher scolds them and tells them to sit down, then talks to them and tells them not to fight. The blue ribbon means peace, tranquility, respect, love, not drugs."

Manuel Lugo, 4th Year Student: "The culture of peace is being enacted every day, indirectly. But it is true that teachers are always willing to help students beyond their entirely educational doubts, which is key to the fight against drug addiction. In the Piarist Presence of Caracas good treatment is promoted from students, who understand that being aggressive is not the solution. 3- From my first day in 3rd grade I began to see the message that the institution tries to send us to the students, We have the opportunity to decide for ourselves to fight addictions, as a symbol we have the white flag and the blue ribbon next to the slogan "a culture of peace and drugs free".. As a strength, I'm always surprised at how immersed the values are in our school culture. Teachers who arrive and leave the classrooms, but who still adhere to their principles the "calasanzian feeling". (Professor Zorel Irazábal should be noted) The commitment that managers maintain, who is taking the projects as themselves, leading them to good results: like Zulay, who extends his hands to the cultural center and the band. Katty, who manages Itaka and seeks to ensure that all necessary aspects are addressed, from her role as coordinator. Also, Professor Marirrosá, who in addition to directing, teaches and organizes all the activities required, finally the Calasanz movement kids, who educate and entertain young people from the faith."

Profesor Julio Cesar Perez Perez: "In our case, thank God and the educational dimension we apply (such a project) there is no evidence of any relationship (negative external influence) between the poor (no educational) outside and the day-to-day life of our school. Despite the geographical location of the school, a difficult social context, in all aspects, especially because of the different deficiencies, those that have always existed and the emerging ones, our student population does not project to the facilities or activities of our day to day the unfortunate social reality in which they and their families live every day. It is culture that upon entering school, violence problems... So-called bad things... They stay out, almost like a projection of Calasanz's table full of daggers from the children of Rome. That's when balls, art, love, science and above all Piety and Letters do their job. The blue ribbon and the flag, in reality, is just a materialization of the new heart that each of us has, wants, accepts and above all makes known with that bond that we are one more of those who are willing to work for the common good. But that sign is already inside each person not only hanging from their clothes."

Maestra Hilbelis Rodriguez: "In our presence of Caracas without a doubt education is based on values where all the people who make up this great calasanzian family are treated equally, where there is empathy and respect for the other. Where the freedom, rights, equity and love of each of the people that make up this presence is demonstrated and that is how it leads to the construction of peace and drugs free. Conflicts are resolved through cooperation where non-violence is demonstrated by peace, respecting the views and rights of each person. Both the symbol of the blue ribbon and the Flag are icons of great importance already remind you of the commitment and responsibility that you acquire by having them. They are symbols that are part of an integrity that as a person you like to acquire and share with others to go all filling us with that commitment of protection towards non-knowledge and peace. One of the strengths highlighted in our presence is that there is a great staff with a human quality willing to help the others without asking for anything in return. It multiplies the message that we must live in peace and harmony and not be left alone in words but is put into practice. There are no weaknesses just opportunities for improvement and one of the opportunities for improvement is that we must continue to multiply our value building, peace and zero drugs to the community of representatives so that the work that is done in our presence and continues to be encouraged at home. "

Representative, Suyin Sivira: "Teaching not only subjects of academic pensum, they also teach her friendship, generosity, patience, solidarity and respect, not only to be good professionals, but to be people of good, to know how to differentiate the good from the bad, Professor Marirrosá always emphasizes that in El Colegio La Paz is built and drug use is rejected! They always promote good treatment, reinforce the attitudes and behavior not only of students, but also of school representatives and staff. Once my son fought with a partner and Coordinator Chael handled it in the best way, he solved the problem through dialogue, identifying the cause and solving the problem by being very objective, getting the boys to make peace! The blue ribbon is a sign of rejection of drug use, and the flag indicates that El Colegio is drug-free territory. Strengths:

- Help students use free time in useful time.
- Teach to work as a team.
- Good integration of staff, not only the manager and the teacher, but also the administrative and worker."

Representative, Glorian Rodriguez: "Value education is the fundamental daily basis in school, where class-to-class boys are instilled, respect, love, communication, solidarity, companionship, union, are evident when teaching classes and coexistence within the school, the civic event on Mondays gives the message that the school is territory of peace and drugs free, as well as in activities such as family Sunday, in the celebration of Saint Joseph Calasanz, in the celebration of December, talks are given on drugs. The school staff is very friendly paced respectful, teacher Milagros Noroño is Love, Peace, tranquility reflection of values. The rights of all of us who make life at school are respected and defended, conflicts are resolved by talking to those involved and keeping them low, taking care not to expose them. The headteacher Marirrosal is peace of mind, cordiality, intelligence, serenity, knows how to listen and that allows to come to fruition with those involved. The blue symbol is the commitment to peace, good treatment and not to drugs in their different versions, the flag is the reminder that the school is healthy territory where there should be no drugs and is a place of peace. The union to carry out events in common, the organization, the respect, the vocation that everyone has in doing their jobs, companionship, solidarity and support in difficult times."

