

Love ^{AND} Logic

Helps Lewis Center students solve problems

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FOR THE DAILY PRESS



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Academy for Academic Excellence students, from left, Hope Jones, Paityn Thibideaux, Ceili Myers and Carsyn Fonville, pose for photos during their classroom September Birthday celebration. Carsyn Fonville had one of the September birthdays. The school uses the Love and Logic behavioral management system to improve classroom behavior.

When Paul Rosell joined the Lewis Center in 2001, he brought with him a behavioral program called Love and Logic that has become an integral part of student-teacher interaction at the Apple Valley school.

Founded in 1977 by educator Jim Fay and Foster W. Cline, M.D., the program uses a philosophical approach to bring children, educators and parents toward respectful interaction. The adults help guide the students in taking ownership of problems in which they have participated and find logical ways to make wiser choices.

Carolyn Schmidt is the Love and Logic coordinator for the Lewis Center for Educational Research working with parents and teachers to guide them through the program. Schmidt describes the weekly sessions available to parents as discussions about the nine principles of Love and Logic. It also allows parents to share what works and what doesn't.

"It is empowering the kids to own and solve their own problems," Schmidt said. "What's really neat is when you see the kids take ownership of something and then being proud of themselves."

The nine principles of the program include neutralizing teacher and student arguing and handing the child's problem back to them by using empathy and making them realize the consequences of their choices.



Academy for Academic Excellence teacher Sarah Eisler, foreground, leads students between the school's computer lab and classroom. The school uses the Love and Logic behavioral management system.

Rosell, director of special educational services and the school psychologist, described a situation where the student may have gotten a poor grade on their report card.

"All the tenets related to Love and Logic boils down to getting the child to think, not behave," Rosell said. "Once they take ownership, they go, 'Maybe I am going to study harder because it will help me in the long run.'"

Rosell spoke of the different parenting styles and research that shows by dictating to students we are not teaching them to think out the problems and find their own solutions.

“You have the drill sergeant parent who says, ‘Do it or else,’ ” Rosell said. “The other style of



parenting is the helicopter parent — hovering, fixing everything and they don’t allow the child to do anything. Then there is the consultant parent.”

Rosell said research also shows that 90 percent of a child’s life is receiving directives from someone else who is telling them to sit down, brush your teeth or do

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Academy for Academic Excellence teacher Sarah Eisler, foreground, leads students between the school’s computer lab and classroom. The school uses the Love and Logic behavioral management system.

this.

“Nowhere in that process are we really working with the student to exercise social skills in how to resolve problems,” Rosell said.

According to Rosell and Schmidt, a proven part of what happens in a home where the parents are utilizing Love and Logic principles is that parents are moving away from shouting contests or just dictating to their children. By getting parent and child to find a gentler approach to how they discuss problems, the child gradually moves to a logical solution on their own. That communication carries over to the school environment and teachers use the same principles.

“A number of parents would originally argue or put their child in their rooms with power struggles, and it destroys the relationship,” Rosell said.

The result when the child comes out of that room does not garner warm and respectful communication according to Rosell.

“For our teachers, we have staff meetings, send out emails and we have a ton of resources,” Schmidt said. “Some teachers do request that I go into a classroom from time to time and offer suggestions, which I am happy to do.”

Both educators describe parents marveling at how much better their relationships are with their children. Also, they each have experienced how incredible it is to see the students working out solutions to social problems, minus the rebellion and anger.

Schmidt and Rosell shared that Love and Logic principles can work in any relationship.

“My husband was on the phone with the cable company one time,” Schmidt said, “and he used every Love and Logic skill on them. And it worked.”



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Heidi Valcore listens to classroom instructions prior to a birthday celebration.

For more information about the Love and Logic program, visit the website at www.loveandlogic.com .

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