

# The Institute for Student Empowerment

# Empowerment Issue

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BLAME

No Single Raindrop Believes It Is Responsible For The Flood

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## Teacher's Corner

I can never forget Gloria. Gloria is a teacher. Little did she know, the advice she extended to one of her "At-risk" students would contribute to that student helping so many others.

And, even though the student was difficult and challenging, Gloria saw beyond his faults and looked to his potential.

No, Gloria wasn't a super-woman teacher, with a S on her chest, saving children with a single word. She didn't receive glamorous teaching awards or take in the homeless. She merely followed a simple motto, "Every human is a special masterpiece, made by the Creator, and the Creator doesn't create any junk!"

The student went on to become a national keynote speaker, author and trainer. Gloria was my own teacher.

Here's to you Gloria and to all teachers who look past a child's faults and seek to bring forth the beauty within.

"Education is not the piling on of learning, information, data, fact, skill or abilities – that's training or instruction, but is rather making visible what is hidden as a seed ... to be educated a person doesn't have to know much or be informed, but he or she does have to have been exposed vulnerably to the transformative events of an engaged human life ... One of the greatest problems of our times is many have been schooled but few are educated.

Author, Thomas Moore

## Welcome to the Empowerment issue

"Let's settle this once and for all. If blame is to be cast, related to the education of the child, it's the entire fault of the parent," said an elementary teacher. "Parents are responsible for preparing their child before that child enters school."

"Certainly, teachers can teach academic principles, but the way that child receives that instruction is based on his upbringing," said the teacher.

A parent, on the other hand, had this to say about whose to blame, "Teachers who pass the blame to the parent are equivalent to doctors who pass their failures to the patient. A doctor should

know his craft and be able to effectively diagnose a patient's problem. Can you imagine a doctor asking a patient to fix her own problem that's what many teachers want everyone else to do for them," said the parent.

The blame game doesn't stop there. There are principals to blame for implementing too many new programs. There are superintendents to blame for not allocating dollars, resources or simply, "Don't get it." There are politicians to blame for cutting dollars and resources, and countless other villains contributing to the educational demise.

In this monthly newsletter we will find the real culprit. We will actively seek it out, unclasp it, and display it shamelessly before you.

If you are privy glimpses of this menacing imposter, please share its whereabouts and we will share your thoughts (anonymously, if you choose) with our readers.

Some things in life have no grey area, and the education of our children is such a thing. We are charged to act as one, identify strengths and shortcomings, be bold enough to challenge self, institution and others, and create a model that leaves no child unable to compete in today's global marketplace.

We look forward to your powerful insights.

Wes Hall, Editor

# I Am a Teacher!

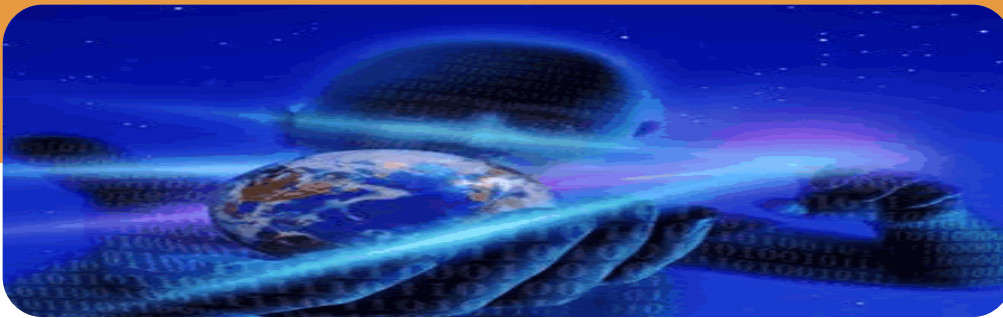
I am a teacher! What I do and say are being absorbed by young minds who will echo these images across the ages. My lessons will be immortal, affecting people yet unborn, people I will never see or know. The future of the world is in my classroom today, a future with the potential for good or bad. The pliable minds of tomorrow's leaders will be molded either artistically or grotesquely by what I do.

Several future presidents are learning from me today: so are the

great writers of the decades, and so are all the so-called ordinary people who will make the decisions in a democracy. I must never forget these same young people could be the thieves or murderers of the future.

Only a teacher? Thank God I have a calling to the greatest profession of all! I must be vigilant every day lest I lose one fragile opportunity to improve tomorrow.

*Ivan Welton Fitzwater*



## Strategy Corner - #1 The Relationship

It's been said, "People only care about how much you know, when they know how much you care."

That statement holds a greater truth when applied to at-risk students. At-risk students generally come from situations where promises are broken on a regular basis. In many instances, dealing with danger is a normal way of life. You can see why creating an atmosphere of trust is critical in reaching such a student.

The fact the at-risk student comes from such a dysfunctional environment creates in him/her a "Danger detection identifying system." That system is designed to identify (in a short amount of time)

who/what is real, fake, a threat or safe.

On the side of the page you will find 5 bullets to building a positive relationship with an at-risk student. I hope the insights help you in developing the great relationships necessary to communicate effectively with challenging students.

Feel free to send any questions to me @ [whall888@aol.com](mailto:whall888@aol.com) or visit [www.studentemp.org](http://www.studentemp.org)

Good luck in building powerful relationships with your students!

be thankful for the people who expect a lot from you



## *5 secrets to building positive relationships with at-risk students*

- *Use your energy to deliver a message of "Accessible control"*
- *Create outcomes from the beginning (What will they gain from mastering the materials?)*
- *Always have a plan (never appear to be shooting from the hip)*
- *Be consistent (a lull in control can create the appearance of uncertainty on your part)*
- *Keep expectations high (although the possibility of playing in the NBA or becoming a famous rapper is thousands to one, at-risk youth dream of being that one. Keep expectations high and watch them reach for the vision you say can be theirs')*

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