

# warm welcome



# Applying NVR Successfully In Israel High School with Severe Pupil Violence



Tzahi Lev-Ran, Ph.D.  
May 11 2018

# Headlines

Chapter A – welcome to Beit-Shemesh (March 2008)

Chapter B – the road not taken (April 2008)

Chapter C – the 2008 NVR process

Chapter D – The NVR concepts

Chapter E – successful results and conclusions

# The Amit School context

- An all boys high school for seventh to twelfth graders - 240 students.
- Five religious schools.
- Four of them can classify the students who come to them.
- My high school accepts everybody
- Expectations are high, and the level should match the national level.
- The school belongs to the AMIT network.

# Chapter A

## "The hallways of terror"



# Media 4 Page Converge



## מסדרונות האימה

"The hallways of terror"

תחקיר  
מיוחד  
עמ' 46



אין שם רגע דל ■ כמעט כל יום מתרחשת בו קטטה, חילופי קללות שם הם דבר שבשגרה והכרזה על "מכות" כבר לא מהווה הפתעה ■ ביה"ס אמ"ת פירסט הפך, לדברי לא מעט תלמידים והורים, לזירת קרב אלימה ■ והכי גרוע- התעלמות וטיוח מצד ההנהלה

# "The hallways of terror"



- There's never a dull moment.
- There's at least one fight almost every day
- Exchanging curses between students is commonplace
- And the declaration of beatings is no longer a surprise
- The Amit First School had become, according to a few students and parents, a violent battlefield.
- And worst of all, the management had complete disregard and seemed to have blinders on to what was happening at the school.



# "The hallways of terror"

Systematic violence and harassment



# "The hallways of terror"

Property set on fire



Firecrackers thrown  
at a teacher



Resulted in hospitalization

# "The hallways of terror"

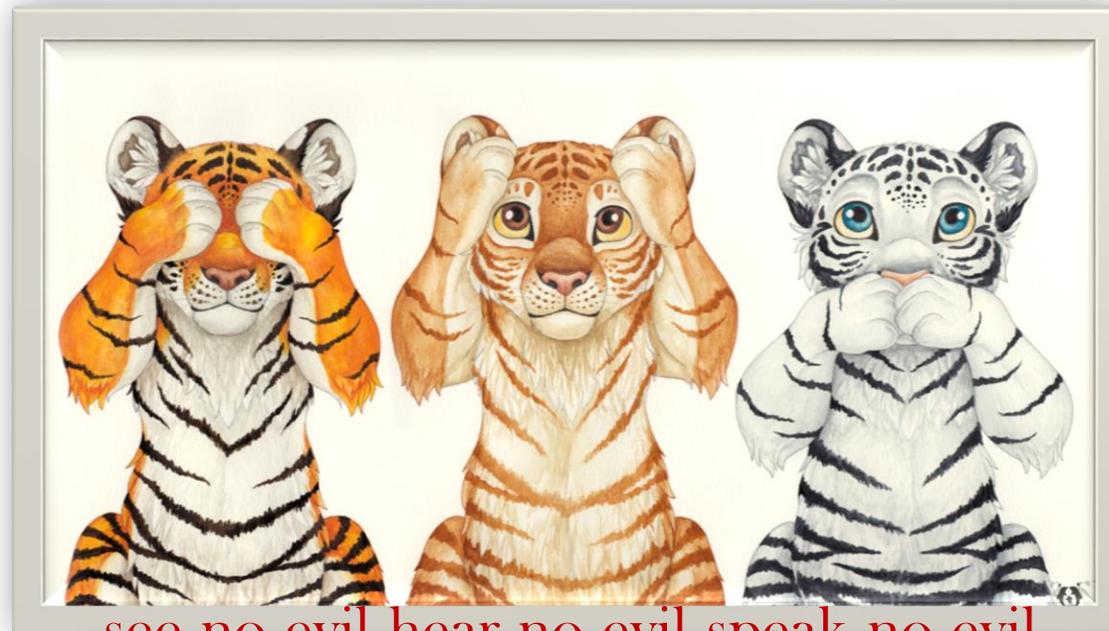
- A pupils father tried to enter school premises with a baseball bat seeking vengeance for his son.



# Intimidated Staff

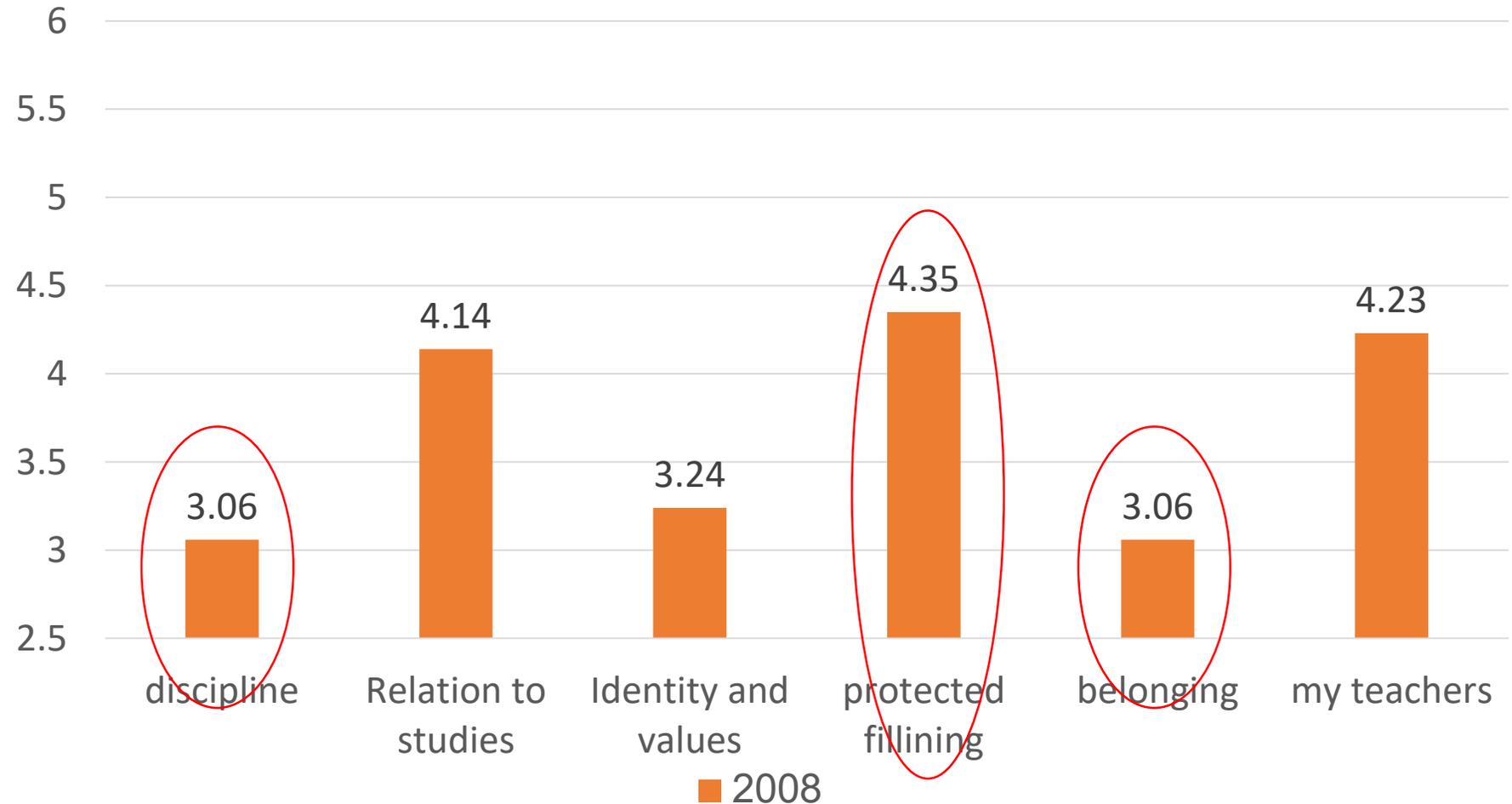
40 Intimidated staff members:

- No tools for action
- No backup



see no evil hear no evil speak no evil

# Climate Questionnaires 1-6 scale



# 2008 Matriculation Certificate Eligibility



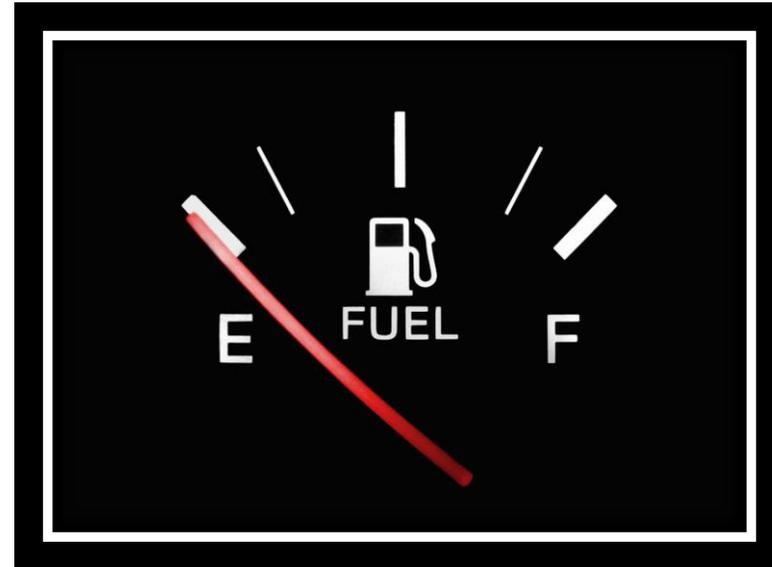
**34%**



# Worrying Future

ONLY Four seventh graders registered for the 2009 school year

Mistrust in Community



Teachers who managed to find another job - left.  
Those who remained were totally discouraged

Possible outcome – school will be closed

- The principal left
- A tender was held
- One applicant



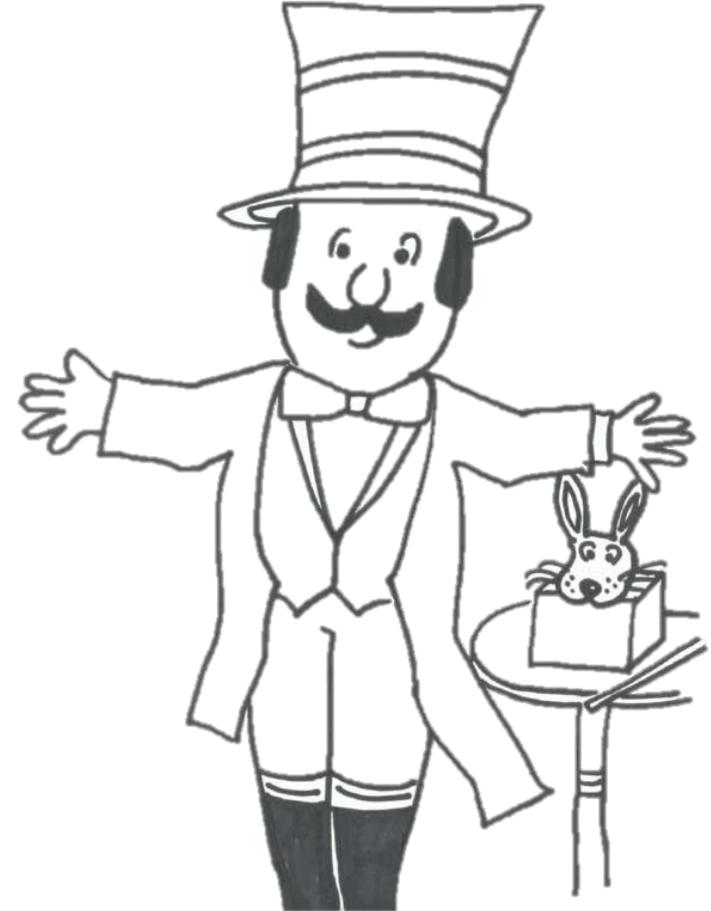
# Chapter B



# Consultation



The advice I received



# The Quest for the New Way

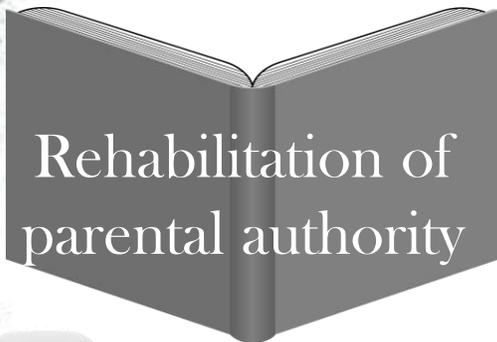
Several meetings with principal and staff



The Adults Are The Key

Overwhelming  
insight

2008 the new authority approach



A solution for families

Theoretical  
background



One Israeli school applied NVR approach

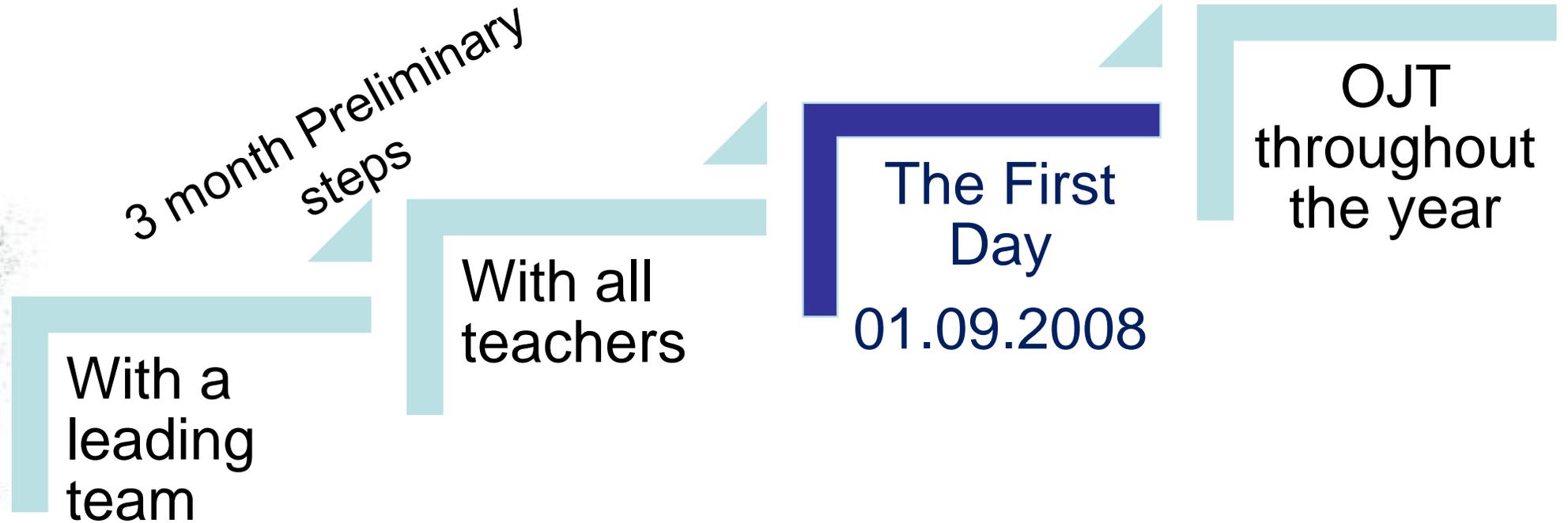
Real life  
model

# Chapter C

## The 2008 Process



# The intervention process



# The Need For a Leading Team

- ✓ If you realize that your charisma is a disadvantage - you will be able to succeed over time (Jim Collins)
- ✓ Lead a 180° change – only a team can

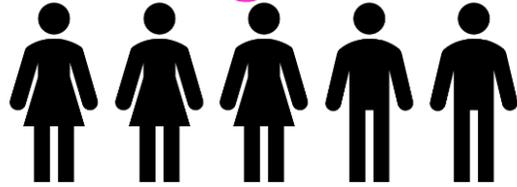
A team within the team

A small committed team to lead all 40 teachers

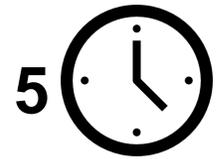
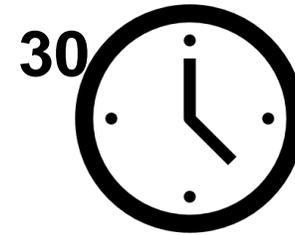


# Our Diverse Leading Team Of Five

Mix gender



Mix teaching experience



Mix school positions



Mix influential level in other teachers



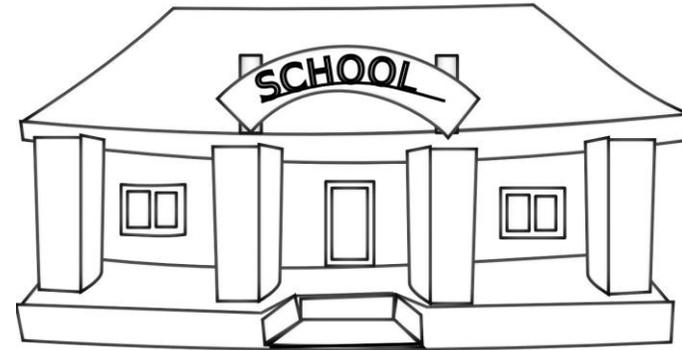
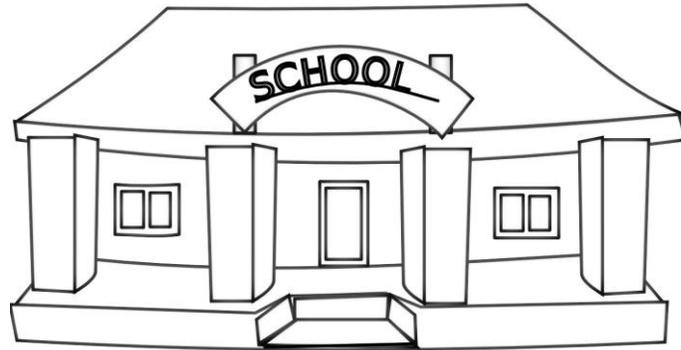
Mix level of inner motivation to change



I asked them to join the leading team

# The First Decision – Which Approach?

Visited two Israeli high-schools



Looked into two different successful approaches



rigid behavioral system



new authority approach

Luck goes with the  
good guys

- the team unanimously chose the new authority approach

# The Two Days Of Staff Preparation

- Lecture by Haim Omer - Understanding the concept
- Workshop work:

1. **Meaningful presence**

2. **Preventing escalation and delaying the reaction**

3. **Alliance teams**



- Prepared for the first day of school

# My First Summer as a Principal

LESSONS  
LEARNED

In order to succeed take care of your staff

- Their physical aspect
- Their emotional aspect



# 01.09.2008 – THE FIRST DAY

1. Successful demonstration of meaningful presence
  - ✓ All 40 teachers at school – at least two in each class
2. Specific personal empowerment of the teachers
  - ✓ “We support your homeroom teacher and your homeroom teacher supports all of the other teachers”



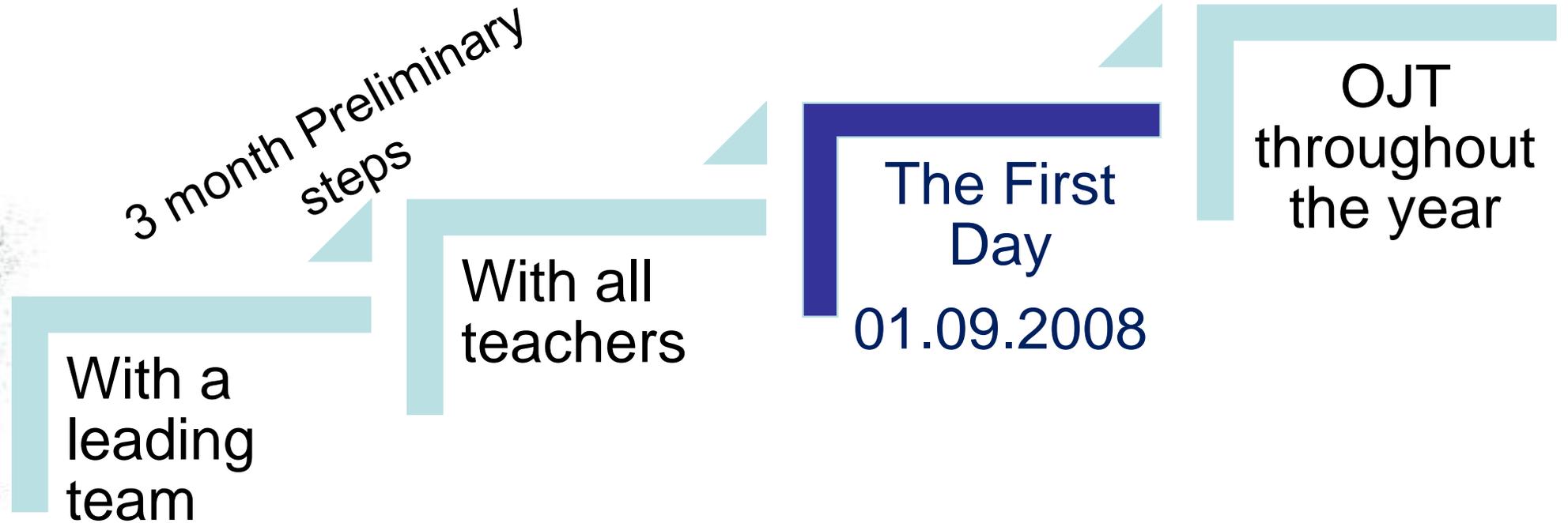
# On the Job Training for staff

A biweekly meetings Addressed as a course

- during school hours at 14:00
- starts with lunch buffet
- lead by the two consultants
- includes discussions & dilemmas analysis



# The intervention proses - Summary



# Chapter D – The Concepts



# The NVR

Meaningful presence

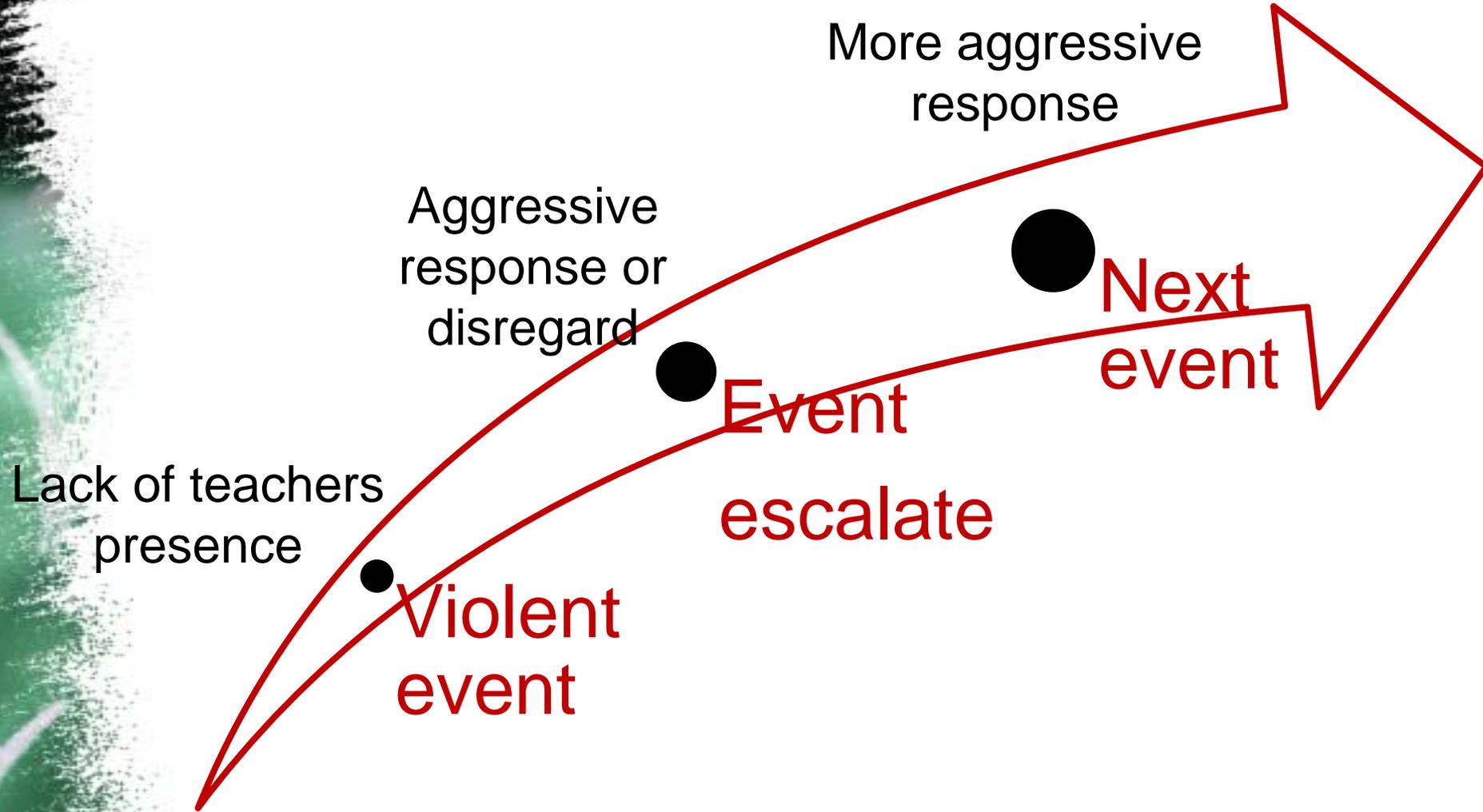


Preventing escalation and delaying the reaction

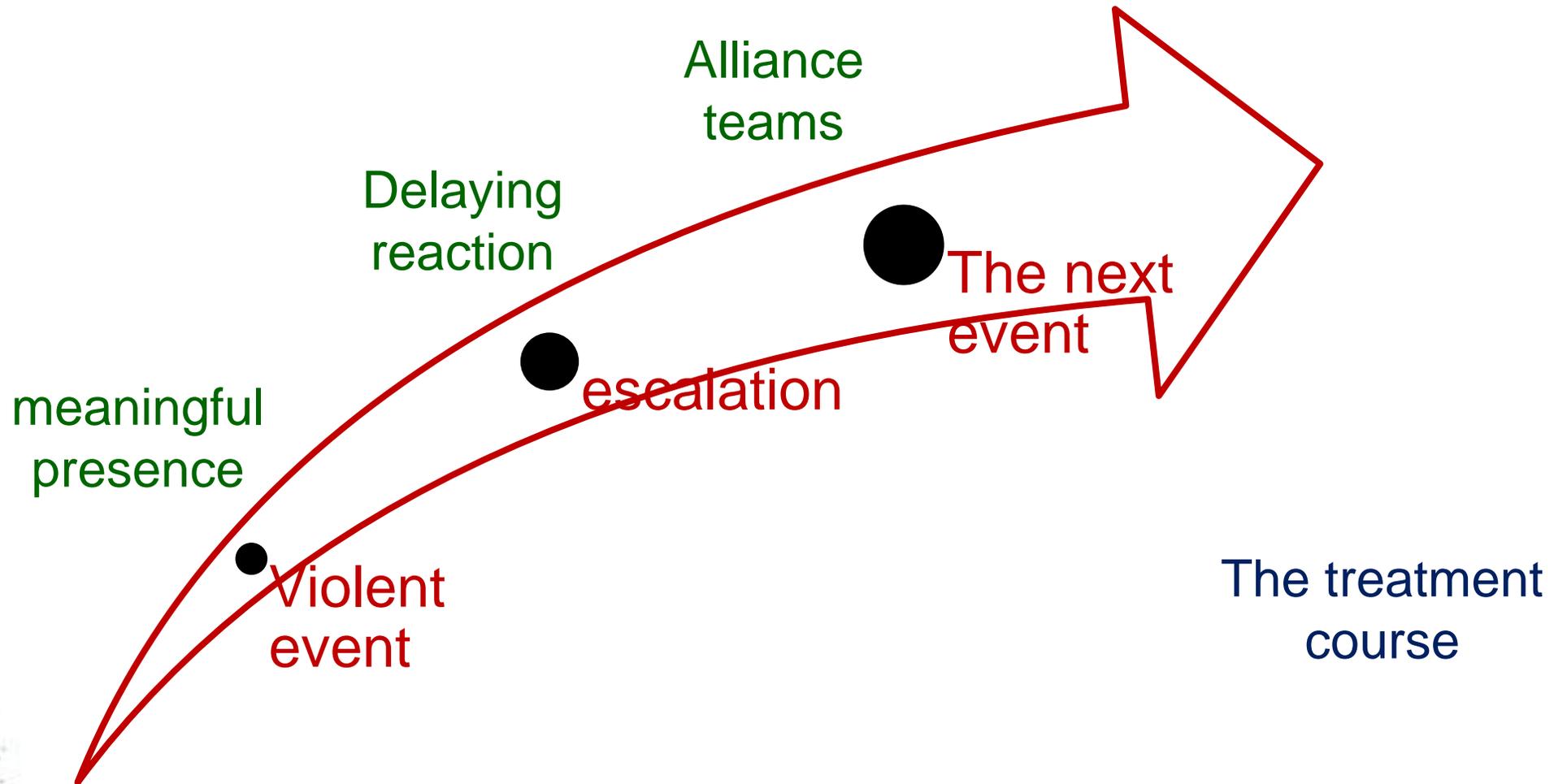
Alliance teams



# The violence course



# The preventive course



# 1. Preventing Violence With Meaningful Presence



# Meaningful Presence Core Concept

A relationship between an adult and a child is based on the presence of the adult

A conversation, a smile 😊, a pat on the back - contact

The presence in the classrooms, hallways and courtyard

rules are set in all places and at all times

It is not enough to be in a place - it should also be significant

it is much easier to prevent an event than to deal with it after it has occurred

# The Rosh-Hashanah “Test”

- Our Jewish New-Year is celebrated at the beginning of school year
- I thought a school assembly was a good way to celebrate with a one hour lecture

I was warned by all the teachers that a massive assembly will bring disastrous violence for sure



# Learning From Past Experience

## The question

How a hall with 240 students and 40 teachers is a potential disaster?



## The answer

Usually only 15 teachers attend such gatherings



# Getting Ready

I asked all the teachers

1. To look into the gathering importance
2. To arrive early and occupy sits all over the hall



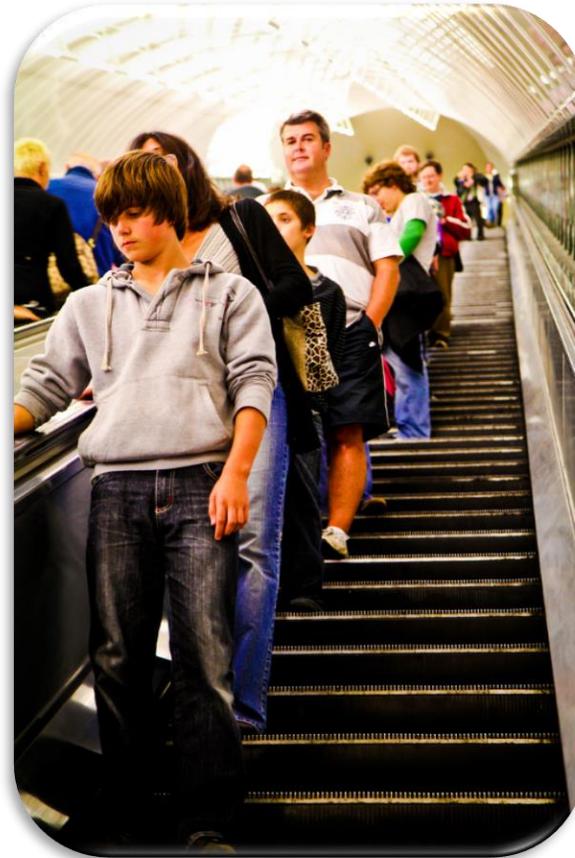
# The Gathering Takes Place

- All teachers arrived and took vacant sits
- Creating a situation where the maximum distance between a student and a teacher was three seats.



# After an Hour

Students left the hall in an orderly fashion



# Lesson Learned

LESSONS  
LEARNED



- Teachers are willing to invest beyond the minimum they owe.
- Students are able to sit for an hour and behave well
- Meaningful presence – every day, all day, everywhere

# 2. Preventing Escalation With Delay Reaction



# Dealing with an event - the old authority

Insolent students must be dealt with fast and hard reaction

- **Fast:** Hit the iron when it is hot
- **Hard:** If the student does not understand power, he will understand more power.



Adults Must **Win** Every Confrontation

# Dealing with an event – N.V.R

**Patience:** Hit the iron when it is COLD

- ✓ Restrain in real time
- ✓ React when both teacher and student are calm
- ✓ Don't ignore and don't forget
- ✓ The teachers are responsible for preventing escalation



# Preventing escalation –Not so simple When Delay Response Does Not Apply?

**Need to keep students safe**

When a student hits  
another student



**Need to teach**

when a student interferes the  
lesson in a way that does not  
allow the lesson to take place



# Main issues:

- there is no need to "win" every confrontation with students
- You are not allowed to ignore violence events
- the responsibility for preventing the escalation is on the adult
- The goal of preventing escalation is to educate

LESSONS  
LEARNED



# 3. Preventing Next Event With Alliance Teams



# Different Alliances

adults against children



everyone is against teachers



# Types of Alliances We Adopted

1. An alliance between teachers themselves.
2. An alliance between teachers and parents
3. A comprehensive alliance parents, teachers and students.



# The Concept of Teachers Alliance

- Each teacher has a support group to talk about specific students and share his
  - ✓ Thoughts
  - ✓ Insights
  - ✓ Problems



# What's new?

“It's interesting.  
I don't have any  
problem with this  
class. I like them  
very much, and  
they like me”



# Clear Rules for Teachers Alliance

1. Always treat your colleague with respect and empathy.
2. Together, think about how your colleague can improve his practices in order to face challenges.
3. If relevant - offer help.

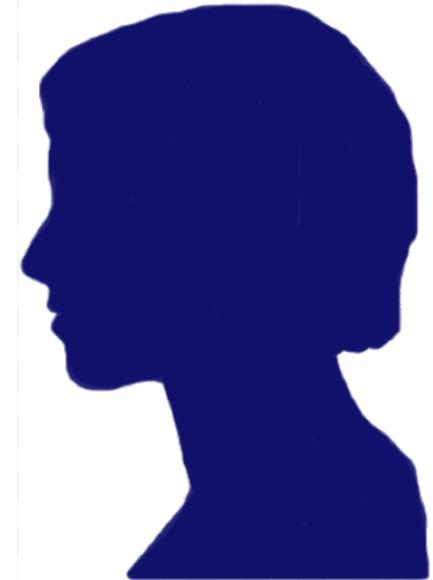


# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

I want to talk to you  
about history class  
I heard yesterday  
that you were  
being rude and  
interrupting history  
lessons regularly.



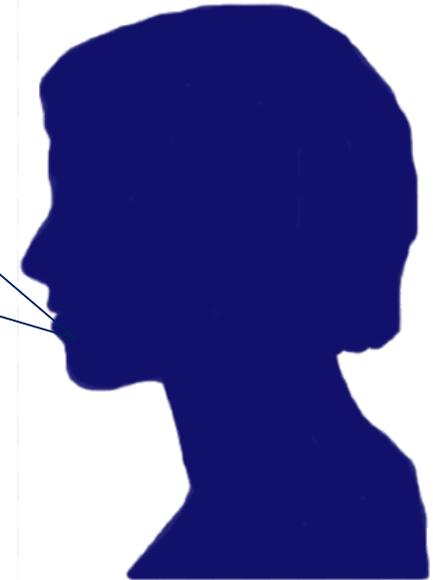
**A student**

# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

Are you talking  
about us in the  
teachers' room?



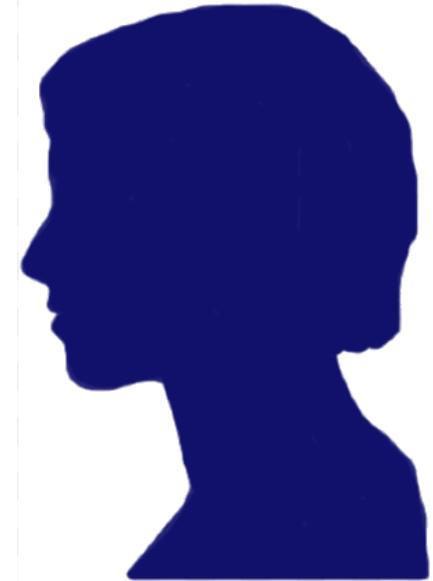
**A student**

# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

Yes. We certainly talk about you, because you are important to us, and because we are one body.



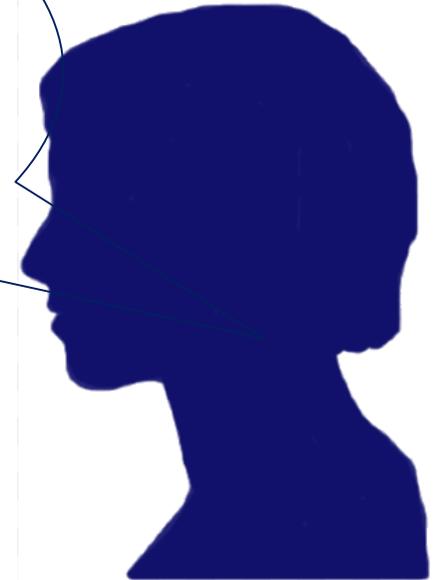
**A student**

# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

Maybe you should talk  
about something a  
little more interesting  
and less nosy?



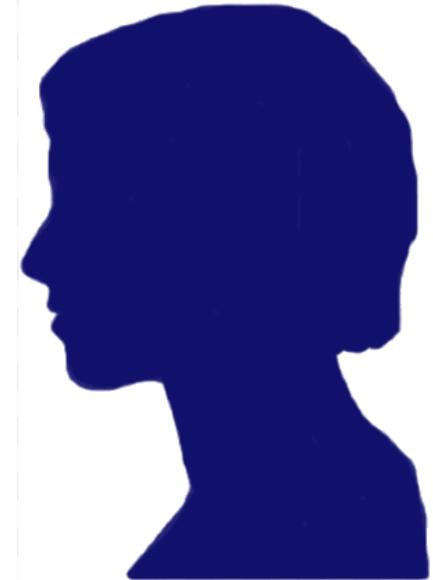
**A student**

# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

I told the history teacher that you are an outstanding student, and I promised him that I would talk to you”.



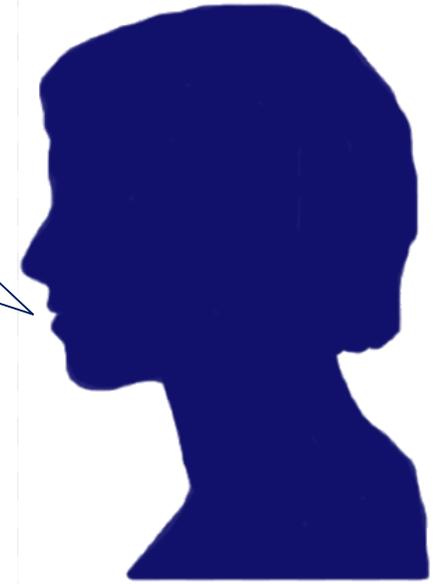
**A student**

# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

But how does  
that relate to  
you?



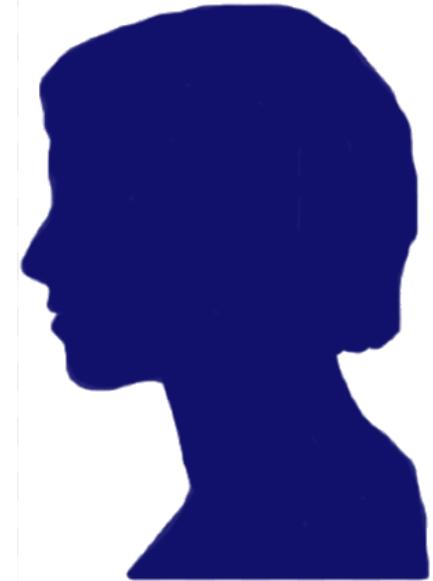
**A student**

# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

You have to understand that hurting the history teacher is a blow to all school teachers.



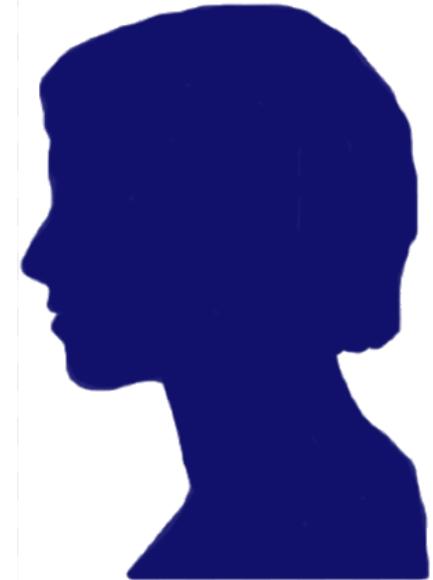
**A student**

# Teachers Alliance Example



**A math teacher**

I know you can excel,  
now the history  
teacher knows that  
too,  
and tomorrow you'll  
show him that in  
class



**A student**

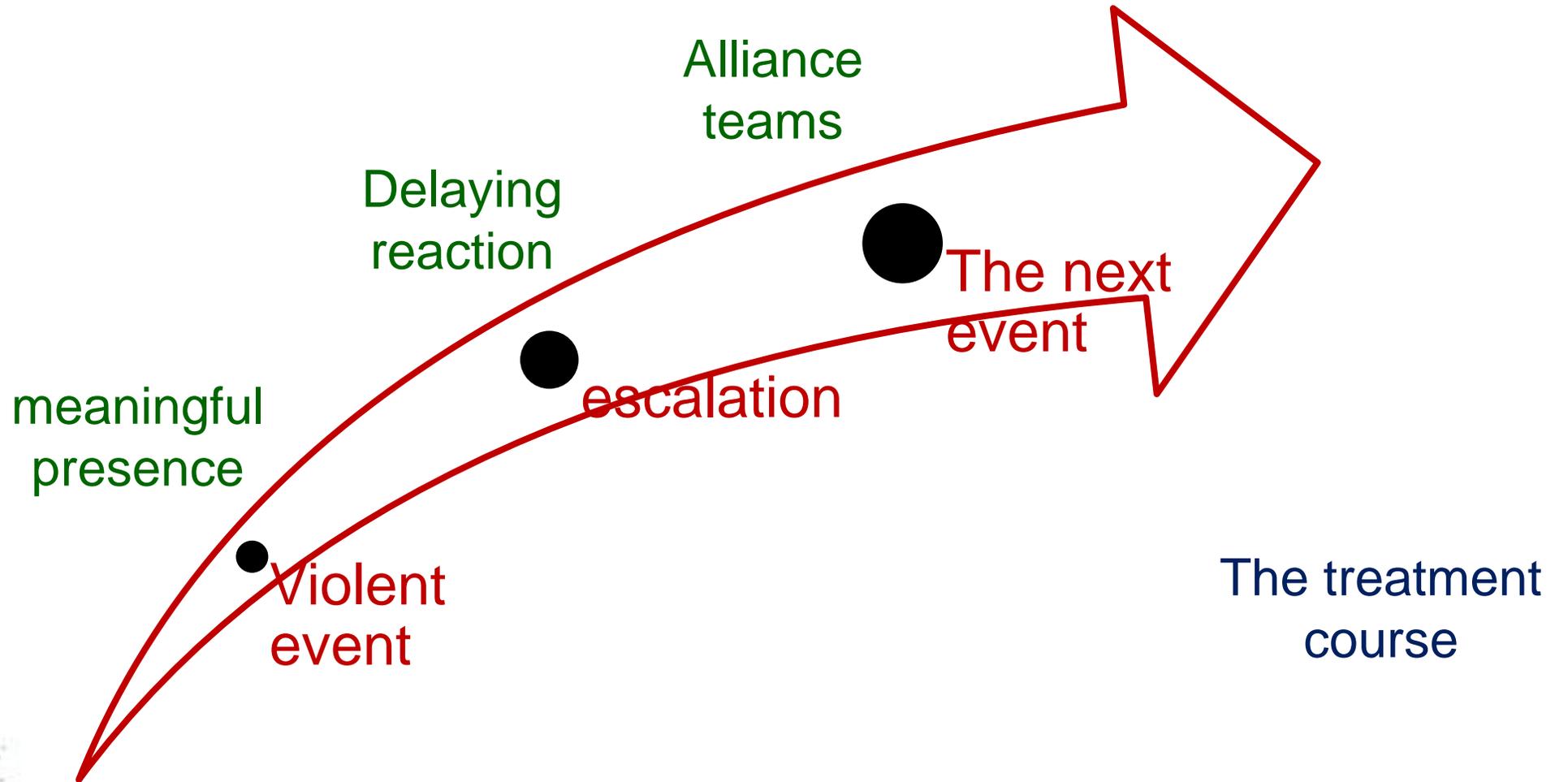
# Not Simple

LESSONS  
LEARNED



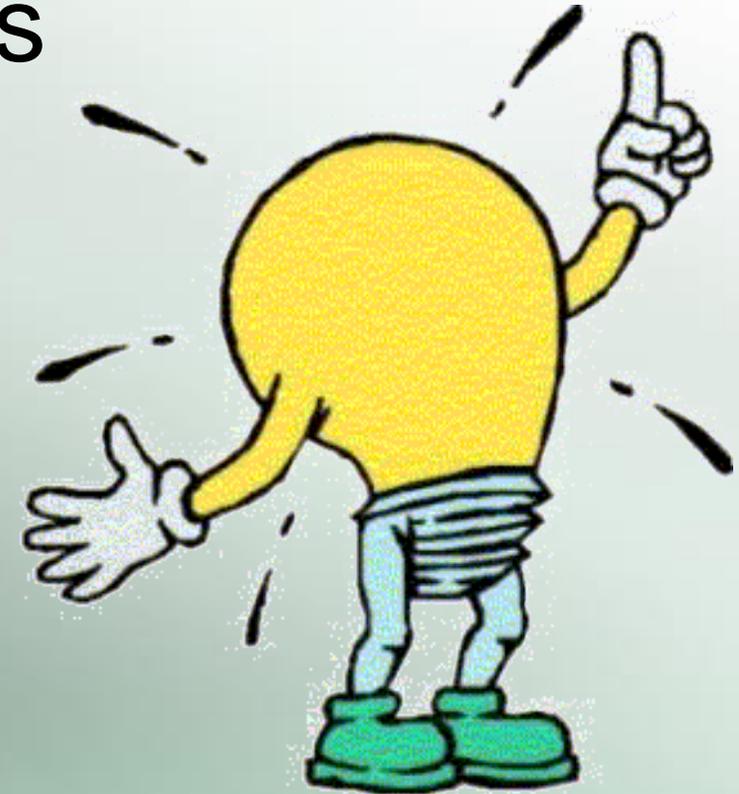
- Alliance teams are a very important part of the course
- The schedule made it very difficult for us to hold the Allied teams regularly

# The preventive course

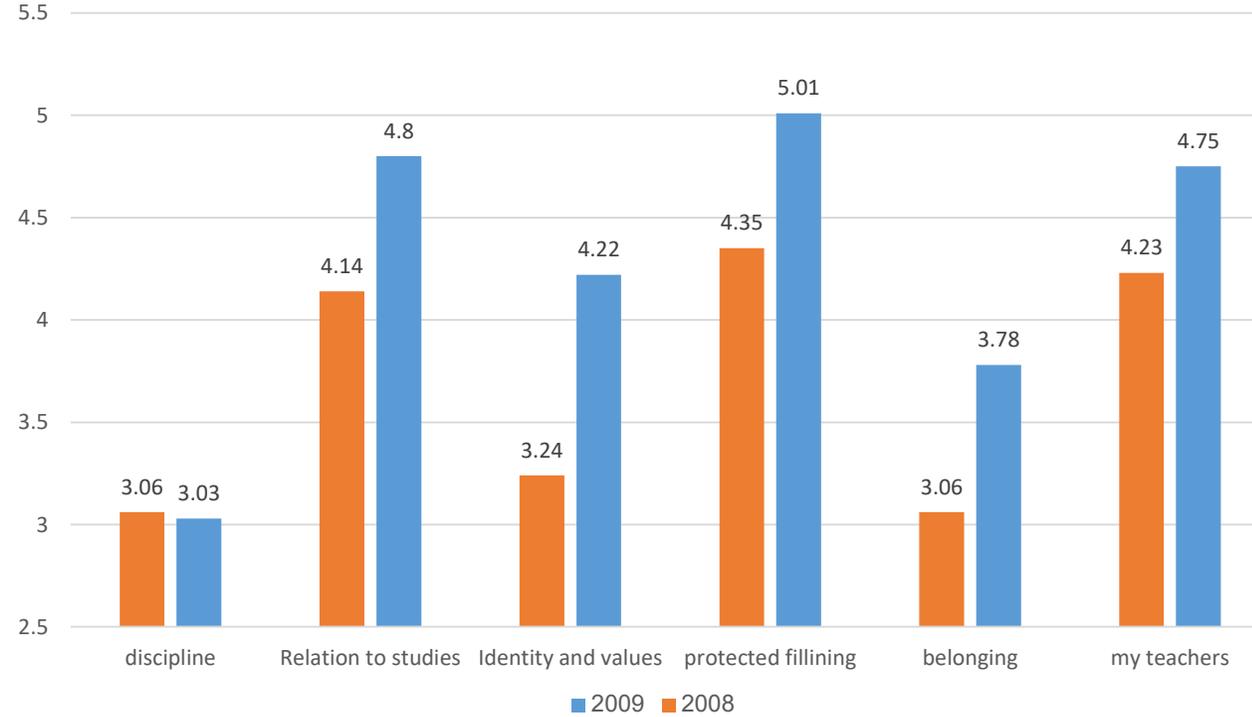


# Chapter E

## Successful results and Conclusions

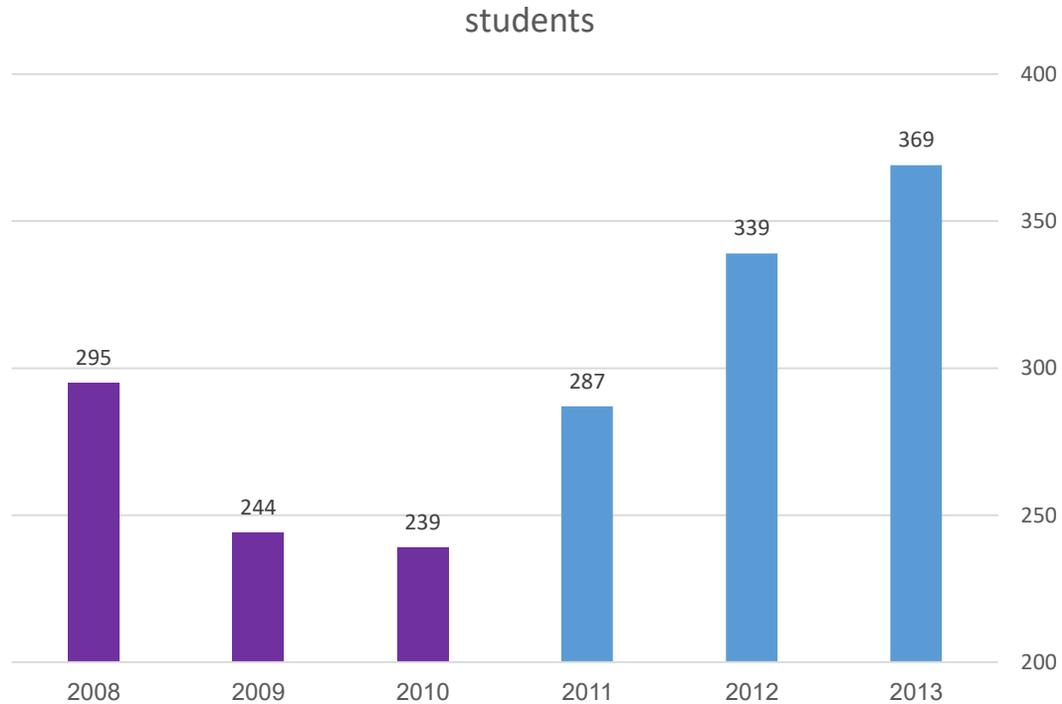


# Climate Questionnaires 2009

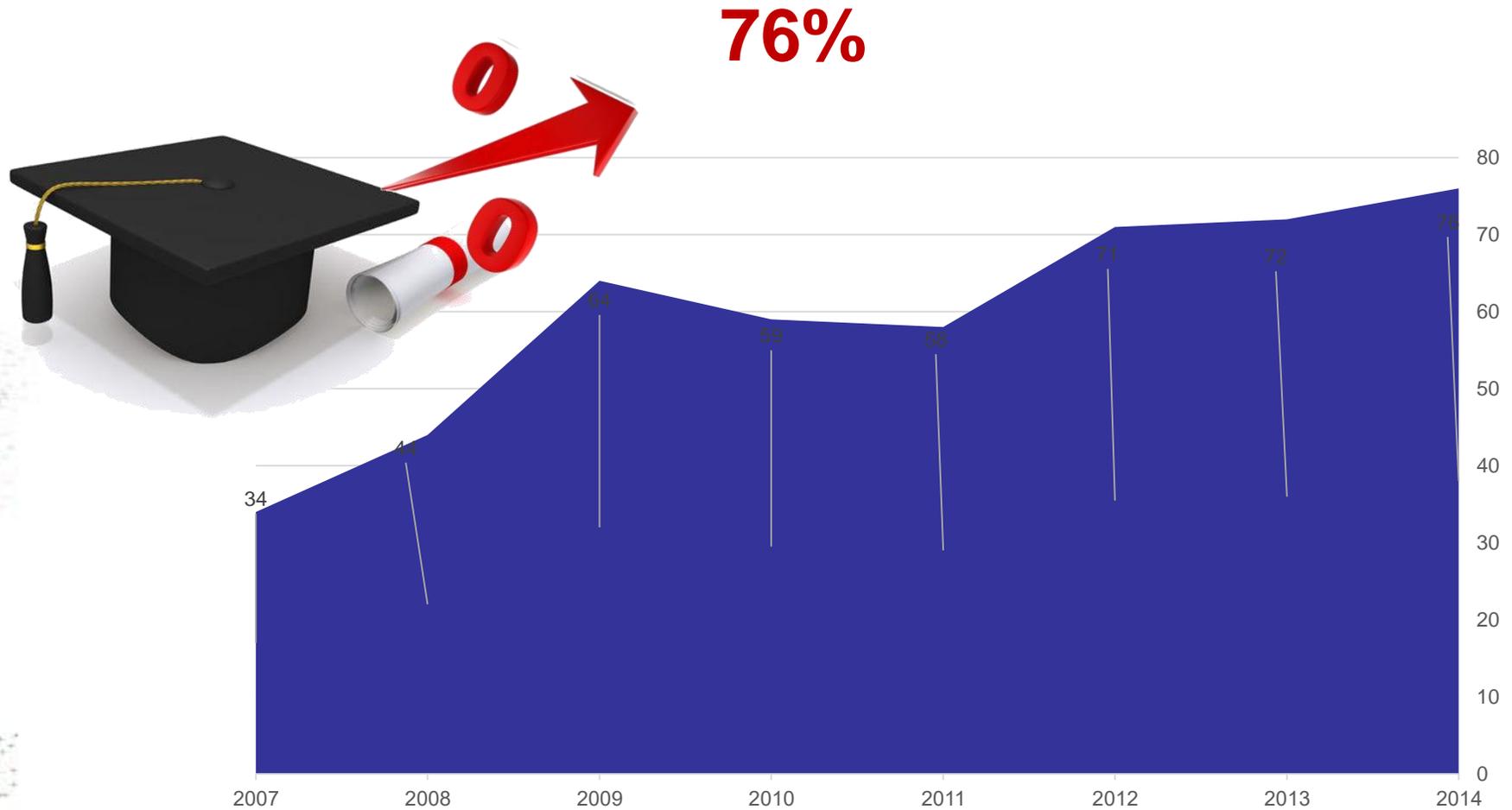


# Results - Increase in student numbers

- The community returned to believing in school

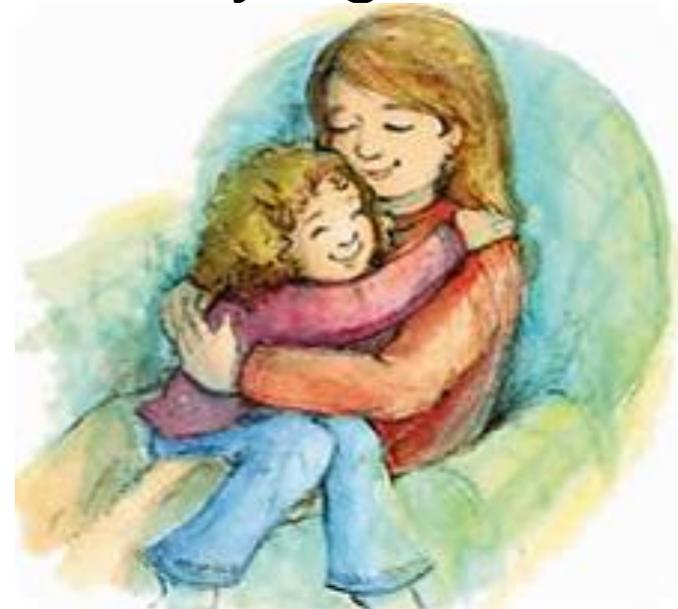


# Improving matriculation achievements



# What's the message?

- Violence can be prevented in nonviolent ways
- Team recruited for the process
- Meaningful presence
- Preventing escalation and delaying the reaction
- Alliance teams
- **Big LOVE**



Tzahi Lev-Ran  
levrantz@gmail.com

THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR LISSENING

TZAHILLEV-RAN



# Rule For Applying Meaningful Presence – new way of “Punishment”

## Before

- A student asked to stay in class during recess



## Now

- ✓ A student sent during recess to find three teachers to sign his attendance sheet.
- ✓ The teachers take the opportunity to have a meaningful talk with the student.
  - ✓ ““happy to meet you, prefer it was in a different circumstance””

## Preventing escalation – Not so simple

צחי, אני לא בטוחה שיש לך הסברים על האבחנה הזו עד כה, והיות וזו לא סדנה מעשית, אני לא בטוחה שצריך להכניס את זה ולמעשה גם להרחיב בעניין

- A distinction must be made between stopping the event and treating it



# צחי, סיפור הסוס, חשוב, השאלה האם יש זמן לזה? אם כן, נכניס למקום המתאים במצגת

- At one time, my school was offered a program to prevent violence.
- A woman from the program came into the office to tell me that a horse remembers three seconds, so if the rider responds after five seconds, the horse will not understand what the reaction was.
- A student, in her mind, remembers 10 seconds, so we must construct a program for teachers in which each event will have a response in less than 10 seconds.
- I asked her politely whether she would be able to reach the office door within 10 seconds, and that was the end of our meeting.
- But the truth is that she expressed the same feelings and beliefs of many people over hundreds and thousands of years.

# It does not sound like it, but it's a real story



# Delayed Reaction Brought Quiet



Reduced significantly the number of conflicts between teachers and students



Allowed different relationship between them

# Rules for Applying Delay Response

Do not ignore

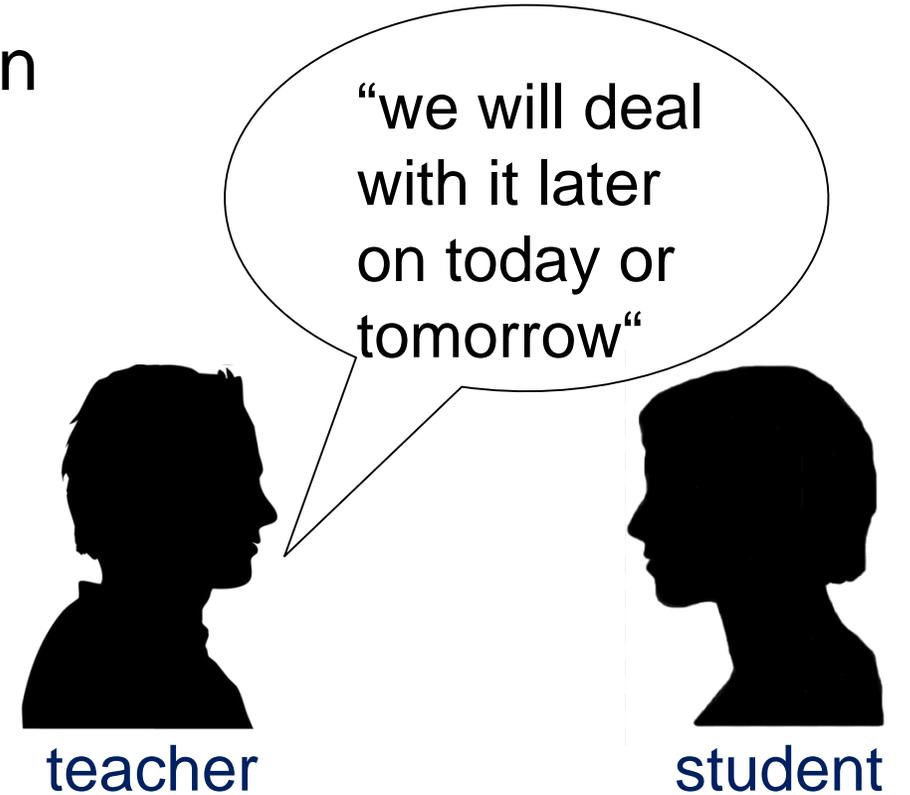


Treat proportionately



# Do Not Ignore

- Ignore it - violence will worsen
  - Response to every event
    - a conversation
- If you decided:
- a reprimand
  - a punishment



# The Key For Correct Daley Response

meaningful presence

Only a teacher who has a meaningful presence can afford to delay a response

Delaying a response by a teacher who is not fixed in the life of his students will be interpreted as ignoring and not as a treatment



# The new authority approach

Gives any adult the ability not only to survive but to lead and succeed

- without charisma
- without physical strength
- without being a magician



## The AMIT staff understanding

- they had no choice
- they had to do something different
- They chose to take a chance

# Applying NVR Successfully In Israel High School with Severe Pupil Violence



Tzachi Lev-Ran, Ph.D  
May 11 2018