

EVERYDAY ANSWERS WITH JOYCE MEYER



Help! How to Change an Entire School

- by Rachael Athearn

What is a student to do when they feel stressed, angry, bullied or lonely? Where do they go for help? When one elementary school principal found a solution to help her through her own challenges, she became determined to share that solution with her students.

After reading *Battlefield of the Mind*, Amy Gurner found a simple, practical way to teach her students how to apply God's Word to whatever situation they might be facing.

As head of school at St. Alban's Primary in England, Amy wanted to give the children the opportunity to build a strong foundation for their lives and overcome challenges by learning God's Word for themselves.

So, she worked with teachers to set up a "help desk" at the school—a station where the children could go and pick up a scripture card to help them with struggles they are facing.

Kindling a Creative Spark

"We sort of brainstormed all the things that we often see, the problems that children have," Amy said. "They might be feeling that they're being bullied, they might be feeling lonely, they might be feeling angry about something."

"So...we carefully selected Bible verses that we knew would support them and help them so that independently they could meditate on those words," she said.

At first, the younger kids made a little game out of it, collecting and exchanging the cards. And the older children memorized the scriptures as part of a school incentive. But then something began to change.

"We found that more and more children were...meditating on the words, or I'd find them in the back of children's pockets," Amy said. "We found out that God's Word was working in them in such special ways, and we really felt that the culture of the school was starting to change."

Students Express a Thirst for God's Word

More and more, the children were talking about how God was changing things in them through reading and thinking about the Bible verses. The one help desk became so popular that children asked the teachers to create more of them for their classrooms.

Ten-year-old Cole Foxtan said he loves having access to the help desks, and believes that because of them, the school is "the best anyone could go to."

"The help desks help loads of children," Cole shared. "If something's bringing you down, if you just...think about verses and how (God) can help you, that can help you a lot."

Help for Stress

Cole remembers one day in particular when he was really stressed out at school. He went to a help desk and picked up a scripture card on peace. The verse he found was [John 14:27](#): *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid* (NIV).

"It helped me to realize that if my heart's troubled, or if I'm scared or afraid, God's with me and His peace is always in (me)," Cole said.

Help for Anger

Eight-year-old George Milnes visited a help desk one day when he was angry at one of his friends and felt like fighting.

"I went to go get one on self-control," George said. The verse he read was [Philippians 4:13](#): *I can do all things through him who gives me strength* (NIV).

"I was asking Him to give me strength...strength to keep me calm," George said. "(Afterward) I felt kind of calm and I just wanted to do my normal things that I would do, not let my anger overtake my body."

Help for Love

Fearne Kiernan, 8, felt like she needed a boost in the area of love. She wanted to care for and spend more time with others, and the help desk gave her the tools she needed to do that.

She said she's learned that repeating the verses out loud makes things better for her. Thinking about the scriptures has also taught her about who she is as God's daughter.

"(God) made us," Fearne said. "If ... in your mind you're saying that (you're) rubbish...that means God is rubbish," she said. "But He's not, so we're not."

Help for Anxiety

Annaliese Catley said when she was younger, she was very shy. But as she learned to speak God's Word, she's developed more confidence in who God has made her to be. Now, the 11-year-old is a leader in her class and an outgoing star athlete.

Help for Life

Throughout the whole project, Amy's desire has been for the Bible stations to equip the students not just for current problems, but for anything that should arise during their lifetimes—she is determined to teach them where to turn for help...God's Word.

"Because once it's in them," she said, "it *is* them."