



BUCKET FILL-OSOPHY 101™

Words of Wisdom to Keep Your Bucket Filled

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Once upon a time, a bus was just —

A Ride to School

By Donna deWitt Schnell, Bucket Fillers Team Member

Another school year is underway. Classrooms are filled with students, many delivered there by a familiar yellow school bus. The signature yellow exterior of the early buses was standardized nationally in the 1930s after a study concluded that yellow would be the safest color when rain, fog, or falling snow obscured visibility.

Fast forward to 2012: More than 26 million students climb aboard yellow school buses twice each school day. Seventy years ago, yellow was the color chosen to keep our students physically safe from hazards *outside* the bus. Today, the larger issue is what can be done to keep passengers physically and emotionally safe from harm *inside the bus*.

This past summer, there was an extremely ugly bullying incident on a bus in upstate New York, which was videoed by a student with a cell phone. It went viral on YouTube with millions of hits. In the video, a school bus monitor (grandmother of eight and a widow) is shown being verbally tormented for 10 minutes by four middle school students.

Americans responded with disgust and disapproval to the behaviors witnessed on this video and with benevolence to the woman who was attacked.

This disturbing video raises some important questions:

Why didn't we hear the voices of other students calling for the bullying behavior to stop? What can we learn from this incident? How can we use it to teach compassion and respect for others?

Pages 14 and 15 of the book, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* provide a simple teaching lesson for this. After reading these pages, ask three questions to initiate a discussion:

1. How would you feel if you were the person being targeted by bucketdipping behaviors?
2. If you were present, what three positive actions could you take, by yourself or with another student or two?
3. What does the dipping done by the students tell you about those students?



School bus circa 1939

Next, discuss "using your lid," a bucketfilling term for setting boundaries and a concept that is covered in our book, *Growing Up with a Bucket Full of Happiness*.

One way to set boundaries is to help students have non-bucketdipping "come-backs" ready to go if they ever encounter a bullying situation. Give them examples of responses that will defuse a situation and have them practice them in the classroom and at home. With practice, they will have the confidence to positively change a potential bullying situation.

Consider having your students practice in pairs. Call on several pairs to demonstrate in front of the class. This exercise in setting boundaries will give students the essential practice required to use their lids and the combined strength to change a situation and support a classmate who is being threatened.

Bullying incidents that students see on the internet or in other media can be turned into opportunities to practice bucketfilling skills, which have led to a reduction in bucket dipping in many of the schools we've visited.

Making a Difference

NEW NUMBERS

Since September 2006, we have visited **798** schools and organizations, given **2,250** sessions and spoken to **345,000** children and adults.



Designed and edited by Glenny Merillat

Congratulations, Taylor!

Professor Mark Cooper, of Conway, Arkansas, is our bucket filler of the week. You have a book coming your way. Every bucket filler is a winner. Encourage your friends to get their buckets filled by subscribing to our free e-newsletter at www.bucketfillers101.com

Words of Wisdom

"People don't change their behavior unless it makes a difference for them to do so." — Francis "Fran" Tarkenton, former professional football player, TV personality, and computer software executive.