

Relational Inclusion blog #9: Change – A Call to Arms

I didn't ever want to be a teacher. I didn't like the system. I didn't like the way schools worked. I've never liked the exam factory. My mum said to me, "If you don't like something, get inside it and change it."

It has taken me 27 years to admit that I came into teaching to change the world. Over the last year I have met so many different people who share this sentiment. Sadly, I've sat in far too many meetings where people talk about change and then nothing changes. This week's blog is an acknowledgement of the growing momentum to influence and affect change. To some extent, it's a call to arms. Let's stand together, showcase all the work we are doing, shout about the growing amounts of evidence and research – and let's make that change happen.

Which leads me nicely to my first quote:

- 1) *The difference between ice and water is one degree* (unknown)

I firmly believe that Relational Inclusion can change things by **one degree** and that **one degree** can be transformational.

My second quote is about the issue with 'decades old theories':

- 2) *In the traditional education system, too many parents receive the **unspoken underlying message** that their child's negative behaviour is somehow the result of their poor parenting.*

It isn't because educators aren't compassionate, well-intentioned professionals (they are). It's because a system steeped in decades old theories doesn't hold the complexity necessary to truly understand and support behavioural challenges.

Everyone, parents, students and teachers will benefit from the rising paradigm shift.
(Dr Mona Delahooke)

My next two quotes are small changes we can apply quite quickly to push for that *one degree* to make a world of difference. The first really reminds me of my time as a trainee teacher. Back in those days it was common to be told, "*Don't smile until Christmas.*" Imagine. I believe this was some kind of misguided behaviour management strategy. It always seemed draconian to me. Why would you not smile at a group of children you were building a relationship with? Years later it was replaced with '*meet and greet*' and there seemed to be at least some recognition that a smile from a teacher might be the first friendly face or sign of warmth a child had seen that morning (for a multitude of reasons). My hope is that this has become common practice and that *the don't smile until Christmas*



brigade have been cast into the annals of History. I have a sneaking suspicion this might not be the case.

- 3) *If a student's behaviour is challenging, ask them if they're doing okay. Genuinely and openly. **You might be the first person to ask them that today.** Or all week.* (Andy Hargreeves, educator)
- 4) *We can understand how a child is doing on the inside by observing how they are doing on the outside.* (Brain-Body Parenting)

My last three quotes for this week are things to think about:

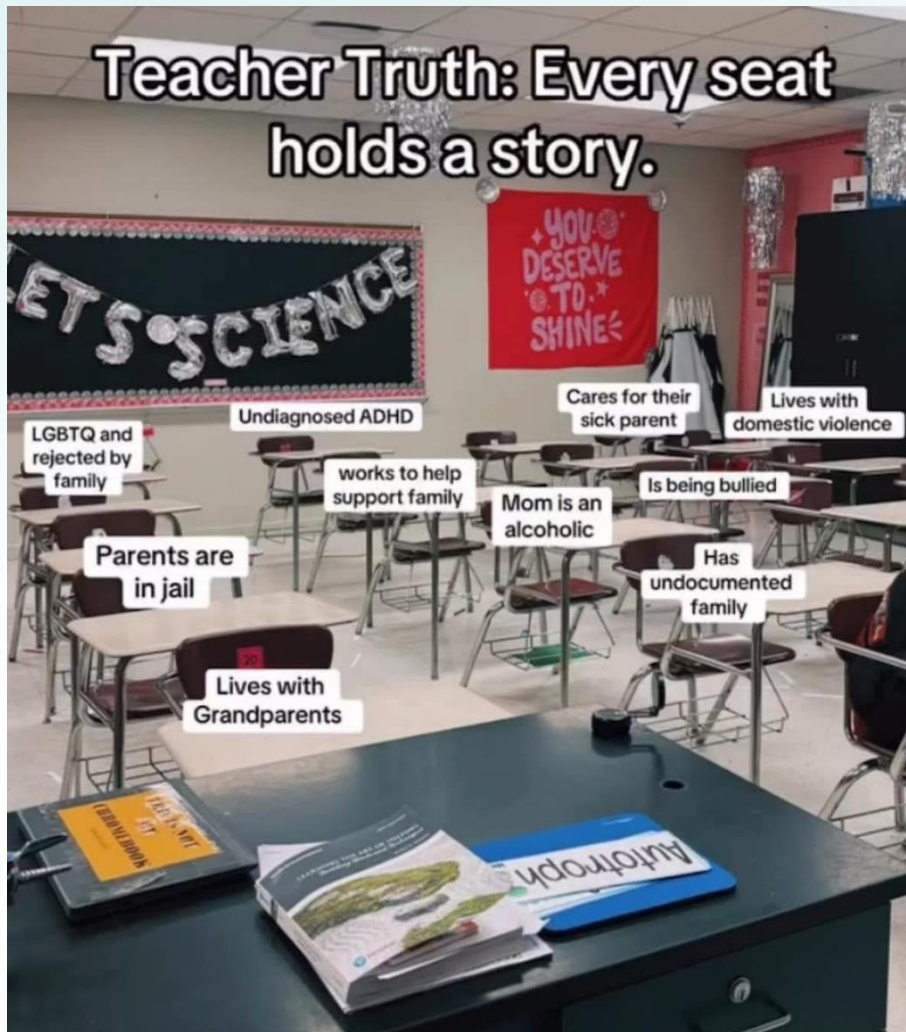
- 5) *One of the most frustrating things is to be full of emotions but limited with words.* (Healing Hearts Play Therapy)
- 6) *Art is not a reward.
Music is not a reward.
Playing outside is not a reward.
Reading books of choice is not a reward.
Food is not a reward.
Being able to move is not a reward.
Children are human beings and should be treated as such.* (Aeriale Johnson)
- 7) *Unhealed people don't listen with their ears – they listen with their triggers* (The Bat Wolf)

Below is my cut out and pin to the wall image for the week:



I also came across this which was too good not to share:

- 8) *They aren't a standardized test score. They aren't a data point. They aren't a graduation rate. They aren't a school report card. They are children, and each one holds a story.* (Travis Akers)



My article to read this week is a blog called 'No Child Should Be Excluded from School':

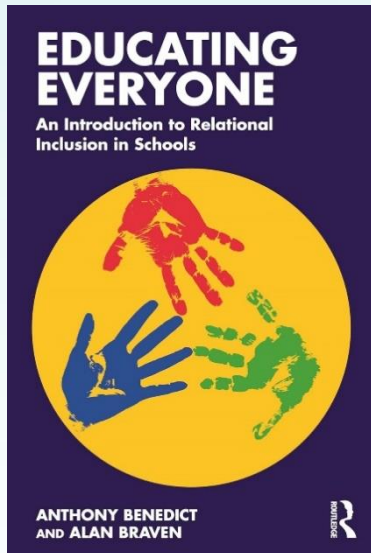
[CYP Now - No child should be excluded from school](#)

If you find the Relational Inclusion blog useful, feel free to share with your networks.

If you would like adding to the mailing list please email Hannah:

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Our book, *Educating Everyone: An Introduction to relational Inclusion in Schools* comes out at the end of the month and is available to pre-order here:



Thanks for reading

Anthony Benedict

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