

Published Sunday, June 01, 2008

## Let kids talk and be kids

A 12-year-old stands facing the wall, lunch tray jammed between his stomach and wall so that he can eat. It's not lunch at a juvenile detention center or boot camp, but lunch at Lee Middle School.

According to the school, this punishment is the "consequence administered by teachers" for students in the silent lunch area who don't remain silent and are disruptive. Punishment? Or abuse?

As parent of a Lee student, someone who's regularly been a parent volunteer and an East Coweta High resource teacher, and as a long-time educator, I was shocked to learn students are regularly treated this way by educational professionals who should be able to manage behavior more appropriately.

Silent lunch? You're kidding. What offense is so heinous a student has to be silent during one of the rare times in the school day when social interaction is possible? What crime does standing against a wall fit?

Silent lunch? When did the noise of a lunchroom filled with happy kids interacting with one another become offensive?

Having lunch with my kids was always the highlight of the week. Kids are spontaneous, animated, outgoing social beings. I loved to listen to them, talk with them. I learned the most interesting things. Was enthralled by the constantly changing tapestry of evolving personalities. Saw the world through eyes that hadn't become jaded.

Students against the wall? This is middle school, not the Marine Corps.

When did teachers forget children are children? Look up the latest teen suicide and drop-out rates. Middle schoolers are dealing with some of the most dramatic life-altering transitions they'll face in life.

Lunch should be a time-out from the day's activities and pressures, a neutral zone where kids can socialize and be kids.

Nick De Bonis

Sharpsburg

- [About us](#)
- [Customer Service](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Visitor Agreement](#)
- [RSS](#)

- [Mobile](#)
- [Go To Top](#)

© 2008 The Newnan Times-Herald Inc. Any unauthorized use, copying or mirroring is prohibited.