

Fitting In

Kids with different backgrounds often have trouble fitting in.

By Lathisha

As a fifth grader at Manhattan New School, Wilbert Smith says his biggest problem at school is getting along with other people. Wilbert says this happens because his interests, like computers and dogs, differ from other kids. Wilbert also says he does not get chosen for games and he even gets bullied a lot.

Wilbert is no different than many ordinary children around the world. Kids who don't fit in often don't get along with people. It's hard to feel fully at ease in school if you get bullied because it makes your life really hard. It's nice to have friends and not to be teased all the time. Some people don't fit in because they think people are different from other people but they're really not.

Lathisha Reece, also a fifth grader at Manhattan New School says she has trouble fitting in with people. Lathisha says she doesn't fit in with people because "I'm older, taller, bigger and physically more developed than most of the other kids in school." Lathisha has friends but maybe they are friends for the wrong reasons. "I mostly get chosen for games and to be on teams but I also sometimes get picked on." Lathisha feels like she falls somewhere in the middle of the social scene at school.

Mark Walker, a ten year old who lives in Lathisha's neighborhood says he has trouble fitting in at his school because he has money problems. Mark

says the only reason he can't make friends is because his family is poor and can't afford a Discman and cell phones. Wilbert told Mark "he should not feel ashamed just because his family is poor." Mark also feels that because he has different color skin than the other kids in his school, that it is hard for him to be accepted by the "in-crowd."

But it's important to not fall behind in your schoolwork just because of social anxieties. Schoolwork should come first instead of last because if you fall behind and get left back nobody would want to be your friend. One way you don't fall behind in school is to ask the guidance counselor at your school to form a group with kids that don't fit in and see if that helps a little.

The best solution to the problem is that you should not be down on yourself if you do not fit in. There are a lot of kids that may like you for who you are. Don't be lazy. Get off the couch and get out of your house with your parent's permission. Try to see if you fit in with people on your block or call people in your class and try to make play dates. If they say "no" try different people. Try and try again until you get a "yes."