



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Bangkok Office
Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau
for Education

Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating
Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments
Specialized Booklet 1

Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

A Guide for Teachers and
Teacher Educators



Inclusive
Learning-Friendly
Environments

Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating
Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments
Specialized Booklet 1

Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

A Guide for Teachers and
Teacher Educators



Published in 2015 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

and

UNESCO Bangkok Office

© UNESCO 2015

1st print: 2006

2nd print: 2007

3rd print: 2008

4th print: 2010

ISBN 978-92-9223-534-5 (Print version)

ISBN 978-92-9223-535-2 (Electronic version)



This publication is available in Open Access under the Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO (CC-BY-SA 3.0 IGO) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/igo/>). By using the content of this publication, the users accept to be bound by the terms of use of the UNESCO Open Access Repository (<http://www.unesco.org/open-access/terms-use-ccbysa-en>).

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

Editor: Caroline Haddad

Graphic designer: Sirisak Chaiyasook

TH/APL/15/012



Foreword

For children in many countries, corporal punishment is a regular part of the school experience; it is also a form of child abuse. Corporal punishment is deliberate violence inflicted on children, and it takes place on a gigantic scale. Legal defenses for teachers who hit or beat children still exist in most countries of the world. Corporal punishment, however, has not been shown to be effective, especially in the long-term, and it can cause children shame, guilt, anxiety, aggression, a lack of independence, and a lack of caring for others, and thus greater problems for teachers, caregivers and other children.

One of the major reasons why corporal punishment persists is that teachers do not understand that it is different from "discipline." While corporal punishment seeks to stop a child from behaving in a certain way, positive discipline techniques can be used to teach a child learn new, correct behaviours without the fear of violence. Another major reason is that teachers are often not taught why children misbehave and how to discipline them positively based on those behaviours. Many times, when a child feels his or her needs are not being met, such as the need for attention, he or she misbehaves. The frustration that a child's misbehaviour causes, and a lack of skills to handle it, leads some teachers to strike out at their children and use corporal punishment or humiliating forms of emotional punishment.

This guide for teachers and teacher educators enriches the UNESCO publication "*Embracing Diversity: A Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*" (*ILFE Toolkit*). It is a specialized booklet intended to help teachers, school administrators, and education officials to effectively manage students in the classroom by giving non-violent ways to deal with behavioural challenges positively and pro-actively. It presents positive discipline tools that are concrete *alternatives* to such punishment practices as caning, spanking, pinching, threatening, pleading, bribing, yelling, commanding, name-calling, forced labour, and other even more humiliating actions.

This guide is truly a collective product. It was first drafted and then revised by *George Attig* of the Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, who has also served as a UNESCO consultant on inclusive education and gender, as well as a consultant to UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) and Save the Children for the development of child-friendly schools. This guide also benefited from the comments and suggestions of educators around the world. UNESCO Bangkok would like to thank all of them for their contributions. Every single input was thoroughly considered and contributed to the enrichment of this guide, as well as to the ILFE Toolkit. *Ochirkhuyag Gankhuyag*, as Programme Assistant at UNESCO's Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, coordinated the process.



Sheldon Shaeffer
Director
UNESCO Bangkok

CONTENTS

Foreword	iii
Overview	1
Our Challenge.	1
What is an “Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom”?	2
Why is This Document Needed?	4
What Will You Learn?	5
Understanding Punishment versus Discipline	7
Children Past and Present	7
The Meaning of Punishment	10
The Meaning of Discipline	20
Positive Discipline in the Classroom	25
Avoiding the Discipline Dilemma	32
Building Positive Teacher-Student Relationships	34
The Basis of a Teacher-Student Relationship	34
Why Children Behave as They Do	35
Why Children Misbehave.	38
Learning about Your Students	42
Understanding the Context of Your Students’ Lives	45
Learning about Your Students’ Families	55
Parent-Teacher Communication	58
Encouragement Strategies.	62
Creating a Positive and Supportive Learning Environment	64
Classroom Management in an ILFC.	64
Making the Learning Environment Comfortable	65
Developing Classroom Routines.	69
Developing Classroom Rules with Students and Parents.	70
Standards for Behaviour and Good Management	75
Providing Positive Reinforcement	80
Dealing with Challenging Students	84
Improving the Effectiveness of Positive Discipline Techniques.	84
Positive Discipline Tips.	85
Positive Classroom Teaching Tips	89
Using Appropriate Consequences, Positive and Negative	91
Use Caution in Using a “Timeout”	93
Conflict Resolution	95
Age-Specific Teaching and Positive Discipline	98
Assisting Children with Special Needs.	102
Suggested Readings	106

“

This booklet is dedicated to the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children (UNGA Resolution 57/190) that is rooted in children's human right to protection from all forms of violence. The booklet aims to promote action to prevent and eliminate violence against children in schools and education settings.

”



Overview

OUR CHALLENGE

Children come into this world helpless and unable to fully develop without us. As teachers, our job is to nurture them and to teach them how to live. This is no easy task. On some days, our classes are exciting, fun, and joyful places to learn for our students and ourselves. On other days, we may feel tense and uncertain about our ability to do our job. Being a teacher is rarely dull; but being a teacher is also the most important work we'll ever do.

We know how tough teaching can be. We also know how much you care for your students. But children don't come with instructions. Unlike parenting, you are responsible for *many* children at once, not just a few, and all are unique in many ways. They also don't always behave in the way you want them. It seems that just as you figure out what works with one class, they're gone, replaced by a new set of faces with a whole new set of joys and challenges.

All teachers should want the best for their students and should be concerned with fostering confidence in their abilities and raising their self-esteem. But when your students don't listen to you, refuse to do what you ask, defy or ignore you, it is easy to become annoyed and frustrated. When this happens, or better yet *before*, turn to this document for help. It will give you ways to deal with this challenge positively and pro-actively by preventing misbehaviour before it starts, by dealing effectively with unexpected challenges, and by encouraging your students to listen and cooperate within an inclusive, learning-friendly classroom. The positive discipline tools presented here are concrete *alternatives* to such punishment practices as caning, spanking, pinching, threatening, pleading, bribing, yelling, commanding, name-calling, forced labour, and other even more humiliating actions.

WHAT IS AN “INCLUSIVE, LEARNING-FRIENDLY CLASSROOM”?

When we walk into our classrooms, we see the faces of the children we are to teach. But we need to remember that these children may not be the only ones who are supposed to be in our classrooms. There may be others who are not included because they are not able to get to school. Still others, who are physically there, may feel that they don't belong there, and may not truly “participate” in class or may misbehave.

An inclusive, learning-friendly classroom (ILFC) welcomes, nurtures, and educates all children regardless of their gender, physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other characteristics. They may be gifted children or children with physical or learning disabilities. They may be street or working children, children of remote or nomadic peoples, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities, children affected by HIV/AIDS, or children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.¹ An ILFC is thus one in which the teacher understands the value of this diversity in the classroom and takes steps to ensure that all girls and boys come to school.²

But getting all children into our classrooms is only half of the challenge. The other half is in meeting all of their different learning and behavioural needs so that they want to stay in our classrooms. All classrooms are diverse in terms of the types of children we teach and the ways that they learn. We need to consider what each child needs to learn, how she or he learns best, and how we - as teachers - can build positive relationships with each child so that they want to actively learn from us. Equally important is that we need to discover how to get all of the children to want to learn *together*.

Children behave and learn in different ways because of hereditary factors, the environment in which they live, or their own personal or psychological

¹ UNESCO. *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

² UNESCO. Booklet 3: *Getting All Children In School and Learning. Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

needs.³ Many times, when a child feels his or her needs are not being met, such as the need for attention, he or she may misbehave. Consequently, we need to understand why children behave as they do so that we can try to prevent misbehaviour before it happens and use a variety of different ways to guide their behaviour in a positive manner. Classrooms can then become inclusive, welcoming, and enjoyable places for all children to learn, and ones in which misbehaviour is rare. We can thus spend more time teaching and learning with our students.

At first, this can be a frightening idea. Many of you may be working in large classrooms, or even multi-grade ones, and may wonder, "How can I use different teaching and disciplinary methods to suit individual children when I have over 60 children in my classroom?" Actually, the frustration that this situation causes, and our lack of skills to handle it, may lead some of us to strike out at our students and use punishment to try to stop misbehaviour, such as using corporal punishment or humiliating forms of emotional punishment. In our frustration, we often forget that children misbehave for many reasons. Some of these reasons may be personal; others may result from the way they are being taught, such as when they become bored with the lesson or constant lecturing; still others come from external factors associated with the family and community that may cause the student to be frustrated and unhappy. Furthermore, in some cases, and particularly among new teachers, an incident may be interpreted as a discipline problem when it is not; for instance, when a child's question is interpreted as challenging our authority or knowledge, but, in fact, the child simply had difficulty in phrasing the question properly and politely. That misidentification - or miscall - often creates anger among students, thus *causing* a real discipline problem.⁴

In any case, the temptation is always there to take the "quick way out" through severe punishment to try and stop - but not necessarily correct - the child's misbehaviour. But fortunately, misbehaviour and the use of punishment can be prevented when you create a well-organized learning environment in which your students are interested and active in their learning.

³ UNESCO. "Booklet 4: Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classrooms". *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

⁴ Know When to Discipline! Wire Side Chats. http://www.educationworld.com/a_issues/chat/chat020.shtml [accessed online on 10/4/2005]

4 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

The goal of an inclusive, learning-friendly classroom is active students. Students who actively and enjoyably participate in classroom learning have fewer disciplinary problems.⁵ They want to be there, and they will do whatever is necessary to stay there.

WHY IS THIS DOCUMENT NEEDED?

The purpose of this document is to help you reach this goal. You may be an experienced teacher who wants to adopt positive disciplinary practices, but who needs guidance in how to do it. You may be a student enrolled in a teacher-training institution who is learning how to manage the behaviour of students effectively. You might be a teacher-trainer who is giving instruction in positive discipline within pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. This document will be especially useful for those of you who are working in schools that are beginning to change into more child-centred and learning-friendly environments. In many countries, such schools are being called "Child-Friendly Schools," ones in which the inclusion of all children in school and the prevention of violence against them are core principles, but, in many cases, the techniques to do so need strengthening.

Some of you may also be working in large class settings with many students. A class is "large" whenever it feels large to you. While a class of more than 50 students is usually considered a large class, to those teachers who normally teach 25 or fewer students, a class of 35 can be large and overwhelming. ***The tools and resources cited in this document will help you to effectively manage your students, no matter how many you have in your classroom, and with as few behavioural challenges as possible.***

Most of all, the tools in this document will be valuable for those of you who are facing policy reforms introduced by a Ministry of Education, and especially in countries where policies have been set, or are being set, against the use of corporal punishment. In support of these policies, many publications exist that advocate a ban on corporal punishment and its benefits in terms of ensuring all children's rights to a good quality basic education in a safe, healthy, and participatory environment, as noted in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Unfortunately,

⁵ Caught in the Middle: A Perspective of Middle School Discipline. <http://people.uncw.edu/fischettij/david.htm> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

however, many teachers have very limited access to resources on how to actually go about it, that is, how to positively discipline children and eliminate violence against them in schools and classrooms. For those of you involved in this reform process, beginning teachers and their instructors, or those who simply want to abandon corporal punishment altogether, this document will be a valuable tool for helping you to learn about and adopt positive discipline in your classrooms.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN?

Experience has shown that one major area of concern for teachers is their feeling of inadequacy in managing student behaviour.⁶ This is not surprising. Although many recommendations exist, there is no magic formula that will automatically give you the skills you need to undertake this important task. These skills are learned and improved upon over time. Yet, every teacher knows that the right skills and strategies can make the difference between a calm classroom and a classroom in chaos. Teachers in well-organized ILFC, in which all children are actively learning and follow clearly defined rules and routines, spend less time disciplining and more time teaching.

This document has five major sections. Each section contains tools that you can use to create an active, positive learning environment for your students, one in which you guide their behaviours effectively, rather than simply react to them negatively. These tools are ones that teachers and education specialists have developed through experience and have used successfully in actual classroom settings among both younger and older aged students. You are also encouraged to explore the references cited in this document for more information. They are excellent sources for ideas and are gratefully acknowledged here.

In this section, you have learned about the challenges of teaching, what an “inclusive, learning-friendly classroom” is, and what is its goal. In the following sections, you will explore the process of positive discipline. This process has four essential elements, each of which is the topic of a specific section in this document.

⁶ Classroom Management, Management of Student Conduct, Effective Praise Guidelines, and a Few Things to Know About ESOL Thrown in for Good Measure. <http://www.adprima.com/managing.htm> [updated April 3, 2005] [accessed online on 10/5/2005]

6 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

- (a) *An understanding of the difference between punishment and discipline.* In this section, you will learn about the true meanings of "punishment" and "discipline," the nature and consequences of corporal punishment, and the power of positive discipline.
- (b) *A positive and supportive relationship between a teacher and a student, one based on understanding and empathy.* In this section, you will learn why your students behave as they do and why they may misbehave. You will learn about your students from their perspective, how the context from which they come may affect that behaviour and your interpretation of it, as well as how important it is to involve each child's family in developing his or her behaviour. You will also learn some important encouragement strategies.
- (c) *Creating a positive and supportive learning environment for your students and yourself.* Proper behaviours must develop within well-organized and managed classroom learning environments. In this section, you will learn about managing your classroom's physical environment so it is comfortable for learning and promotes good behaviour even if your class has many students. You will also learn the importance of setting routines and standards of behaviour for your students, as well as involving parents in their children's behaviour management. Since you are an important role model for your students, you will also gain insights into your management style and how to improve upon it, as well as ways to provide positive reinforcement for your students.
- (d) *Knowledge of constructive ways to stop misbehaviours when they arise, as well as to prevent them.* All children misbehave at some point in time. As they test their limits, it becomes an important part of developing their self-control. In this document's final section, you will learn a variety of ways to deal with challenging behaviours, including ways to prevent them and how to resolve conflicts. You will also learn some age-specific positive discipline techniques, as well as those for children with special needs.



Understanding Punishment versus Discipline

What You Will Learn:

- ◆ Children Past and Present
- ◆ What is "Punishment"
- ◆ The Perils of Corporal Punishment
- ◆ What is "Discipline"
- ◆ Positive Discipline: What It Is and How It Works

CHILDREN PAST AND PRESENT

The Past

"Children now love luxury, they have bad manners, contempt for authority, they show disrespect for their elders, and they love chatter in the place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize over their teachers."

This statement was made by Socrates, an Athenian philosopher who lived from 469-399 BC.⁷ Do you think anything has changed?

⁷ Classroom Management. http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/cm-intro.html [accessed online on 10/20/2005]

The Present: The Case of Ramon⁸

"I'm not going to that man's class! I don't have to do what you say!"

"I'm not even supposed to be in this class; my momma says I'm supposed to be in a special education school. They said I'm learning disabled and have ADHD, whatever that is." [ADHD is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.]

He runs down the hallway bumping into other children and teachers, walks into the classroom in the morning stating what he isn't going to do, and yells or runs around the room whenever he feels like it. He calls classmates members of the "dumb club" and swears other sixth graders are committing acts that I hadn't even heard of until I was in my third year of high school. ...

This is my homeroom student, "Ramon." I feel angry about his behaviour. I'm tempted to hate him, but most of all, I'm frustrated with him, my lack of skills, and the system. ... I left school that day in tears, sick to my stomach because of this child.

What Would You Do?

Ramon's case, though to an extent extreme, is not uncommon. Virtually all of us have experienced students who have challenged our authority or who have disrupted our classes and upset our students in many ways. Ramon is in desperate need of discipline, but what alternatives are there?



Reflection Activity: How Were YOU Disciplined?

Think back to when you were in primary school. If you or one of your classmates had misbehaved like Ramon, what disciplinary methods would, or did, your teachers use? Write these methods down in the table below.

⁸ This case study is adapted from the diary of Ellen Berg, a language arts teacher in Turner Middle School, St. Louis, Missouri, USA. <http://www.middleweb.com/msdiaries01/MSDiaryEllenB6.html> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

Then, write down how you felt about these methods, as well as whether or not you thought they were effective in the long-term. How do you think the child felt? Did you see or experience a lasting change in behaviour?

Next, ask yourself, "If I had a student like Ramon, what would I do, and why?" Do you think it would be effective in stopping future misbehaviour? Write your thoughts down as well. Are your methods similar to those of your teachers?

	Disciplinary Method	Why was this method used?	Was the method always effective, especially in the long-term? How did the child feel?
Your Teachers' Actions			
Your Actions			

In many countries and classrooms, Ramon would have been physically punished for his misbehaviour, most likely by being beaten with a cane or another object. What methods would your teachers have used? What methods might you have used?

10 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

In completing the table above, it would not be surprising if many of you answered "To punish the child for misbehaving" or "to stop his misbehaviour" under the column on "Why was this method used?" Likewise, under the last column on "Was the method always effective, especially in the long-term?" many of you - if you thought long and hard - probably answered "No". Sooner or later, the same child misbehaves again, often in the same way. Why? The answer lies in the difference between punishment and discipline.

THE MEANING OF PUNISHMENT

Punishment is an action (penalty) that is imposed on a person for breaking a rule or showing improper conduct. Punishment aims to control behaviour through negative means. Two types of punishment are typically used with children:

1. Punishment involving negative verbal reprimands and disapproval; this type of punishment is also known as negative discipline.
2. Punishment involving severe physical or emotional pain, as in corporal punishment.

Unfortunately, both forms of punishment focus on the misbehaviour and may do little or nothing to help a child behave better in the future. Moreover, the child learns that the adult is superior, and the use of force - be it verbal, physical, or emotional - is acceptable, especially over younger, weaker persons. This lesson can lead to incidents of bullying and violence in school, where older children dominate younger ones and force them into giving the bullies money, food, homework, or other valuable items.

Furthermore, rather than leading to a child with inner control, such punishment makes the child angry, resentful, and fearful. It also causes shame, guilt, anxiety, increased aggression, a lack of independence, and a lack of caring for others, and thus greater problems for teachers, caregivers, and other children.⁹

⁹ Positive Guidance and Discipline. http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/smp9/parent_education/guidance_discipline.htm [accessed online on 10/10/2005]

Verbal Punishment and Dealing with Anger

Negative discipline is a form of punishment meant to control a student's behaviour, but oftentimes it involves only short verbal commands or statements and does not lead to an outright, often severe penalty, such as being hit or painfully humiliated. Teachers who do not use corporal punishment may use negative discipline approaches instead. But like corporal punishment, these also can cause children to become angry and aggressive or have low self-esteem. Negative strategies include:

Commands - "Sit down and be quiet!" "Write 100 times, 'I will not waste my time on meaningless tasks!'"

Forbidding statements - "Don't do that!"

Explosive, angry statements - "You're in more trouble than you know."

Criticizing statements - "Is that the best you can do!"

Threatening statements - "If you don't stop talking, I'll send you to the Principal's office."

Belittling statements - "When will you ever learn to write well?"

Often, we use these negative strategies, as well as corporal punishment, when we are angry or frustrated. Yet, there are a variety of positive ways to deal with anger and frustration. Some teachers tell their children, "I need a moment to calm down; I am very angry right now." Others calm down by counting to 10 or by leaving the room for several minutes. Some teachers describe their feelings to their students to help them understand what annoys them. The children then learn what not to do and why. They might do it again, but they are responsible for their actions and will have to deal with the consequences. What would work best for you?



Action Activity: "DON'T" - How Negative Am I?

Most of us naturally give "don't" commands to students as a form of negative discipline: "Don't talk in class. Don't run around the room." We may not know ourselves how often we give these negative commands; they just come naturally; but our students know. If you want to find out how often you give "don't" commands, select a student in your class (or ask a teacher's aide for help) and give him or her a box of small stones or shells and a cloth or plastic bag. Ask the student to listen to you throughout the week. Whenever the student hears you give a "don't" command, ask him or her to take one of the stones or shells out of the box and put it in the bag. At the end of the week, count how many stones or shells are in the bag. Were you surprised?

Instead of constantly giving "don't" commands (although sometimes they are necessary), learn to rephrase in a positive way while clearly stating the desired behaviour. Instead of saying, "Don't run in the classroom," for example, try saying, "Walk in the classroom." This states clearly how you want your students to act. Sometimes you may want to give reasons for the rule, especially when you state it for the first time. Explaining a rule might sound like this: "Walk in the classroom. If you run, you might trip over a chair and hurt yourself; then you might have to go to the doctor."

Corporal Punishment

In dealing with students like Ramon, many teachers probably would have resorted to some form of severe punishment. Two types of severe punishment that can occur separately or together are corporal punishment and emotional punishment. Both are forms of violence against children that violate their rights as human beings to respect, dignity, equal protection of the law, and protection from all forms of violence.

Corporal or physical punishment, and the threat of it, occurs when a teacher, parent, or caregiver intends to cause physical pain or discomfort to a child, usually in order to stop a child's misbehaviour, to penalize him or her for

doing it, and to prevent the behaviour from being repeated.¹⁰ Increasingly around the world, corporal punishment is illegal – and is not conducive to better “learning”. What constitutes corporal punishment varies across – and within – cultures, and it includes, for example:

- ◆ hitting the child with the hand or with an object (such as a cane, belt, whip, shoe, book, ruler, etc.);
- ◆ kicking, shaking, or throwing the child;
- ◆ pinching or hair pulling;
- ◆ forcing a child to stay in uncomfortable positions,
- ◆ forcing a child to undergo excessive physical exercise or forced labour;
- ◆ burning or otherwise scarring the child; and
- ◆ forcing the child to eat foul substances (such as soap).

While corporal punishment is meant to cause physical pain, emotional punishment is meant to humiliate the child and cause psychological pain. Similar to negative verbal punishment, but much more severe, it can include public ridicule, sarcasm, threats, name-calling, yelling, and commanding, or other humiliating actions, such as denying a child clothing or food or forcing them to stay in undignified positions for everyone to see and comment on.

While corporal punishment is more visible, emotional punishment is more difficult to identify. Nonetheless, punishing a child by sending him or her outside to stand in the sun for hours, to undermine a child’s self-esteem through public ridicule, or to deny a child food or clothing is as damaging as different forms of corporal punishment.

Moreover, there is no clear line between corporal punishment and emotional punishment. Very often, children perceive corporal punishment as also being humiliating or degrading.¹¹ In this document, therefore, we use the term “corporal punishment” to include both physical and emotional punishment.

¹⁰ Durrant, Joan E. “Corporal Punishment: Prevalence, Predictors and Implications for Child Development,” in: Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

¹¹ *Ending Corporal Punishment of Children in Zambia*. Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for Southern Africa, Arcadia, 2005.

14 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom



Action Activity: Is This Corporal Punishment?

Read the following actual case study. Think about - and maybe discuss with your colleagues - whether this is an example of corporal punishment and if the penalty is actually teaching the child a lesson.

Shireen's Lesson

Shireen goes to school every day and, for the most part, she enjoys it; all except her spelling lessons. The days she dreads the most are spelling test days. For every word she or her friends spell incorrectly, her teacher makes them climb the hill behind the school and carry down five bricks. The bricks are being used to build a wall around the school. Shireen doesn't understand how carrying bricks will help her to learn to spell, but she has no choice but to do the labour. Sometimes when she finishes, her clothes are very dirty, and then she gets scolded at home, as well.

How Prevalent is Corporal Punishment and Why?

Think back to your own schooling. Were you or any of your friends ever physically or emotionally punished? Chances are you will say "Yes" because corporal punishment is a common practice throughout the world. Only 15 out of the 190-plus countries in the world have banned the corporal punishment of children. In the many remaining countries, parents and other caregivers, including teachers, retain the "right" to hit and humiliate children.¹²

While most of us would condemn violence in general - and violence towards adults, especially - few people in the world have given any serious attention to violence against children. Why? Longstanding traditions and cultural beliefs exist that perpetuate the use of corporal punishment in many societies. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" is a very popular one. Others include the beliefs that corporal punishment: (1) is effective; (2) prevents children from getting into trouble;

¹² Newell, Peter. "The Human Rights Imperative for Ending All Corporal Punishment of Children," in: Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

(3) teaches them right from wrong; (4) instills respect, and (5) is different from physical abuse. Research has shown, however, that corporal punishment does none of these and is, in fact, a form of violent abuse against children.¹³

Other related myths and facts about corporal punishment follow.¹⁴ Have you ever heard anyone using one or more of these to justify his or her use of corporal punishment? Have you ever done so, or at least thought so? Be honest.

Myth No. 1: "It happened to me and did me no harm."

Fact: Though they may have felt fear, anger, and mistrust from being hit by parents or teachers, people who use this argument often do it to reduce the guilt they have for using corporal punishment on their children today. In their minds, they are defending their violent actions against their children. However, their actions reveal that corporal punishment did, in fact, do them harm: it perpetuated the cycle of violence that they now inflict upon children, and similarly these children are more likely to perpetuate the violence for generations to come.¹⁵ In addition, many things that former generations managed to survive are no longer common practice now. For instance, the fact that some people may not have received vaccinations when they were children does not mean that they would prefer this NOW for their own children.

Myth No. 2. "Nothing else works!" or "They ask for it!"

Fact: While positive discipline requires developing a trusting, mutually respectful relationship between a child and his or her teacher, inflicting pain on a child is really a lazy way out. It is an admission that we have failed to do what it takes to help the child to learn and internalize good behaviour. If we regularly use corporal punishment, it will take time and effort for

¹³ Durrant, Joan E. "Corporal Punishment: Prevalence, Predictors and Implications for Child Development," in: Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

¹⁴ Adapted from: From Physical Punishment to Positive Discipline: Alternatives to Physical/Corporal Punishment in Kenya. An Advocacy Document (Draft Two) by ANPPCAN Kenya Chapter, January 2005. <http://kenya.ms.dk/articles/advocacy%20document%20ANPPCAN.htm?udskriv+on%5D> [accessed online on 9/29/2005]

¹⁵ Durrant, Joan E. "Corporal Punishment: Prevalence, Predictors and Implications for Child Development," in: Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

new methods to work. If we have been nagging, yelling, threatening, or physically punishing our students for a long time, it is difficult to build an effective, trusting relationship with them overnight. This may in turn create the feeling that nothing else works, or that the children are “asking” to be beaten; but the problem is the disciplinary approach, not the misbehaviour of the children. Justifying that a child has asked for violence is really intended to make the perpetrator feel less guilty: blame the victim. Besides, do you normally hit your boss, employee, spouse, or best friend when it appears that “nothing else works”? Hopefully not!

Myth No. 3: “Corporal punishment works best. Other methods don’t.”

Fact: Getting your students to behave through fear of punishment is not the same as discipline. Corporal punishment seems to work only if you look at it superficially and in the short-term. Corporal punishment teaches children to do what you say, but only when you are around. In effect, it teaches them to be sneaky, as well as to lie about misbehaviour to avoid being hit or punished in some other degrading manner. By creating a sense of distrust and insecurity in the child, it destroys the teacher-child relationship. Children become angry at why someone who is supposed to teach and care for them is instead threatening, beating, or insulting them. While a single act of corporal punishment may seem to be effective, it only temporarily frightens a child into submission.

Myth No. 4: “Corporal punishment teaches obedience.”

Fact: In the past, it may have been the practice to teach children never to question authority, but times have changed. Many teachers are adopting child-centred learning techniques that encourage children to explore, to think for themselves, to ask questions, and to learn the joy of finding answers as a major way of learning. Corporal punishment, however, stops a child from questioning, thinking critically, and achieving personal goals; yet these are qualities that both adults and children need in order to excel in a dynamic, competitive, and innovative society. Enforcing blind obedience through the threat of corporal punishment greatly stifles initiative and creativity in children (and adults).

Myth No. 5: "I only do it as a last resort. I had no choice."

Fact: This excuse rationalizes for us, and teaches our students, that the use of violence as a last resort is justified. This argument is not acceptable; for example, is a husband justified in hitting his wife as a last resort? It should be no more acceptable when it comes to our students. Besides, it is quite common for parents and teachers to result to physical punishment at the first instance - not as a last resort - and for very minor misconduct.

Myth No. 6: It's the only way I can control the children in my class. I have too many!

Fact: This excuse is common among teachers who face large classes, sometimes around 100 children all in one class. It usually arises because the classroom has no set rules or routines; the children do not know what is expected of them and the consequences for misbehaving; and the teacher did not take the time to build a positive relationship with the children so they would want to be good. This may be due to his or her authoritative classroom management style, one that says, "I'm the teacher and we'll do things my way!" In trying to maintain control, the teacher may also use corporal punishment not just to stop misbehaviour in one child, but also to put fear into the hearts of the other children so, hopefully, they won't misbehave as well (but they do). Like Myth 4 above, enforcing blind obedience through threats of physical violence does not encourage children to learn from the teacher, only to fear him or her. As a result, they don't want to learn, which makes our job harder, and they don't learn well, which reflects poorly on our performance as a teacher.

Myth No. 7: "Corporal punishment is a part of our culture."

Fact: Corporal punishment is sometimes defended as a part of growing up in one's society, and the idea of promoting alternatives to physical punishment is a "Western" imposition that doesn't consider Asian values. Asian societies depend upon age-related status hierarchies and the idea that the young should respect, serve, and obey older people including teachers. Although physical punishment is widespread in Asia, there is no necessary connection between traditional belief systems and violence against children through corporal punishment. On the contrary, two core values of Asian societies are maintaining social harmony and learning to use mental abilities to discipline the body, especially in terms of maintaining self-control in the midst of chaos. Violence through corporal punishment

18 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

actually goes against these traditional Asian values. It destroys the social harmony in the classroom in terms of student-teacher and student-student relationships, and it threatens any future relationships that the child will have. It erodes children's confidence and self-esteem, and it legitimizes the lack of self-control as an acceptable way to dominate others. Rather than corporal punishment, traditional ways can be used as alternative forms of discipline that do not include violence;¹⁶ for example, when respected adults model good and non-violent behaviour, which is then imitated by their children.¹⁷ Moreover, individual and cultural belief systems that perpetuate the use of corporal punishment can be changed in a relatively short time.¹⁸

Does Corporal Punishment Work? What Are The Consequences?

Corporal punishment persists largely because teachers believe that it works; it's effective. But is it? Research spanning over two decades has shown that the only positive outcome of corporal punishment is immediate compliance, while its negative consequences far outweigh this outcome.¹⁹ The use of corporal punishment rarely produces the desired result, that is, positive, lasting behaviour change in the student. On the contrary, it can have very dire, negative consequences for the child and for you.

¹⁶ Save the Children. "How To Research the Physical and Emotional Punishment of Children." Bangkok: Southeast, East Asia and Pacific Region, 2004.

¹⁷ Information provided by Elizabeth Protacio-de Castro, Head of the Programme on Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights, Centre for Integrative Development Studies, the University of the Philippines, and documented in: Power, Clark F. and Hart, Stuart N. "The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline." in: Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

¹⁸ Durrant, Joan E. "Corporal Punishment: Prevalence, Predictors and Implications for Child Development." in: Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

¹⁹ Ibid.

- ◆ When we use corporal punishment, the results are unpredictable. They include sadness, low self-esteem, anger, rage, aggressive behaviour, desire for revenge, nightmares and bedwetting, disrespect for authority, higher states of depression, anxiety, drug use, sexual abuse, child abuse, spousal abuse, child delinquency, and, of course, more corporal punishment.²⁰
- ◆ In the long term, children who have been physically punished have been shown to develop anti-social behaviour and are likely to resort to violence quickly, thus creating a continuum of physical abuse from one generation to the next.²¹ By using violence, we teach violence.
- ◆ As teachers, we are responsible for improving the growth and development of our students. Corporal punishment can seriously harm a child's development and result in educational as well as social, interpersonal, and psychological adjustment problems. For example, studies have shown that some victims of corporal punishment are forced to drop out of school because they fear being beaten or humiliated. Once out of school, they are likely to resort to using or selling drugs or other socially unacceptable activities.^{22,23}
- ◆ Even when we are successful at stopping inappropriate behaviour for the moment, our use of corporal punishment still doesn't foster appropriate behaviour in the child. Why? The child doesn't know, or learn, what to do; what behaviour he or she is supposed to adopt except only to stop doing what he or she is doing. It's similar to telling you not to use corporal punishment, but then not teaching you what alternative disciplinary methods you can use.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ From Physical Punishment to Positive Discipline: Alternatives to Physical/Corporal Punishment in Kenya. An Advocacy Document (Draft Two) by ANPPCAN Kenya Chapter, January 2005. <http://kenya.ms.dk/articles/advocacy%20document%20ANPPCAN.htm?udskriv+on%5D> [accessed online on 9/29/2005]

²² Ibid.

²³ Cotton, Katherine. Schoolwide and Classroom Discipline. School Improvement Research Series. Iclose-Up #9. <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/5/cu9.html> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

20 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

- ◆ Our use of corporal punishment can sometimes back-fire; that is, it can become unintentionally reinforcing. For instance, when it brings attention from teachers and peers, something that the misbehaving child, like Ramon, may be seeking.
- ◆ Corporal punishment often creates resentment and hostility, making good teacher-student and student-student relationships and trust harder to create in the future. It thus makes our work harder, less rewarding, and immensely frustrating. We begin to dread going to class and teaching. Our students may sense our displeasure and regret coming to class, too.
- ◆ Children who are victims of corporal punishment may end up with injuries that need medical attention, leave permanent damage, or cause death. Even threatening to use corporal punishment can cause damage; for instance, when a teacher threatens to use a cane, and in raising it, he or she unintentionally pokes a student's eye out. (Unfortunately, this incident has actually occurred.)

THE MEANING OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an often misused word, especially when it is mistakenly equated with punishment. To many teachers, discipline means punishment. "This child needs disciplining" translates into "This child needs spanking or caning." This is **WRONG!**

Discipline is the practice of teaching or training a person to obey rules or a code of behaviour in both the short and long terms.^{24,25}

While punishment is meant to **control** a child's behaviour, discipline is meant to **develop** a child's behaviour, especially in matters of conduct. It is meant

²⁴ Kersey, Katharine C. Don't Jime It Out On Your Kids: A Parent's and Teacher's Guide to Positive Discipline. <http://www.cei.net/~rcox/dontake.html> [accessed online on 10/10/2005]

²⁵ Welker, J. Eileene. Make Lemons into Lemonade: Use Positives for Disciplining Children. <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/5000/5153.html> [accessed online on 10/10/2005]

to teach a child self-control and confidence by focusing on what it is we want the child to learn and what the child is capable of learning. It is the basis for guiding children on how to be in harmony with themselves and get along with other people. The ultimate goal of discipline is for children to understand their own behaviour, take initiative, be responsible for their choices, and respect themselves and others. In other words, they internalize a positive process of thinking and behaving that can last a lifetime. For instance, when you think of a "disciplined person," what do you think of? An Olympic gymnast, someone who has given up a bad habit, such as smoking, someone who remains calm in the midst of chaos. All of these require self-control, which is the goal of discipline.

Discipline shapes a child's behaviour and helps them to learn self-control when it provides encouragement, not painful, meaningless consequences. If you are a parent, or your friends have children, think back to a child's first year or two of life. How was he or she taught to clap hands, to walk, or to talk? You or your friend probably used teaching techniques like showing through example (also known as "modelling"), as well as giving praise and opportunities to practice; not yelling, spanking, insulting, or threatening. This encouragement is a type of reward that stimulates the child to work, learn, and achieve. It builds self-esteem because the child learns that he or she was directly responsible for earning his or her praise or other reward. Children can choose to earn it, or not to earn it. This gives them a feeling of control over their lives, which is a key ingredient for healthy self-esteem. Likewise, not giving encouragement for misbehaviour - such as ignoring attention-getting behaviours like temper-tantrums or being late for class - will, over time, teach the child self-control if he (or she) doesn't get the attention he is trying to obtain through his misbehaviour. He learns that he only gets attention when he behaves calmly or arrives promptly; that is, when you catch him being good.

Let's turn once again to Ramon and how his teacher disciplined him and learned from him.

A Case Study: Ramon's Change²⁶

The new week started off much as the week before had. Ramon was continuing his disruptive, unruly behaviour and was driving everyone crazy. But I had thought a lot about Ramon over the weekend. I began to think about how he was making me feel, and the overwhelming emotions that surfaced were anger and irritation. According to the book *Cooperative Discipline*, the way we feel when a student acts inappropriately gives us clues about the student's goals for the misbehaviour. Once we understand why the student is doing what he is doing, it is easier to find appropriate ways to deal with him.²⁷

Feeling angry is a clue that the student is seeking power, and irritation is a clue that the student is seeking attention. As I thought about it, I understood that most of Ramon's irritating behaviour was done in front of peers and adults in as loud and wild a manner as possible in order to get attention. Once he had our attention, he sought power by directly refusing to comply with our requests to stop, causing most of us to become extremely angry. I then realized that I had willingly been giving Ramon control over me and my classroom. I can't blame him; after all, I am responsible for my own actions. I began to understand that although I could not control him, I could control what I did and said. A new plan and attitude were created.

I resolved on Wednesday morning that no matter what Ramon did, I would not give him the attention that his misbehaviour was demanding. I would ignore him. When he came to class ten minutes late, I pretended he hadn't entered. I gave the teacher's aide a piece of paper and asked her to record everything Ramon did, but not to interfere with his behaviour in any way.

Ramon did everything but get naked during that class period. He ran up and down the aisles, played with another student's hair, put the aide's glasses on, inched towards the door as if he was going to walk out, and even climbed behind the aide on her chair. We said nothing. The rest of the class looked at me like I was crazy. I explained to them that our business was much too

²⁶ This case study is adapted from the diary of Ellen Berg, a language arts teacher in Turner Middle School, St. Louis, Missouri, USA. <http://www.middleweb.com/msdiaries01/MSDiaryEllenB7.html> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

²⁷ Albert, Linda and Desisto, Pete. *Cooperative Discipline*. American Guidance Service, 1996.

important to be interrupted by those who were not interested in learning, so we were going to go on as usual. I could have kissed every one of those students who, although they occasionally giggled to themselves, completely ignored his antics, even when he would try to bother them.

Ramon's behaviour intensified. Throughout the period, Ramon continually asked me to go to the bathroom, to go to the Assistant Principal's office, and to go to the security guard's desk. I continued to ignore him.

Then, an amazing thing happened. Instead of walking out, he sat down. By the end of the class as I was dismissing students by name, he came up to me and said, "Can I go too, Mrs. Berg?" He waited and waited as I called every other student's name, asking to go but not leaving until I gave him permission.

I wondered what would happen the next day. Would there be any change, or would I have to endure another round of Ramon's horrible behaviour?

On Thursday, Ramon came on time, complete with paper, pencil, and book. He sat down quietly and raised his hand to ask questions. For the entire period, he didn't get out of his seat or talk without permission. He was a little squirmy, but I know what a hard time he has staying still. He didn't do any of his assigned work, but I think controlling his own behaviour was work for Ramon.

What have I learned? It is not good enough to rely on what we have "always done." If I had continued with the same old strategies that supposedly had worked for me in the past, I know there would have been no change in Ramon's behaviour. I know some teachers believe that students should simply act appropriately because we tell them to, but the reality is that many will not. We are the adults, and we have the responsibility to change what we do to meet the needs of all students, not just the ones who sit still, behave appropriately, or understand a concept the first time we explain it to them.

Ramon taught me that I cannot make anyone do anything, but I can change my classroom conditions to try to influence their decisions. The school librarian once told me that the real teaching begins when a student is having problems.

24 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

We also cannot control everything, and we certainly cannot control anyone else, but we do have some power in the classroom. It is the power of what we, as professionals and human beings, choose to do in response to difficult situations.

Understanding that point has made all the difference in the world to Ramon.

The following table summarizes some of the positive features of discipline as opposed to what a punishment-oriented environment is like.²⁸ Which features did Ramon's teacher use in disciplining him? Which are common to your classroom?

Discipline is:	Punishment is:
Giving children positive alternatives	Being told only what NOT to do
Acknowledging or rewarding efforts and good behaviour	Reacting harshly to misbehaviour
When children follow rules because they are discussed and agreed upon	When children follow rules because they are threatened or bribed
Consistent, firm guidance	Controlling, shaming, ridiculing
Positive, respectful of the child	Negative and disrespectful of the child
Physically and verbally non-violent	Physically and verbally violent and aggressive
Logical consequences that are directly related to the misbehaviour	Consequences that are unrelated and illogical to the misbehaviour
When children must make amends when their behaviour negatively affects someone else	When children are punished for hurting others, rather than shown how to make amends

²⁸ From Physical Punishment to Positive Discipline: Alternatives to Physical/Corporal Punishment in Kenya. An Advocacy Document (Draft Two) by ANPPCAN Kenya Chapter, January 2005. <http://kenya.ms.dk/articles/advocacy%20document%20ANPPCAN.htm?udskriv+on%5D> [accessed online on 9/29/2005]

Discipline is:	Punishment is:
Understanding individual abilities, needs, circumstances, and developmental stages	Inappropriate to the child's developmental stage of life; individual circumstances, abilities, and needs are not taken into consideration
Teaching children to internalize self-discipline	Teaching children to behave well only when they risk getting caught doing otherwise
Listening and modelling	Constantly reprimanding children for minor infractions causing them to tune us out (ignore us; not listen to us)
Using mistakes as learning opportunities	Forcing children to comply with illogical rules "just because you said so"
Directed at the child's behaviour, never the child - your behaviour was wrong	Criticizing the child, rather than the child's behaviour - you are very stupid; you were wrong

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM

Children need to be taught so that they understand and follow social rules. But it is not necessary, and can be quite damaging, to hit or otherwise abuse a student. Evidence shows that girls and boys respond better to positive approaches, including negotiation and systems of rewards, rather than punishment through verbal, physical, or emotional abuse.²⁹

²⁹ Save the Children. *How To Research the Physical and Emotional Punishment of Children*. Bangkok: Southeast, East Asia and Pacific Region, 2004.

26 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

Read the following classroom scenes and see if you can identify the positive and negative ways in which the teacher handled a student's misbehaviour.³⁰

Scene 1

Lek walks into her Grade 4 class ready to start a mathematics lesson. As she begins the lesson, her students are continuing to talk to each other and are not listening to her. She says loudly, "Everyone stop talking, please. We are starting our lesson now." Everyone quiets down except Chai. Chai is still talking to his friend about the soccer game he saw on television last night. Lek screams, "Chai, why can't you shut up? Stand in the corner with your face to the wall. You're in more trouble than you know. You just wait until class is over!" Passing by the class, the headmaster asks, "Do you want me to show him who's boss?" Crying, Chai goes and stands in the corner, fearing for his fate and wishing he wasn't there. Maybe tomorrow he won't come to school.

Scene 2

Lek walks into her Grade 4 class ready to start a mathematics lesson. As she walks in she says, "Everyone quiet down now, please. We are going to start our mathematics lesson and everyone needs to listen closely." After the class quiets down, Lek hears Chai still talking to his friend. Lek asks, "Who is still talking? I guess someone can't remember the rules around here." The passing headmaster overhears Lek's comment, and he angrily asks if there is a problem and, if so, he knows how to take care of it quickly. Lek thanks him, and tells him that she can handle the situation for now. After the headmaster leaves, Lek looks in Chai's direction and asks, "I wonder why the headmaster would say that? Do you have any ideas?" Guiltily, Chai replies, "Well, I was still talking after you asked the class to be quiet." Lek asks, "When can we all talk without disrupting others and their opportunity to learn the lesson." Chai says, "When class is over." Lek nods and asks Chai to tell her what 100 divided by 2 equals. He answers 50. Lek smiles and

³⁰ This section is an adaptation of one originally developed for parents in: Doescher, S. and Burt, L. *You, Your Child, and Positive Discipline*. Oregon State University Extension Service, March, 1995. <http://eesc.orst.edu/agcomwebfile/edmat/ec1452-e.pdf> [accessed online on 10/12/2005]

says, "Very good." Chai paid extra attention during the entire class and did not talk to his friend until after class was over.

Scene 3

Lek walks into her Grade 4 class ready to start a mathematics lesson. As she walks in she says, "Everyone quiet down now, please. We are going to start our mathematics lesson and everyone needs to listen closely." After the class quiets down, Lek hears Chai still talking to his friend. Lek picks up an infraction slip and writes down "Failure to follow classroom rules" and then she asks Chai to fill in the top with his name, grade, teacher, time, and date. Lek says, "Chai, I will put this infraction slip here on the corner of your desk. If it is still there when class ends, you may throw it away. If you continue to talk without being given permission, I will pick it up and it will be turned into the office for the headmaster to see." At the end of class, Chai threw away the infraction slip.

If discipline techniques are negative, they may discourage and frustrate students. If they are positive, however, they will help students to adopt and maintain good behaviours.

In Scenes 1 and 2 above, negative situations between Lek and Chai can be seen. Can you identify them?

Answer: In Scene 1, both Lek and the headmaster show explosive anger. They *threaten Chai*: "You just wait until class is over!" and "Do you want me to show him who's boss?" Lek also uses *unreasonable, meaningless punishment* in ordering Chai to stand in the corner with his face to the wall. In Scene 2, Lek *belittles Chai* with sarcasm: "I guess someone can't remember the rules around here." How do you think Chai feels after Lek and the headmaster's angry responses?

Scenes 2 and 3, however, contain examples of positive situations between Lek and Chai. In Scene 2, Lek enters the room and *asks for a specific behaviour to occur* (quiet down), as well as *the reason why* (starting the mathematics lesson and everyone needs to listen closely). In response to the headmaster's comment, *she asks the question*, "I wonder why the headmaster would say that?" This question helps Chai think about the reasons for the headmaster's actions and how his behaviour may have upset

the headmaster, Lek, and his fellow students. Lek also nods to show Chai that he is correct about when is the right time to talk with friends. She also *reinforces* his behaviour by giving him a chance to answer a simple math question correctly, and she *praises* him and smiles. This tells Chai that Lek still likes him. It was his behaviour that was the problem, not he, himself.

In Scene 3, Lek is *gentle yet firm* in dealing with Chai's misbehaviour. She offers him a choice in directing his behaviour. This gives Chai the chance to be *responsible* for his own behaviour and what happens next.

Seven Principles for Positive Child Discipline

1. Respect the child's dignity
2. Develop pro-social behaviour, self-discipline, and character
3. Maximize the child's active participation
4. Respect the child's developmental needs and quality of life
5. Respect the child's motivation and life views
6. Assure fairness (equity and non-discrimination) and justice
7. Promote solidarity

Source: Power, F. Clark and Hart, Stuart N. "The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline," in: Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

Positive Discipline Steps

While punishment is a single act, positive discipline is a four-step process that recognizes and rewards appropriate behaviour in the following manner.³¹

1. **The appropriate behaviour is described:** "Everyone quiet down now, please."
2. **Clear reasons are provided:** "We are going to start our mathematics lesson and everyone needs to listen closely." This means that quieting down quickly will show respect for others. *It is a good example of treating others as you would like them to treat you.*
3. **Acknowledgement is requested:** "Do you see why quieting down is so important?" Or, as in the case of Chai, "When can we all talk without disrupting others and their opportunity to learn the lesson."
4. **The correct behaviour is reinforced:** eye contact, a nod, a smile, an extra five minutes of play time at the end of the day, extra credit points, having a success mentioned in front of the class or school (social recognition is the greatest award). When rewards are used, they should always be immediate and small, yet gratifying

This process is effective for individual children. Moreover, for those of you who are working in large classes, it can also be effective for groups of children. The "trick" is to make the children feel they are on a "winning team" (the class as a whole) and to praise each child's efforts in being a good team member.

Remember: *Catch students doing the right thing and reward them immediately. This is the core of positive discipline.*

³¹ Adapted from: Positive Discipline: An Approach and a Definition. <http://www.brainsarefun.com/Posdis.html> [accessed online on 12/2/2005]

Note: *Positive discipline can fail if:*

1. The student, or the entire class, is not rewarded quickly enough.
2. The emphasis is put on tasks rather than behaviours. For instance, "It's good you closed your mouth and stopped talking" as opposed to "It's wonderful that you were very considerate of others and quieted down quickly."
3. The emphasis continues to be on what the student is doing incorrectly, rather than correctly.

In using positive discipline, try to keep in mind a 4:1 ratio. Catch a student, or a class, doing something correctly four times for every one time you find them doing something incorrectly. Be consistent. By using this four to one ratio consistently, you show your students that you really are serious about catching them doing something correctly and rewarding them immediately.³² To see if you're achieving this ratio, keep a diary, and at the end of each class period, or day, think back to how many times you caught your students being good compared to how many times you found them doing something incorrectly. You can also ask a student or teacher's aide to monitor you until praise becomes routine and criticism becomes rare.

Teachers who use positive discipline believe in their students' abilities and communicate affection and respect for their students. When teachers are willing to observe their students and respond in ways that encourage positive behaviour, they help their students become responsible for their own behaviours, and they reduce the likelihood of misbehaviour.



Reflection Activity: Learning and Applying Positive Lessons

Many opportunities occur each school day for teachers and students to relate to one another positively. Think about a recent situation where you and one of your students related well to one another, maybe during individual instruction. Describe your experience in the space below. How can you use this information to work better with other students and avoid the use of negative discipline?

³² Ibid.

What did your student do?

What did you say or do?

How did your child respond?

How did you feel?

How can you use this experience with other children?

AVOIDING THE DISCIPLINE DILEMMA

This section has been about the discipline dilemma, that is, deciding upon whether to control a student's behaviour for your sake, or developing the student's behaviour for their benefit. This dilemma rests on the mistaken idea that discipline and punishment mean the same thing, that the actions undertaken for each are the same, and that the results will be the same. To avoid this dilemma, and clear up the confusion, we have learned about the difference between punishment and discipline, the nature and consequences of punishment versus positive discipline, and the positive discipline process. Hopefully, you've discovered many new things, developed some useful ideas, and learned about how our disciplinary actions affect children's behaviour and encourage (or harm) its development in the long-run. Below is one last exercise to test your knowledge about the difference between positive and negative discipline.



Action Activity: Positive or Negative Discipline

Which disciplinary actions in the table below are positive and which are negative? Place a check mark (✓) in the appropriate column. Next, place a check mark in the last column for each action that you have ever used, or might use, to correct a child's misbehaviour. Be honest!!

Action	Positive (✓)	Negative (✓)	Have you ever used this action? Yes / No
1. Getting the student's attention before you begin class			
2. Using direct instruction (tell them exactly what will be happening)			
3. Making assumptions			
4. Making accusations without proof			
5. Getting up and walking around the classroom			
6. Using physical force			
7. Commanding			

Action	Positive (✓)	Negative (✓)	Have you ever used this action? Yes / No
8. Acting in the way that you want the children to act (modelling)			
9. Generalizing about a student's behaviour			
10. Publicly comparing one child to another			
11. Enriching your classroom environment			
12. Anticipating problems			
13. Insisting that you are right and acting superior			
14. Establishing clear and consistently enforced rules			

Answers: Actions numbered 1, 2, 5, 8, 11, 12, and 14 are positive.³³ Actions numbered 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 13 are negative.³⁴ How did you score? How many of the negative and positive methods have you used?

³³ McDaniel, Thomas R. "A Primer on Classroom Discipline: Principles Old and New." *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 1986. Abstract available at <http://www.honorlevel.com/techniques.xml> [accessed online 10/6/2005]

³⁴ Albert, Linda. *A Teacher's Guide to Cooperative Discipline*. Circle Pines, Minnesota: AGS, 1989.



Building Positive Teacher-Student Relationships

What You Will Learn:

- ◆ The Basis of a Teacher-Student Relationship
- ◆ Why Children Behave As They Do
- ◆ Why Do Children Misbehave
- ◆ Learning About Your Students From The Inside
- ◆ Understanding Your Students' Lives
- ◆ Learning About Your Students' Families
- ◆ Parent-Teacher Communication
- ◆ Encouragement Strategies

THE BASIS OF A TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

Teachers who use positive discipline respect, nurture, and support their students. They *understand* why a child behaves - or misbehaves - as he or she does, as well as how the child sees him or herself, which may cause misbehaviour. They also *empathize* with the child's abilities and his or her situation in life. The teacher's expectations of the child are realistic, taking the child as he or she is, and not on what he or she should be. The teacher *understands* that misbehaviour is a constructive learning event, both for the child and for his or her teacher, and that it is an important, natural part of the child's development, not a threat to a teacher's authority.

By building such a positive relationship on understanding and empathy, students come to trust their teachers and to value their approval. As students respond to the positive nature of the relationship and consistent discipline, the incidence of misbehaviour decreases, and the quality of the relationship improves even further. Towards this end, the best teachers are ones who are good role models and about whom children care enough to want to imitate and please.

WHY CHILDREN BEHAVE AS THEY DO

Making Choices

Miss Samina, a Grade 4 science teacher, was always having trouble with Hari. They were constantly at odds. Whatever Miss Samina wanted Hari to do - such as come to class on time or turn in his homework every day - Hari just wouldn't do it. What she didn't realize, and finally another teacher saw, was that Miss Samina always phrased what she wanted Hari to do as a question; for instance, "Hari, would you please come to class on time?" and he always said "No!"

No one and no situation can make a child behave in a certain way. For Miss Samina, she was inviting Hari to adopt a good behaviour, but he always rejected the invitation. Why? Behaviour is based on choice, and your students choose what behaviour they want to adopt. You cannot force them, which is why punishment doesn't work in the long-run. However, as Ramon's teacher learned in the previous section, you have the power to influence a student's decisions about how to behave, but the change must start with you, the teacher. For Ramon's teacher, she needed to learn how to interact with Ramon - and her other students, as well - so that he would want to choose an appropriate behaviour and comply with classroom rules. You face the same challenge. Your role is to identify the reason for these bad choices and to develop strategies to help the student make better choices about his or her behaviour.

As we learned in the first section of this document, children learn - and behave - as a result of hereditary factors, the environment in which they live, and their own personal and psychological needs. We cannot change their heredity, and we may have limited control over their environment, especially if we don't work well, or at all, with parents and community leaders. Yet by understanding that each of your students is making choices about how he or she behaves, you are provided with strategic leverage for influencing them. Remember: Behaviour is understandable and purposeful. Our students do what they do for a purpose, however little they may be aware of it. When you can begin to see the world - or just your classroom - through their eyes, you can respond to them rationally, confidently, and effectively.



Action Activity: Same Student, Different Behaviour

Choose one student in your class whose behaviour worries or frustrates you. Watch this student regularly for one week, especially outside your classroom. Does she (or he) act the same way in other classes, with other teachers, or with other students as she does in your class? If she behaves quite differently in a variety of other situations in school, why do you think she is choosing to behave as she does in your classroom? Consult teachers who are not having a problem with her behaviour. What are they doing differently from you? Are you phrasing your requests in terms of a question (as with Miss Samina above)? Have you punished her so she doesn't want to come to class? Are other teachers giving her choices and allowing her to deal with the consequences? How can you work towards helping her become more responsible in her behaviour in a positive manner?

If we believe that each student is making choices about his or her behaviour, we must also apply this approach to our own reactions in the classroom and all other dealings with students. We must ask ourselves about the choices we are making in our own actions, and why we make these choices, and then take greater care about how we express ourselves both in voice and gesture.

The Need to Belong

The ultimate goal of student behaviour is to fulfill the need to belong.³⁵ This desire to belong is a fundamental need, one that is shared by children and adults alike. Each one of us continually strives to find and maintain a place of significance, a place to belong. In our search, we select beliefs, feelings, and behaviours that we feel will gain us significance. Most students spend several hours a day in school, so their ability to find their place in the classroom group, and the school at large, is of major importance. Moreover, whatever method each student chooses to use in achieving the goal of belonging - either through proper behaviour or misbehaviour - this method is selected early in life and becomes the lifestyle that characterizes that person. This is why you are a very important actor in helping each child to choose a method that is socially acceptable. It will last a lifetime!

³⁵ Democratic Approaches to Classroom Management. <http://www.educ.sfu.ca/courses/educ326/chapter3.htm> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

Students need to satisfy three C's in order to experience a sense of belonging.³⁶

- ◆ They need to feel CAPABLE of completing tasks in a manner that meets the needs of the classroom and school;
- ◆ They need to feel they can CONNECT successfully with teachers and classmates; and
- ◆ They need to know they CONTRIBUTE to the group in a significant way.

The three factors that affect students' abilities to satisfy the three C's, and which require action on your part, are:

1. the quality of the teacher-student relationship, one based on trust, mutual respect, and understanding (not fear);
2. the strength of the classroom climate for success (for instance, all children feel that they are included, that they are valued, and that they can work together cooperatively and effectively);³⁷
3. the appropriateness of the classroom structure (how it is managed, the topic of the next section in this document).

By finding ways to satisfy these three C's along these three lines, you can fulfill your students' need to belong and therefore prevent misbehaviour that may arise in their search to satisfy this need. You will also be well on your way to inspiring both well-behaved and passive students to actively participate in your class. In all cases, one of the strongest tools you have is encouragement, without which your students cannot develop the tools to succeed and achieve their sense of belonging.

³⁶ Albert, Linda and Desisto, Pete. *Cooperative Discipline*. American Guidance Service, 1996.

³⁷ Many techniques for improving your classroom's climate are included in: *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*, Bangkok: UNESCO, 2004. http://www2.unescobkk.org/ips/ebooks/documents/Embracing_Diversity/index.htm

WHY CHILDREN MISBEHAVE

Don't worry; your students don't intentionally set out to misbehave. In fact, children usually misbehave for a reason. Some of the most common reasons that are believed to contribute to misbehaviour are:

- ◆ The work may be too easy or too hard for the student.
- ◆ The work is not interesting and the student is bored.
- ◆ The teaching methods may not fit the student's learning style.
- ◆ The student may not be prepared.
- ◆ The expectations are unclear or unreasonable.
- ◆ The student has poor social skills, cannot communicate well with you or others, or has low self-esteem.

All of these reasons may cause students to become discouraged, and misbehaving students are discouraged students. They do not believe they can belong in useful ways. Therefore, they seek to belong through misbehaviour.

In addition to the above reasons, it is also believed that children misbehave to reach four goals, namely:

1. Attention
2. Power
3. Revenge
4. Avoidance of Failure or Inadequacy³⁸

Think again about a student whose behaviour worries or frustrates you. To learn the reason behind this misbehaviour, ask yourself how you feel when this student misbehaves. For example, if you feel annoyed when this student disobeys, the student is probably seeking attention (like Ramon). Do you feel angry? Then power is the child's ultimate goal. Do you feel hurt by the student's behaviour? Then the student's objective is revenge. Frustrated to the point of wanting to give up as a teacher? Then the student believes they are inadequate and misbehave to confirm their feelings. Let's look at each of these goals more closely and what can be done about them.³⁹

³⁸ Dreikurs, Rudolf. *Children: The Challenge*. New York, NY: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1964. Dreikurs, Rudolf and Soltz, Vicki. *Children: The Challenge*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1987. Albert, Linda and Desisto, Pete. *Cooperative Discipline*. American Guidance Service, 1996.

³⁹ The following four sections on attention, power, revenge, and failure are adapted from: *Dealing with Behaviour*. <http://www.kidsgrowth.com/resources/article/detail.cfm?id=119> [accessed online on 10/12/2005]

Seeking Attention

Every healthy child demands attention, and most misbehaviour is due to the child's need for attention. An important goal of teaching is to supply the attention that students need to develop healthy self-esteem. However, some students choose misbehaviour to get extra attention. They want to be centre stage and constantly distract you and their classmates to gain an audience. They need some way of confirming their existence and significance: "Hey! Notice me! I'm here and I'm important!" If students can't get attention through achievement and cooperation, then they'll get it any way they can. They may disrupt the class, but they know that they'll get the attention that they crave.

Denying attention in such situations usually stops the misbehaviour, such as in the case of Ramon. If a teacher is constantly having to cope with attention-getting behaviour, however, ignoring it may not always be enough. Actually, being ignored may be the reason for the problem in the first place.

For students who require a lot of unnecessary attention, you may be tempted to scold, bribe, or use other negative discipline techniques. But if you remember that the student's goal is to get attention, it is easy to see that scolding or bribing only encourages more misbehaviour. In a child's mind, attention from an angry teacher is better than no attention at all. If you only notice a student's misbehaviour, then the student will misbehave in order to get attention.

Following is a list of positive disciplinary actions that you can take to guide students whose misbehaviour is demanding attention.

- ◆ Catch them being good; praise them when they are not seeking attention and misbehaving.
- ◆ Ignore the behaviour when possible, giving the child positive attention during pleasant times.
- ◆ Teach them to ask for attention (for instance, make "notice me, please" cards that they raise when they have a question).
- ◆ Give them a stern "eye" (look) but do not speak.

- ◆ Stand close by rather than far away (there's no need for attention-getting behaviours if you are standing next to them).
- ◆ Target-stop-do; that is, target the student by name, identify the behaviour to be stopped, tell the student what he is expected to do at that moment, let him make the decision about what he does next and its consequences; for example, read Scene 3 between Lek and Chai in the previous chapter.
- ◆ Do the unexpected, such as turn the lights off, play a musical sound, lower your voice, change your voice, talk to the wall.
- ◆ Distract the student, such as ask a direct question, ask a favour, give choices, change the activity.

The general principle for responding to attention-seeking students is:

Never give attention on demand, even for useful behaviour. Help students become self-motivated. Give attention in ways they don't expect. Catch them being "good."

Power

Children are constantly trying to find out how powerful they are; Ramon is a good example of this. Some students feel that they are only a significant part of the class when they are running the show. Power-seeking students feel that they are important only when they challenge your authority, resist rules, and do not follow instructions. They mistakenly believe that they belong in the classroom only when they are in control. They'll defy you to see how far you can be pushed, or they'll do just enough to appease you, since they sense that you don't want to keep fighting.

Our natural response during such power struggles is to feel provoked and angry. The temptation is to stop these struggles altogether through the use of some form of corporal punishment, but this will only provide a brief respite. During power struggles, you need to take kind, but firm, action. Talking will do little good, and it only feeds into the power struggle. You need to decide *what you will do*, not what it will take to make the student

do it. The general guideline for dealing with power-seeking students is to withdraw from the conflict. Remember: it takes two to quarrel. Be calm, give choices, and let the consequences of the student's behaviour occur. You might even win their cooperation by enlisting their help. For instance, "Ok, you don't want to come to class on time. I understand. But could you please help me by taking attendance as students arrive?" Instead of seeking power over you, you put the student in a position of responsibility and grant him or her legitimate power.

Revenge

Dealing with the mistaken goal of revenge takes patience. A student who hurts others, and you, feels that they have been hurt (either real or imagined), and they have to take revenge. They feel mistreated, defeated, and unhappy, so they knowingly or unknowingly seek revenge. Revenge can be pursued physically, verbally, or passively through inactivity. It can also be entirely silent, such as through hateful looks and gestures. The student can also seek revenge against you indirectly, such as by picking on other students or writing on a desk.

When a student is allowed to take revenge, they establish a painful cycle of relating to people through hurting and being hurt. Remember that the revenge-seeking student is troubled and deeply discouraged. To break the revenge-seeking pattern, you should avoid feeling hurt, and you should never retaliate. Don't go seeking your own revenge. Instead, try to build a caring, trusting relationship with the student while improving his or her self-esteem. This can be easily done by placing the student in situations in which he or she cannot fail. When a student has a better opinion of himself or herself, they rarely misbehave to seek revenge. Also teach the student - and all of your students - how to express their feelings appropriately. Rather than taking revenge for being hurt physically or emotionally, teach the children to "talk it out," to tell each other how hurt they were, and to try to determine the cause and how to avoid it in the future.

Avoidance of Failure or Inadequacy

Some students fear failure or feel that they are inadequate and cannot live up to their own, their parents', or their teachers' expectations. This feeling of inadequacy is an escape for the discouraged child. In other words, since they feel bad, they act badly. They will not try to do well in your class if they think they are stupid. It's a lot easier to give up rather than to try and fail again. To compensate for their feelings of inadequacy, they may choose withdrawal behaviours that make them appear inadequate: "I just can't do these math problems." "I'm no good at science." "This book is too hard for me." Negative discipline tactics, such as ridicule and sarcasm ("Can't you do better than that!"), make these children feel even more worthless. Alternatively, students who feel that they are inadequate, unpopular, or cruel may brag, boast, or fight. They may also turn into bullies in an attempt to make other students feel fear and inadequacy.

When your students feel inadequate, you have a difficult task. Start where they are (not what they are supposed to be), develop realistic expectations, eliminate all criticism of their work, encourage their slightest effort, and, above all, don't pity them. You must restore their faith in themselves and encourage them by praising whatever successes they achieve, no matter how small. Intentionally arrange for them to succeed in easy tasks and find opportunities to compliment them on their behaviour and positive efforts. Remember, children are not miniature adults with bad judgment; they make mistakes because they are always learning.

LEARNING ABOUT YOUR STUDENTS

Building a trusting and caring relationship between you and your students, one that promotes good behaviour and prevents misbehaviour, can be challenging, but it can have its rewards as well, such as making your teaching more enjoyable and improving your students' learning. Their positive achievements reflect how well you are performing and how well your students see you as a "role model."

Whether you have many children in your classroom or a more manageable number, your challenge is to learn as much as you can about each of your students. For those of you working in large classrooms, initially focus your efforts on that small number of students who may need special attention, either because they are misbehaving now or because you suspect that their personal or family situation places them at risk of misbehaviour. Focus your efforts on understanding how they see themselves, as well as on what external factors - possibly in the family - may be affecting their behaviour.

Remember: Each student is an individual. Each student brings a different history, a different way of responding to and learning from the world, and a different dream for the future. By taking time to learn about your students as individuals and by getting to know their families, you show that you care about them and respect their uniqueness.

In a respectful environment, all students feel safe and valued. The teacher has a friendly and open rapport with students, but the teacher is always an adult. Giving thoughtful attention to a student's work demonstrates caring and respect. Rather than just saying "good work," tell the student why the work is good.

A teacher needs to know the interests and dreams of each student as well as what they know and are able to do. It is important that you develop some activities for getting to know about your students. Here are three activities that teachers have used successfully.⁴⁰ Can you think of any more?



Action Activity: Who Am I?

At the beginning of the school year, have your students fill out a card similar to the one below. Use this information to talk with your students, develop lesson plans, and design learning activities. At the end of the first term, ask your students to fill out the card again, and then look for any changes, particularly in terms of what each student believes he or she is good or not good at doing, as well as when they are happy or uncomfortable in class.

⁴⁰ Classroom Management. Rapport With and Knowledge of Students. http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/cm-know.html [accessed online on 10/20/2005]

44 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

Using this information, what new learning activities can your students do that will improve their confidence and make your class a more enjoyable place to learn?

If you are a teacher who can follow your students for several years, keep the cards in a card file and review them for changes. Revise your lesson plans and activities accordingly. If you're working in a school with teachers who teach different subjects, share your information with them and encourage them to use it in preparing their lessons.

Student Name: _____
I want to be called _____
One thing you need to know about me is _____

I would like to work with _____
I'm really good at _____
I'm not very good at _____
I'm happiest in class when _____

I'm uncomfortable in class when _____



Action Activity: Sharing Time

Set aside 10 to 15 minutes during the day, or at least once a week, for your students to share in small groups how they are feeling, bad things and good things that are happening in their lives. A group can elect to share information they feel is important with the teacher or the class.

Other similar sharing activities could include asking the children to keep a private diary and sharing parts of it with you and the other students. In teaching them to write essays, ask them to write one on what is happening in their lives, both good and bad.

For students who are experiencing especially difficult circumstances, try some of the encouragement strategies mentioned at the end of this chapter. Praise them whenever possible and appropriate. Ask if there is anything special they would like to do or learn about.



Action Activity: Fill in the Blanks

Develop a form or worksheet with fill-in-the-blanks like,

"After school I mostly _____

My favourite food is _____

My favourite activity is _____

My favourite subject in school is _____

I want to be like _____

I want to be a _____ when I finish school."

In classrooms where there are a lot of new students, you can use this activity at the beginning of the school year as an opportunity for students to get to know each other, especially in classrooms containing children with diverse backgrounds and abilities. On the sheet of paper with this information, add a column on the right side of the paper, but leave it blank. After your students have filled in their blanks, ask them to find other students with the same response to each statement and to write each student's name in the column.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT OF YOUR STUDENTS' LIVES

When you understand why your students misbehave, such as through the four goals above, you can more easily choose a positive discipline tool that will reduce the misbehaviour or prevent it entirely. Yet the four goals discussed above centre solely on the child fulfilling his or her own emotional and psychological needs. What is missing is understanding the context from which each child comes.

We are not the only ones who affect a child's behaviour. Each child is a product of his or her total learning environment. This environment encompasses not only your classroom and school, but also includes the child, the child's family, and his or her community. For instance, how many times have you heard, "He acts just like his father" or "He acts just like his older brother"? Understanding this broader environment probably will be a new challenge for many of you, especially for those who usually work only within the confines of their classroom and school.

How a student behaves in your classroom may reflect his or her frustration in himself, in his home life, or in dealing with other difficult circumstances inside and outside of school. We need to be careful in interpreting a child's behaviour. What we think is misbehaviour may not be a disciplinary problem at all; for instance, a child may be seeking extra attention from you because he is not getting it at home. It may be the child's reaction, or frustration, to problems at home or elsewhere that carry over into the classroom. Thus, it's not the child's behaviour that is the problem, it's the situation in which the child is caught. This frustration, fueled by its causes, may also help to explain sudden behaviour changes in students who usually don't misbehave. In any case, if we discipline the child for his or her misbehaviour, we make a "miscall." We may be blaming the child for something that is not his or her fault, and we may confuse the child even more. In this case, punishment will definitely not work, and it may severely harm the child's behavioural development.

To guide the child's behaviour in a positive manner, we need to understand his or her total learning environment and the factors that may affect his or her behaviour at a personal level, a family level, and a community level. When a child misbehaves, we need to take these factors into account just as much as the four goals discussed above. We need to ask ourselves if he or she is having difficulty with the classroom situation or whether it is something outside of the classroom and school that may be causing the problem. Finally, solving these problems rests not only with us. We also need to form strong partnerships with parents, community leaders, and local organizations to identify and solve any very difficult conditions that a child is facing and that his or her misbehaviour is reflecting.

Following is a list of factors that may affect whether or not one of your students wants to attend and achieve in your class, and whether or not he or she may misbehave. Also included are some actions that can be taken

to try and overcome these factors, and especially actions involving the participation of families and communities.⁴¹ This list is not exhaustive. Talk with your colleagues about what other factors in your locality may be affecting your students' behaviours and what actions can be taken to solve them when they arise.

The Child

Need to work. Children who feel that they should be home, or elsewhere, helping their families to earn a living may not want to be in your class and may use misbehaviour as a means of escape. Their interest is on providing their families with immediate assistance, rather than viewing their education as a long-term way to ensure their families' economic future. For these children, they need to be shown how their learning and good behaviour may actually improve their work prospects. They also can be given opportunities to earn as well as learn, such as through in-school, livelihood skills training programmes, where the products that they make can be sold with the profits going to the child. Another good strategy is to invite parents or respected community members with special knowledge or skills to be resource persons in the classroom. They can teach the children about their specialty, how it relates to what they are learning in class, and the value of education in the long-run.

In addition, some children - and girls, especially - may have many household duties to perform before school starts, such as caring for younger siblings, cleaning the house, collecting fuel, preparing food, and tending animals. Thus, they may have very little time to do homework, may come to school late, and may sleep in class. These are not behavioural problems, but responses to their family situation. Consequently, discipline probably will not correct the child's behaviour. Rather, other strategies will need to be pursued to try and help the child work in the home as well as learn, such as giving extra attention during class time; giving little to no homework and, if given, providing time to complete it in school; encouraging students to help each other in completing assignments (peer-to-peer learning); and giving additional time for tutorials, possibly in the home.

⁴¹ UNESCO. "Booklet 3: Getting All Children In School and Learning," *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

Illness and hunger. Children do not learn well if they are ill, hungry, or malnourished. Usually these children are from poverty-stricken families who are fighting on a daily basis just to survive. Illness and hunger reduce a student's attention span and drastically affect his or her achievement levels. Low achievement levels can lead to feelings of inadequacy and failure, which can lead to misbehaviour. The actions that are needed to help these children go beyond your classroom, reaching out from the school and into the community. The first action is to establish school feeding for learning programmes that provide regular, nutritious lunches or snacks. These may benefit girls, in particular. Community women's groups or other local organizations can prepare these lunches or snacks. In addition, we need to work with local health service providers to establish regular health, dental, and nutrition screening and treatment programmes.⁴²

Fear of violence. Fear of violence when going to and from school, as well as at school and in the classroom (in the form of corporal punishment or bullying), may cause some students to become withdrawn and to not participate in class. It also takes a heavy toll on their self-esteem and raises their sense of inadequacy. What actions can you take to understand your school's situation better? Assist children and community members to map where violence occurs on school grounds, as well as in returning to or coming from home. You can also work with community leaders and parents to establish "child watch" activities, where responsible teachers, parents, or other community members watch over areas of potential or high violence within and outside of school. This may include escorting children to safe areas when needed. You can also ask your students to complete anonymous questionnaires that ask them about whether or not they have been bullied or were subjected to corporal punishment, and in what ways.⁴³ Your school will also need firm and enforceable policies for violence against children, including the use of corporal punishment, and suitable codes of conduct for teachers and school staff.

⁴² For additional ideas, see: UNESCO. "Booklet 6: Creating a Healthy and Protective ILFE," *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

⁴³ UNESCO. "Booklet 4: Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classrooms," *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

Disabilities and special needs. Most children with disabilities or special needs are not in school, especially when our schools and education systems have no policies or programmes for including children with physical, emotional, or learning impairments. However, some of these children ARE in school and may be in your class. They are the ones whose disabilities are more “hidden,” such as those with sight and hearing impairments and those with such disorders as ADHD, such as Ramon. If these impairments are not detected, the children’s behaviour – such as not paying attention, poor learning performance, or hyperactivity in the classroom – may be wrongly identified as misbehaviour. Schools need screening programmes to identify these conditions early and refer the children for assistance so that they can fully learn and participate in our classes. Your students can even do some simple sight and hearing tests themselves.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ UNESCO. Booklet 6: *Creating a Healthy and Protective ILFE. Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments.* Bangkok, 2004.

The Family and Community

Families and communities should be the first line for protection and care of a child, for understanding the problems a child may be confronting, and for taking action to address these problems in sustainable ways. The most effective means to prevent misbehaviour is through strong, caring, and productive families and communities. Below are some of the major considerations associated with the family and community that may determine whether your students attend school or how they behave within it. ***Are there any other family or community factors in your community, country, or culture that could affect children's attendance and behaviour in school?***

Poverty and the Practical Value of Education. Directly related to the "need to work" factor above, poverty often affects a child's performance and behaviour in school. Because of their financial burden, poor parents are often pressed to provide even the basic necessities of life. Hence, children must help to earn the family's income at the expense of their education and future life. This occurs especially when families do not feel that education is meaningful for their daily lives; thus, they do not understand why their children should attend school and do not take an interest in how their children behave in school (or sometimes at home, as well). Parents also may feel that the local school cannot provide a good quality education, and the skills their children will learn in certain jobs are more valuable than those they will learn in the classroom.

Since the root cause of poverty is economic, effective strategies to reach poor children, get them in school, and help them to learn actively often must be based on short- and long-term economic incentives for the child and his or her family.

Inadequate Caregiving. Because of the need to earn money, some parents may have little time to care for their children. Sometimes, they may be forced to migrate away from home either temporarily or for long periods of time. As a result, they may put their children in the care of elderly grandparents or others. These parents or guardians may not have the knowledge, experience, or resources to provide suitable child care, which can lead to illness and hunger. They also may not value education when money is needed so badly, and they may not care how the child behaves in class. What are some of the actions that can be undertaken to help these children?

- ◆ On special days, invite parents and other caregivers to visit the school. Show them the children's work, and give informal talks or participatory learning sessions on improving children's health and behaviour through better caregiving.
- ◆ As above, invite parents and caregivers with special knowledge to talk about their skills with your class so they can also learn that their knowledge is valuable for their children.
- ◆ Encourage regular "teacher-parent/caregiver" conferences to discuss children's learning progress and how better caregiving can improve children's learning, self-esteem, and behaviour.
- ◆ Obtain childcare materials from government agencies and non-governmental organizations, especially those dealing with health and nutrition. Use them in school health or family life education programmes with children, and regularly send them home with children to read to their family members.
- ◆ Establish parenting skills training programmes in which the school and other local organizations can help parents and other caregivers to improve their parenting and caregiving practices.
- ◆ Develop partnerships with local social welfare agencies and refer children who are experiencing especially difficult family circumstances.

The Family and Community: A Strategy from Thailand

In Thailand, child-friendly schools are using information about children's learning achievements and their family backgrounds to identify those children who are learning poorly, frequently absent, not interested in learning, and are most likely to drop out, often because their families have little money and value their children's labour over their education. These children are given priority for livelihood skills training in such areas as silk and cotton weaving, sewing, woodworking, agricultural production, typing, computer training, and the like. This training increases family income while the children are in school, and it provides the children with skills that they can use throughout their lives. It also raises their self-esteem, confidence, and sense of accomplishment. Some of these children have even received national and regional awards for their work. In some schools, family members of these children serve as "teachers" in teaching the children time-honoured skills, such as how to dye silk thread and weave it into traditional patterns. Such participation increases the value of the school in the eyes of parents and community members through improving livelihoods and stressing the value of maintaining important cultural traditions. It also increases communication between parents and children about the children's work and behaviour in school, as well as what the future—and the children's education—can bring to the family. ***Can a similar strategy become a part of your school's curriculum?***

Conflict. Some parents, caught in an argument over money or other problems (such as drunkenness or drug abuse), may lash out at their children, thus leading to violence and abuse, as well as a strong sense of inadequacy in the child. This may contribute to irregular attendance and misbehaviour, or even encourage children to run away from home and school. During the 1997 Asian economic crisis, for example, one Thai boy was caught in the middle of his parents' quarrels about money and was beaten. His home life was very poor, and soon he began to be withdrawn in class and would not participate. He also would not complete his assignments on time, if at all. Rather than punishing the boy, his teacher asked him to describe his home life, and the truth about his situation came out. He divulged that he didn't understand why he was beaten; he had nothing to do with his family's money problems. After that, his teacher went out of her way to praise the child, to give him opportunities to excel, and to give him even a little extra

“tender loving care” and attention. Whenever possible, she also asked him to help her before and after school so he could be in class rather than in a destructive home environment. Quite rapidly, his behaviour changed and he began to excel in his studies. After his parents solved their differences, they also saw that he was doing well in school, and they complimented him during a parent-teacher conference.

Discrimination. Children who come from families that are different from the community at large in terms of language, religion, caste, or other cultural features are especially at risk of being the targets of bullying, ridicule, teasing, and the like. Also at risk are those children affected by HIV/AIDS. Negative, discriminatory attitudes towards such children are perhaps the biggest single barrier to including these children in school and to allow them to participate equally, actively, and happily in the learning process. Negative attitudes can be found at all levels: parents, community members, schools and teachers, government officials, and even among marginalized children themselves. Fears, taboos, shame, ignorance, and misinformation, amongst others, all encourage negative attitudes towards such children and their situations. These children may develop low self-esteem, hide away and avoid social interaction, misbehave in class, and become invisible members of their communities. For such children, we need to put special emphasis on reducing discrimination and embracing the value of diversity.

- ◆ Work with parents and community members to modify class lessons and materials to represent the diverse cultures and languages of the community. This will help ensure that the community will find the materials authentic and useful, and it will encourage all children to attend to school and work together cooperatively.
- ◆ Use local stories, oral histories, legends, songs, and poems in developing class lessons.
- ◆ For children who do not speak the language of instruction in your classroom, work with bilingual teachers or others who speak the child's language (even family and community members) to develop an appropriate language-training curriculum for the classroom.

54 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

To reduce bullying, you will need to take a range of actions, such as:

- ◆ conducting exercises to help children to relax and reduce tension;
- ◆ increasing the amount of cooperative learning within the classroom (children helping each other to learn);
- ◆ improving the assertiveness of children by giving all students more power, such as by allowing them to make class rules and take responsibility within a student committee;
- ◆ increasing responsibility within the class by establishing committees and working more closely with parents and the local community;
- ◆ developing child-to-child strategies to deal with conflict, such as teaching conflict resolution skills like negotiation and mediation (discussed below); and
- ◆ allowing your children to identify what disciplinary measures should be taken towards those who bully others.

Within the curriculum, teachers can use drama or puppets to explore the extent of bullying and its causes, as well as to find solutions to it when it occurs in and outside of school. For example, teachers in Guyana made puppets and developed short plays to illustrate aspects of racial bullying. They then developed action steps that they could take to help children caught in these situations.

Discussions or debates on sensitive issues can also be used along with stories or role playing to allow children to try out how to say 'No!' assertively as well as to find the right language to use against bullies and abusers.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ UNESCO. "Booklet 4: Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classrooms," *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

LEARNING ABOUT YOUR STUDENTS' FAMILIES

In many schools in Asia and the Pacific, teachers are developing **student profiles** as a means to learn about the families from which their students come. A student profile:

- ◆ helps teachers to recognize the reasons why a student may not come to school, may misbehave in class, or is at risk of dropping out;
- ◆ shows the diversity of children in the community in terms of their individual characteristics and those of their families; and
- ◆ helps to plan programmes to overcome factors that exclude children from school and encourage misbehaviour.

A student profile can be created by using the steps below.

Step 1: Brainstorm with your colleagues about what are the major misbehaviours seen in your students and the factors within the family or community that may cause them (such as those discussed above). Be sure to include any factors that you think might cause a child to be absent or to come late.

Step 2: Using these factors, create a list of questions that, when answered, may give you some insights into why a child may not be behaving well in class. Below is an example of a list of questions that is being used in Child-Friendly Schools in the Philippines and Thailand to understand the situation of children with diverse backgrounds and abilities who do not learn well and may feel inadequate.⁴⁶ *You can develop your own list of questions based on the barriers you feel are common in your community.*

Discrimination

- ◆ What is the child's sex?
- ◆ What is the child's age?
- ◆ What is the child's nationality or ethnic affiliation?
- ◆ What is the child's religion?

⁴⁶ Examples of the Child Profile from other countries such as El Salvador and Uganda can be found in: Toolkit for Assessing and Promoting Equity in the Classroom, produced by Wendy Rimer et al. Edited by Marta S. Maldonado and Angela Aldave. Creative Associates International Inc., USAID/EGAT/WID, Washington DC. 2003.

- ◆ What is the child's mother tongue?
- ◆ Where is the child's home located with respect to the school (distance, travel time)?
- ◆ What mode of transportation does the child use and is it safe?

Child level factors

- ◆ Does the child work either in or outside of the home to earn an income or help with family chores?
- ◆ What is the child's health and nutritional status?
- ◆ Does the child have any disabilities that affect access to school facilities or his or her performance in the classroom?

Caregiving; Conflict

- ◆ How old are the child's parents?
- ◆ Are both of the child's parents still alive; if not, which parent is deceased?
- ◆ What level of education does each parent have?
- ◆ Has any member of the family ever dropped out of school? Why?
- ◆ Are the child's parents still married?
- ◆ With whom does the child live?
- ◆ How many people reside in the household?
- ◆ How many children are in the child's household (especially very young children)?
- ◆ Who is the primary child caregiver for these children?
- ◆ Has either parent ever migrated for work?

Poverty and the Practical Value of Education

- ◆ What is the primary (main) occupation of each of the child's parents?
- ◆ Does the family own land for income generation; if yes, how much land?
- ◆ Does the family rent land for income generation; if yes, how much land?
- ◆ What is the household's average monthly income?
- ◆ Does the family borrow money for income generation? If yes, how much, how often and during what time(s) of the year?
- ◆ Is the household a member of any community development group?

Step 3: Develop a questionnaire to collect answers to these questions. This questionnaire can be the list of questions above for which answers are noted, or it can be a more formal Student Profile form.⁴⁷ Once the questionnaire is completed, it can then be: (a) sent to the children's homes to be filled out and returned to the school or a community leader; (b) filled out by a teacher during home visits; or (c) filled out based on interviews with the children themselves, or with their parents when they come to pick up their children from school, at parent-teacher conferences, or during Parent-Teacher Association meetings.

Step 4: After the questionnaires are completed and returned, create a descriptive case study for each child that incorporates answers to the questions above. This case study will help you to identify, link, and analyze the factors that may affect children's behaviour and learning.

Step 5: After the case studies are completed, look at them closely to see what factors may be affecting each child's ability to learn fully in your classroom as well as their behaviour. Underline them to make them stand out and help you to link them. For the case of Aye below, these might be cultural differences that cause her to feel discriminated against and inferior, poverty, inadequate caregiving, no access to resources outside the family, and poor health/nutritional status. Use these factors as starting points to develop positive actions to address the causes of children not coming to school or misbehaving in class. Work actively with your colleagues, school management committee, parents, community leaders, and local organizations to plan, undertake, monitor, and evaluate each action.

⁴⁷ UNESCO. "Booklet 3: Getting All Children In School and Learning," *Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments*. Bangkok, 2004.

A Student's Family: The Case of Aye

AYE belongs to the Hmong ethnic group living in Northern Thailand. She is believed to be 9 years old. Her father is deceased. Her mother is 30 years old and has not remarried. Aye's mother is illiterate. Her primary occupation is upland rice farming on a small plot of land. Aye's grandmother takes care of Aye and her five year old brother who does not attend pre-school. Aye's family is very poor, earning less than 500 baht per month. During the non-farming season, Aye's mother migrates to work in Bangkok as a labourer. Aye's family does not belong to any village development group and has no access to community resources. Half of Aye's absences from school were excused because she needed to help her mother or grandmother, while the other half were due to illness. She is commonly affected by acute respiratory infections (ARI) and has mild iodine deficiency. When Aye is in class, she often sleeps and does not turn her homework in on time. Many times she seem preoccupied and not interested in the lesson or her classmates.

Note: For those of you working in large classrooms, start by building student profiles for that small number of children who may need special attention, either because they are learning poorly or are misbehaving now, or because you suspect that their personal or family situation places them at risk of misbehaviour. Later on, expand to your other children.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Building a positive teacher-student relationship, one that promotes good behaviour and prevents misbehaviour, also requires involving parents in their children's education. Two factors that place a student at risk of misbehaviour and dropping out of school are no parental involvement and low parental expectations.⁴⁸ Parental involvement has a positive effect on children's achievement and is the most accurate predictor of a student's success in school. Some of the benefits of family involvement are:

- ◆ Students achieve more, regardless of their socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or parents' educational status.
- ◆ Students have better attendance.

⁴⁸ Wells, S.E. *At-risk Youth: Identification, Programmes, and Recommendations*. Englewood, Colorado: Teacher Idea Press, 1990.

- ◆ Students complete homework more consistently.
- ◆ Students exhibit more positive attitudes and behaviour.⁴⁹

However, for you to be able to get parents involved in their children's education, you must show an interest in the child. Research suggests that parents use a teacher's knowledge of a particular child's personality or interests as a screening device. They are more willing to hear a range of feedback about a child if they feel the teacher knows what is special about the child.⁵⁰ This is one of the important reasons why getting to know the child and his or her family is so critical in developing parent-teacher partnerships. Moreover, and especially among children who chronically misbehave in class, a parent-teacher-student conference often puts an end to students who play the school against the home, and parents against the teacher.

Usually, a parent-teacher or parent-teacher-student conference is held for at least one of four reasons:

- (a) to discuss a specific academic issue requested by the school, such as the child's learning performance (good or poor) or a request for parental assistance in the classroom or school;
- (b) to discuss the child's attendance or disciplinary issues;
- (c) to discuss an issue brought up by parents, themselves;
- (d) to hold a regular conference as set in the school calendar.

Over time, experienced teachers usually develop their own style and procedures for holding such conferences. However, for beginning teachers, it is important to develop a conference plan. This plan should include what resources you will need, what limitations might affect how well the conference proceeds and how will they be overcome, and what key issues exist that are common to all students versus those that are specific to a student.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Parent-Teacher Communication. Professional Development Academy. <http://www.mcps.org/iss/Portfolio/Communication/Conferences.ppt> [accessed online on 12/1/2005]

⁵⁰ Reforming Middle Schools and School Systems. *Changing Schools in Louisville*, Vol. 1, No. 2 - Spring/Summer, 1997.

⁵¹ Parent-Teacher Communication. Professional Development Academy. <http://www.mcps.org/iss/Portfolio/Communication/Conferences.ppt> [accessed online on 12/1/2005]

Resources might include:

- ◆ Who should attend, and what are their schedules?
- ◆ What space is available?
- ◆ If a parent will be bringing younger children, what can you provide for them during the conference to keep them occupied?
- ◆ What information is available from guidance or attendance records that might be helpful in talking with parents, and that you can request in advance of the conference? Some teachers keep "Behavioural Incident Logs" to keep track of incidents of misbehaviour, and they use these in discussions with parents. They can also be used to identify if a child misbehaves regularly and in what way(s). These files contain: (a) the child's name; (b) date and time of incident; (c) brief description of behaviour; (d) action taken; (e) name of the person to whom the incident was reported, as well as the time and method of reporting (written, verbal); (f) name of persons witnessing the behaviour; (g) name of person completing this log/report and date; (h) any contributing factors and/or changes to be made that might have affected the child's behaviour; and (i) signatures of the principal, witnessing teacher, and parent, as well as date.

Important *limitations or barriers* include those that might hinder the conference process, and which you should try to solve before inviting the parents. These limitations could include the following. Can you think of any more?

- ◆ Is someone available to watch your class if you have to have a conference during the day?
- ◆ How do you get in touch with families that do not have a phone?
- ◆ What if separated parents refuse to come to the same conference?
- ◆ Some parents may not have transportation or have work obligations. What arrangements can be made to help these parents attend a conference, or can you go to them?

Important *issues* may include such questions as:

- ◆ To what degree should the student be involved in the conference?
- ◆ How do you involve the parent in creating solutions to problem areas?
- ◆ What documentation is necessary?
- ◆ What do you discuss with the parent of a student who is gifted, one who is showing signs of a learning impairment, or one who is having behavioural problems?

A well-prepared conference will not only make your work easier, it will also show parents that you are a well-organized person and have taken the time to be prepared to discuss their child's situation. In preparing for the conference, some important procedures include:

- ◆ Letter to parents to request a conference. The request should be a positive one, even if it is for discussing about a child's misbehaviour. (For instance, "Johnny is a very challenging student to teach. Would you be free on [date, time] to discuss his progress?")
- ◆ Checklist of materials to have available at the time of the conference.
- ◆ Checklist of people that need to be invited to the conference (if needed).
- ◆ Agenda for the conference itself (for each student; the agenda should be shared with parents when they come for the meeting).
- ◆ Instrument to record results of conference and plan for follow-up.
- ◆ Follow-up plan for individual student. If possible, this plan - or at least major points - should be discussed with the student's parents, especially if some parts of the plan require parental monitoring and feedback.

Note: Parent-teacher conferences can be either formal or informal. For teachers working in large classes, where there is no time to meet all of the parents on a single day, hold formal conferences with the parents of children who are having difficulties. For other students, hold periodic informal discussions at convenient times (for you and the parents). These can include meetings in the classroom or on school grounds, such as when parents come to pick up their children; meetings at home, if you conduct home visits; or meetings on days when there are special school or community events.

ENCOURAGEMENT STRATEGIES

This section has been about building a positive relationship with your students, one based on understanding and empathy. Some of the conditions that are especially important in encouraging positive student behaviour as part of the relationship building process are:⁵²

- ◆ **Maintaining a positive emotional tone** in the classroom. How you treat and react to your students will be reflected in their behaviour.
- ◆ **Providing attention** to the student to increase positive behaviour. For older children, attention includes being aware of and interested in their home life, in their school activities, and in any other activities that interest them.
- ◆ **Providing consistency** in the form of regular routines for daily activities and interactions to make unexpected, negative experiences less stressful.
- ◆ **Responding consistently** to similar behavioural situations - both positive and negative - in order to promote more harmonious teacher-student relationships and more positive student outcomes.
- ◆ **Being flexible**, particularly with older children and adolescents. Listen to their reasons for complying or not complying with your requests or classroom rules and negotiate a solution. This shows that you value your students' viewpoints, which can reduce future instances of misbehaviour. Moreover, involving the student in decision-making has been associated with long-term enhancement in moral judgment.
- ◆ **Making mistakes okay**. Tell your students, "We only learn by making mistakes. I make mistakes everyday. So let's make some now!" This creates a partnership for learning, one based on mutual respect.
- ◆ **Building confidence**. Promote positive self-talk. Ask each of your students to talk about what they think they are good at, no matter what. Then apply their answers to your lessons; get them involved in helping you to teach.

⁵² Adapted from: The American Academy of Pediatrics. Guidance for Effective Discipline. <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;101/4/723> [accessed online on 12/2/2005]

- ◆ ***Focusing on past successes.*** For a student who tends to feel inadequate or fears failure, praise him or her for their last examination grade (no matter what it was), and encourage him or her to do better. Offer to give them special tutoring or extra credit work, and follow-up on it.
- ◆ ***Making learning meaningful.*** Modify your instructional methods. Instead of a lecture on geometric shapes, divide your children into small groups and ask them to find as many different shapes around the school or community as they can in 15 minutes. The winning group gets a small prize!



Creating a Positive and Supportive Learning Environment

What You Will Learn:

- ◆ The Importance of Classroom Management
- ◆ Making the Learning Environment Comfortable
- ◆ Developing Classroom Routines
- ◆ Developing Classroom Rules and Involving Parents
- ◆ Adopting a Management Style Conducive to Creating Good Behaviours
- ◆ Providing Positive Reinforcement

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN AN ILFC

In order for your students to develop good behaviours, they must be in a classroom environment that is well-managed and well-organized. When we think of classroom management, many of us may think of controlling student behaviour or wondering how we are going to control a class. Actually, our reaction to student behaviour, or misbehaviour, should be the last action in a plan for classroom management. In a well-managed classroom, this action, hopefully in the form of a positive discipline technique, will take little time and will only slightly break the flow of a lesson. To get to this point, you will need to plan for classroom management that has several elements. Some of these elements have been discussed in Booklets 4 and 5 of the *Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-friendly Classrooms*, produced by UNESCO Bangkok. We will discuss others here.

The first step in the planning process is to decide what we really mean by "classroom management." When we use the term "classroom management," we mean the procedures, strategies, and instructional methods that teachers use to create a classroom environment that promotes learning, as well as to develop and manage the behaviours and learning activities of individual students and groups of students within this environment. Effective classroom management, therefore, creates an environment

that is conducive to teaching for us and to the learning and behavioural development of all students. Ineffective classroom management often creates chaos; our students don't know what we expect of them, they don't understand how to behave or respond, they don't know the limits, and they don't know the consequences that will arise for misbehaving. Effective classroom management is the most important - and the most difficult - skill a new teacher must master. Even experienced teachers often find themselves faced with a student - or an entire class - who challenges their longstanding management skills and forces them to find new ways of dealing with classroom situations. A classroom is a place where students gather to learn. Creating a safe and orderly environment in the classroom is, thus, a survival skill for teachers that optimizes the learning environment for all students.

MAKING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT COMFORTABLE

Have you ever been in a crowded room, either crowded with many people or with many objects, like furniture? How did you feel at first? After a while, did your feelings change? Upon entering the room, many of us might have been initially surprised, but when we had to start actually working in the room and interacting with others, we may have begun to have negative feelings. We may become frustrated or angry, or we may retreat to a corner and try to avoid others or avoid falling over or bumping into the many objects in the room.

In classrooms where the physical space is not managed well, our students may also have these same feelings. They may misbehave as a reaction to their being frustrated or fearful. A well-planned classroom space, therefore, can help us to prevent misbehaviours that might arise. It also greatly affects what can be accomplished during a lesson.

As with all aspects of classroom management, how a classroom is organized depends upon your preferences *as well as* those of your students. What makes you feel comfortable may not be the same as what makes your students feel comfortable. At the beginning of the year, organize your classroom, and then ask your students if they are comfortable with it. Better yet, divide them into groups and ask each group to look around the room and its contents, and then to draw or map how they would like the room to be organized, *especially if your class has many students*. Use ideas from all of

their maps or drawings to design your students' "personal" classroom. Try the arrangement for one or two weeks, and then ask your students if they are comfortable. Change the classroom arrangement if they feel a new one would be more comfortable. Moreover, change it whenever you sense that your students are becoming bored with sitting in the classroom and learning.

Here are some things to think about as you and your students organize your classroom space.⁵³ This list is not exhaustive. Can you think of other items?

Seeing everyone. You must be able to see all of your students at all times in order to monitor their work and behaviour. You will also need to be able to see the door from your desk. Your students must be able to see you and the area from which you are teaching without having to turn around or move a lot.

Seating everyone (avoiding the feeling of being crowded). In classes with many students, space is often a luxury. To make the best use of what space is available, consider trying three main strategies. First, *remove unnecessary furniture*. Use mats instead of desks. Use shelving fixed on walls and off of the floor for materials that students do not need to reach for regularly. If your classroom has a cabinet to hold students' belongings, place it just outside the door of the classroom. If possible, keep your belongings, lesson materials, and any other items that you do not use during class time in the teacher's lounge or in another safe place outside of the classroom. If you really don't need a large teacher's desk, ask for a small one.

The second strategy is *be creative in your teaching approach* and make the classroom interactive to reduce the feeling of crowdedness. Try lecturing for only a portion of a lesson period, such as 20 minutes out of one hour, and focusing on one to two important topics or concepts (for instance, talking about geometric shapes), rather than giving a lot of information all at once. This is the maximum time that you will keep your students' attention anyway. Thereafter, divide the children into small groups where they only have to look at a few faces, rather than many. Use mixed sex groups whenever possible, rather than boys versus girls. Give each group a

⁵³ Adapted from: Classroom Management - Managing Physical Space. Collaborative for Excellence in Teacher Education (CETP), National Science Foundation.

http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/cm-space.html [accessed online on 10/20/2005]

complimentary activity, such as one group trying to think of as many round objects as they can, while another group tries to think of as many square objects as they can. Near the end of class, bring them back together and have each group present what they have learned.

Similarly, the third strategy is *use space outside of the classroom* as often as possible. School grounds can be a rich resource for formal learning; they are outdoor classrooms that can be explored by children as part of their learning, and they can serve as much more enjoyable compliment to crowded classrooms. They are important sites for children to develop both social and cognitive skills. School grounds give you a chance to diversify the children's learning environment and to develop important lessons on cooperation, ownership, belonging, respect, and responsibility.⁵⁴ Different areas of the school grounds can be used as activity centres to support what is being learned about a subject in the classroom. In the example about geometric shapes, for instance, students can be asked to explore the school grounds and identify as many geometric shapes as possible. Then sit under a tree and write down as many as they found. Monitor their progress! Ten minutes before the class is to end, bring them all together, either in the classroom or outside, to present their findings.

Furniture. If your classroom has adequate space, consider arranging student desks in a variety of ways, such as circles or "U" shapes for discussion, grouping desks in squares for group work, and rows for test taking or individual work. Think about facilitating movement between these arrangements. Areas that are used frequently and "traffic lanes" (walking areas, such as aisles) should be unobstructed and easily accessible for everyone. Consider using bookshelves, tables, or carpets to create special-use areas. If the room needs to be divided or it needs more "wall space" to display your students' work, consider low-cost options such as the backs of bookshelves, or tall upright screen mats that are woven of palm leaves or bamboo and made by your students or their families. These mats can even be used to divide classrooms in schools where there are no dividing walls.

Centres. Activity centres offer a student, or small groups of students, the opportunity to work on projects or activities at their own pace. Within classrooms, a centre needs to be created so it has a work space, a place

⁵⁴ Malone, Karen and Tranter, Paul. "Children's Environmental Learning and the Use, Design and Management of Schoolgrounds," *Children, Youth and Environments*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2003.

to store tools and materials, and a place to post instructions. In crowded classrooms, activity centres can be located in different areas on the school grounds. Children bring with them what they need to conduct an activity at the centre.

Instructional materials and teaching resources. Books and other instructional materials need to be stored so they can be obtained and put away easily. Tools, such as chalk, rulers, paper, paint, and scissors, need to be placed so students have access to them without disturbing other students. Like instructional materials, teaching tools such as portable chalkboards, easels, chart paper, and work tables need to be stored so they can be used but are not in the way, and, in crowded classrooms, they do not take up valuable space.

Student work. Collecting and storing student work can very quickly become overwhelming if a plan is not in place. Some teachers use individual file folders to do this. Files might be created for each student, and by each student, for each subject or for groups of students. A space is needed to display student work as well. This space can be wall space or even strings onto which each student's work is attached with clips, tape, or even blunt thorns. Decorating the room with student's work will also help add to the attractiveness of the room and make it more welcoming, even if there are a lot of children in the classroom.

Student involvement. Students can be very helpful in managing the classroom's physical space, and it helps them to develop a sense of responsibility. They can hang up student work, create bulletin boards, and put away instructional materials at the end of each lesson. Students can also be helpful in solving space problems. When a problem occurs, such as students bumping into each other or not enough adequate seating space, ask them to suggest solutions.

Remember: *Good discipline and the creation of positive student behaviours is much more likely to occur if your classroom and its activities are structured or arranged to enhance cooperative behaviour between your students and yourself.*

DEVELOPING CLASSROOM ROUTINES

When we develop classroom routines, the opportunity for misbehaviour is lessened because our students know what is expected of them and what they are expected to do. They also help us to avoid “miscalls,” that is, misinterpreting a child’s behaviour as a misbehaviour; for instance, when a child does not know that she (or he) is to sharpen her pencil after the lesson is over, rather than during it, or at least raising her hand and asking for permission. Moreover, if students know the steps necessary to get a particular job done, they are more likely to complete it in an orderly manner. Develop plans for these activities that work for your physical space and your management style (we’ll discuss this below). If a routine is not effective, involve your students in redesigning it. Here are some classroom routines that you and your students can plan.⁵⁵ Can you think of any others?

Movement. Develop plans for entering and exiting the classroom, as well as changing the classroom set up depending on what is being taught, such as moving from a whole class arrangement for test taking to small groups for art or science lessons. Also plan so that your students’ individual needs can be met, such as when they need to sharpen their pencils or to get personal supplies for learning, such as art supplies.

Non-instructional tasks. These tasks include activities such as taking attendance, collecting permission or absenteeism slips, and keeping the classroom neat. When allowable, students can assist with these tasks, and especially those students who feel they need attention. Some of these tasks can be used as instructional activities as well, such as calculating the percentage of students who came to class that day during a math lesson.

Materials management and transitions. If routines are developed for distributing, collecting, and storing teaching and learning materials, student helpers will be able to complete them quickly. If instructional materials are prepared and organized in advance, you can transition (move) between activities smoothly and take little time. Necessary materials might be listed on a daily schedule so students will know what they need and can prepare for one activity, while materials for the previous activity are stored or collected.

⁵⁵ Adapted from: Classroom Management - Classroom Routines. Collaborative for Excellence in Teacher Education (CETP), National Science Foundation.
http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/cm-routi.html [accessed online on 10/20/2005]

Group work. Group work promotes cooperative learning. It teaches students to work together, and they learn the value of teamwork. Each team member within a group should have a job, and, over time, each student should have an opportunity to do each job. With your students, develop job descriptions and routines for assigning the jobs. Jobs might be facilitator, time-keeper, reporter, recorder, encourager, questioner, materials manager, or taskmaster.

DEVELOPING CLASSROOM RULES WITH STUDENTS AND PARENTS

All classrooms need rules to function effectively. These "rules" are sometimes called "expectations" or "standards of behaviour."

The nature of classroom rules, and routines, and how they are developed varies according to a teacher's belief system. How we work with students in the classroom, including establishing rules and routines, is shaped mainly by our beliefs about how students learn how to behave. At one extreme, some of us may believe that students are passive receivers of knowledge, and they need to conform to the system and to see a clear pay-off or benefit for their learning. As a result, we may emphasize firm, standard rules and routines. At the other extreme, some of us may believe that students are active, positive, motivated, and unique problem-solvers. Consequently, we may emphasize giving our students choices.⁵⁶ When we develop classroom rules and routines *with the involvement of our students*, we can take a more "middle of the road" approach that is flexible to meet the different, and often changing, circumstances in our classrooms.

We often develop rules as a way to anticipate and prevent behavioural problems or difficulties that may arise in the management of the classroom. General guidelines for developing rules include the following.

- ◆ Make only a few rules that emphasize appropriate behaviour; neither you nor your students will remember a long list. Post these rules in the classroom for everyone to see.

⁵⁶ Mayeski, Fran. *The Metamorphosis of Classroom Management*. Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning. <http://www.mcrel.org/pdfconversion/noteworthy/learners%5Flearning%5Fschooling/franm.asp>

- ◆ Consider making rules or setting expectations for the following issues in order to create a smoothly functioning classroom: (a) beginning and ending the period or day, including how attendance will be taken and what students may or may not do during these times; (b) use of materials and equipment; (c) how to ask permission for unexpected needs (such as going to the toilet or sharpening a pencil); (d) seatwork and independent group work procedures; and (e) how students are to ask or answer questions.
- ◆ Choose rules that make the classroom environment orderly and that promote successful learning. Some behaviours, such as gum chewing or fidgeting, probably do not significantly impede learning, unless they are noisy or distracting.
- ◆ Do not develop classroom rules that you are unwilling, or are unable, to enforce consistently.
- ◆ Make the rules as clear and understandable as possible. They should be stated behaviourally: "Keep your hands and feet to yourself" is clearer, and sends a more positive message, than "no fighting."
- ◆ Select rules that are unanimously agreed upon or abided by everyone in the school. If students learn that they can't behave in a certain way in your classroom, but can do so in other classes, they will test the limits to see how far they can "get away with" a misbehaviour.
- ◆ Above all, involve your students in developing classroom rules! You might start with the principle that "you may do what you want in this classroom, unless what you do interferes with the rights of others, such as your classmates and your teacher." Using this "rights-based" approach, ask your students to identify what behaviours are acceptable and what behaviours are not acceptable because they violate the rights of others. Develop rules to fulfill these rights and penalties for violating the rules. Remember that these penalties should help the child to learn and they should be consistent with the nature of the misbehaviour; that is, they are in the best interest of both the child and the class. Then ask your students to develop a "classroom constitution" or "classroom policy board" that can be prominently displayed in the classroom. Ask them to sign it so that they agree to adhere to the rules and, if they break them, they will abide by the consequences. Misbehaviour is less likely to occur

if a student makes a commitment to avoid breaking the rules and to engage in other, more desirable behaviours.

- ◆ Revisit classroom rules regularly to see if some are no longer necessary. If there are, praise your students, and then ask them if other rules are needed.

Parental Involvement

Rules are most effective when teachers, parents, and students are equally committed to upholding them. In some schools, a "compact" is made between all of these parties. A "compact" is simply a formal agreement or contract that clearly states the specific responsibilities of each party and is signed by each of them. The text of one such compact might take the following form.⁵⁷ It can be discussed with parents at the first parent-teacher or parent-teacher-child conference. Can you adapt it and use it as a way to involve your students *and* their parents in promoting good classroom behaviour?

As a parent/guardian, I will:

- ◆ Show respect and support for my child, the teachers, and the school.
- ◆ Support the school's discipline policy and the rules of my child's classroom.
- ◆ Provide a quiet, well-lit place for study and supervise the completion of homework.
- ◆ Partipate in formal and informal parent-teacher or parent-teacher-student conferences.
- ◆ Talk with my child each day about his or her school activities.
- ◆ Monitor my child's TV viewing, or other activities that might detract from study time.

⁵⁷ Education World. Creating a Climate for Learning: Effective Classroom Management Techniques. http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr155.shtml [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

- ◆ Assist with at least one school or classroom activity each term.
- ◆ Read with my child for at least 10 minutes each day or let my child read to me.

As a student, I will:

- ◆ Always try to do my best work.
- ◆ Be kind and helpful to my classmates.
- ◆ Show respect for myself, my teacher, my school, and other people.
- ◆ Obey classroom and school rules.
- ◆ Show respect for property by not stealing or vandalizing.
- ◆ Come to school prepared with my homework and my supplies.
- ◆ Believe that I can and will learn.
- ◆ Spend at least 15 minutes each day studying or reading at home.
- ◆ Talk with my parents each day about my school activities.

As a teacher, I will:

- ◆ Show respect for each child and for his or her family.
- ◆ Make efficient use of learning time.
- ◆ Provide a safe and comfortable environment that's conducive to learning.
- ◆ Help each child grow to his or her fullest potential.
- ◆ Provide meaningful and appropriate homework activities.
- ◆ Provide necessary assistance to parents so they can help with assignments.
- ◆ Enforce school and classroom rules fairly and consistently.

74 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

- ◆ Supply students and parents with clear evaluations of progress and achievement.
- ◆ Use special activities in the classroom to make learning enjoyable.
- ◆ Demonstrate professional behaviour and a positive attitude.

Now, together, we will work together to carry out this contract.

Signed:

Parent signature/date

Student signature/date

Teacher signature/date

STANDARDS FOR BEHAVIOUR AND GOOD MANAGEMENT

Classroom rules set the standards of behaviour for our students, but we, as teachers, must also have standards. After all, we are important role models for our students.

- ◆ We should tell our students how we expect everyone to behave in class (our students and ourselves) and discuss these expectations regularly.
- ◆ We must inform our school's administrators, other teachers, and parents about our classroom rules, so they can help to monitor them and avoid conflicting with them.
- ◆ The rules we develop with our students must be applied consistently with no favouritism.
- ◆ We must constantly be aware of what is going on in and outside of our classrooms, and our monitoring must be subtle and preventative.
- ◆ We cannot get angry or lose self-control, but be role models for good behaviour, and following the rules, for our students.
- ◆ When discipline is necessary, it focuses on the student's behaviour, not the student. The student's dignity is maintained.
- ◆ We need to encourage students to monitor their own behaviour, such as by keeping diaries of activities with others. They also need to monitor each other's behaviour with respect.
- ◆ In teaching, we should not use ambiguous or vague terms. Activities should be sequenced clearly and with as few interruptions as possible.

Some of the characteristics students appreciate in a teacher, and should form a core part of monitoring our own behaviours, are:⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Adapted from: Important Traits for Teachers. Collaborative for Excellence in Teacher Education (CETP), National Science Foundation. http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/cm-trait.html [accessed online on 11/28/2005]

Fairness. Students see this as the most important trait of teachers. It means being fair in activities such as making assignments, settling disputes, giving help, and choosing students to be assistants or to participate in special activities.

Humour. The ability to respond lightheartedly to students.

Respect. This means showing regard for the rights and feelings of the student.

Courtesy. This is another sign of respect.

Openness. Students need to see the teacher as a real person. The teacher needs to explain clearly his or her feelings and the circumstance that caused the feelings.

Active Listening. This means responding when a student speaks. You need to show that you have heard the student and to give him or her a chance to correct a misunderstanding or interpretation. You might try restating what has been said or a use of body language to show empathy.

How well we are able to abide by our own standards of behaviour often depends upon our own management style within the classroom.



Action Activity: Classroom Management Profile?⁵⁹

Your classroom management style will determine how well you can interact with your students, how well you can build a positive relationship with them, and how well they will learn from you. It can also affect how your children behave (or misbehave) and how you discipline your students, that is, whether you are more prone to using negative discipline rather than positive methods to help your student learn proper behaviours. To start determining your management style, read each of the statements in the table below carefully. Then answer whether or not you agree or disagree with the statement or, better yet, if it is actually what you do.

⁵⁹ Developed based on: Teacher Talk. What is your classroom management profile? <http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i2/what.html> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

Characteristic	Agree	Disagree
1. I believe the classroom must be quiet for students to learn.		
2. I believe assigned seating in a structured arrangement (such as rows) reduces misbehaviour and promotes learning.		
3. I do not like to be interrupted when I am teaching.		
4. Students should learn to follow directions and not ask why.		
5. My students rarely initiate activities. They should concentrate on what I am teaching them.		
6. When a student misbehaves, I punish or discipline him or her immediately, without further discussion.		
7. I do not accept excuses for misbehaviour, such as being tardy or not doing homework.		
8. Depending upon what is being learned, my classroom may have many different arrangements.		
9. I am concerned about both what my students learn and how they learn.		
10. My students know that they can interrupt my lecture if they have a relevant question.		
11. I give praise when it is warranted, and I encourage students to do better.		
12. I give students projects as a learning exercise, or ask them to develop their own project. Afterwards, we discuss what they have learned, and what more they still need to learn.		
13. I always explain the reasons behind my rules and decisions.		
14. When a student misbehaves, I give a polite, but firm, reprimand. If discipline is needed, I carefully consider the circumstances.		

78 Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom

Characteristic	Agree	Disagree
15. I believe students learn best when "they can do their own thing," that is, do what they feel they can do well.		
16. The emotional well-being of my students is more important than classroom control. It is important that my students see me as their friend.		
17. Some of my students are motivated to learn, while others don't seem to care.		
18. I don't plan in advance what I will do to discipline a student. I just let it happen.		
19. I don't want to monitor or reprimand a student because it might hurt his or her feelings.		
20. If a student disrupts the class, I give him or her extra attention because he or she must surely have something valuable to add.		
21. If a student requests to leave the room, I always honour it.		
22. I don't want to impose any rules on my students.		
23. I use the same lesson plans and activities year after year so I don't have to prepare in advance for my classes.		
24. Field trips and special projects are not possible. I don't have the time to prepare for them.		
25. I may show a film or slideshow instead of lecturing.		
26. My students tend to look around the room and out of the windows a lot.		
27. If the lesson ends early, my students can study quietly or talk softly.		
28. I rarely discipline my students. If a student turns in a homework assignment late, it is not my problem.		

Next, add up the number of "Agrees" for statements 1-7, then 8-14, then 15-21, and then 22-28. For which set of statements do you have the highest number of "agree" responses? This is your preferred management style, though don't be surprised if you also have characteristics of the other styles.

In the above table, statements 1-7 reflect an *authoritarian* style; "I'm the teacher and we'll do things my way." This style is good for making a well-structured classroom, but it does little to increase achievement motivation or encourage the setting of personal goals. Students in this class are likely to be reluctant to initiate activity, since they may feel powerless.⁶⁰ They must obey the teacher at the expense of their personal freedom.

Statements 8-14 reflect an *authoritative* style; "Let's work together." Though limits are placed on student behaviour, the rules are explained, and students are also allowed to be independent within these limits. An authoritative teacher encourages self-reliant and socially competent behaviour. Moreover, he or she encourages students to be motivated and achieve more. Often, he or she will guide the students through a project, rather than lead them.⁶¹

Statements 15-21 reveal a *laissez-faire* style; "Whatever you say." The laissez-faire teacher places few demands or controls on students. This teacher accepts a student's impulses and actions and is less likely to monitor a student's behaviour. He or she may strive to not hurt the student's feelings and has difficulty saying no to a student or enforcing rules. Although this type of teacher may be popular with students, his or her overindulgent style is associated with students' lack of social competence and self-control. It is difficult for students to learn socially acceptable behaviour when the teacher is so permissive. With few demands placed upon them, these students frequently have lower motivation to achieve.⁶²

Finally, statements 22-28 reveal an *indifferent* style; "Do whatever you want." The indifferent teacher is not very involved in the classroom. This teacher places few demands, if any, on students and appears generally uninterested. The indifferent teacher just doesn't want to impose on the

⁶⁰ <http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i2/authoritarian.html>

⁶¹ <http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i2/authoritative.html>

⁶² <http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i2/laissez.html>

students. As such, he or she often feels that class preparation is not worth the effort. Also, classroom discipline is lacking. In this aloof environment, the students have very few opportunities to observe or practice communication skills. With few demands placed on them and very little discipline, students have low achievement motivation and lack self-control.⁶³

If you're still not sure which of the four classroom management styles is closest to your own, ask a colleague, a teaching assistant, or an older student to watch you for a day or two. Then ask them to read through the list of characteristics and management styles above and help you to decide which one is the closest to your own. Does this style affect how much your students are motivated to learn? Does it affect their behaviour? Does it affect how you discipline your students, and how your students react to you? Do you think there is any room for improvement? Try changing your style, or one of the characteristics above, and watch to see if your students become more motivated and easier to teach. Keep a diary of what changes you make and whether or not your classroom is now easier to manage and your students are practicing good behaviours and interpersonal skills.

PROVIDING POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Positive discipline is a way to reduce misbehaviour by rewarding positive behaviours. It is based on the premise that behaviour that is rewarded is behaviour that will be repeated. The most critical part of positive discipline involves helping students learn behaviours that meet our (adult) expectations, are effective in promoting positive social relationships, and help them develop a sense of self-discipline that leads to positive self-esteem. The behaviours that you value and want to encourage need to be known to your students, and you need to make a concerted effort to teach and strengthen these behaviours. Some strategies that you can use to help your students learn positive behaviours include the following:

⁶³ <http://education.indiana.edu/cas/tt/v1i2/indifferent.html>

Give positive statements - "Look how many answers you got right. Let's try to get even more of them right the next time!"

Listen carefully and help them to learn to use words to express their feelings, not destructive actions.

Provide your students with opportunities to make choices and help them learn to evaluate the potential consequences of their choices.

Reinforce emerging desirable behaviours with frequent praise and ignoring minor misdeeds.

Model orderly, predictable behaviour, respectful communication, and collaborative conflict resolution strategies (a topic that will be discussed later).

Use appropriate body language - nod, smile, and look directly at the student.

Lower your body position - especially for younger children, bend, kneel, or sit at their level.

Restructure the environment - remove objects that invite misbehaviour; for example, if games or toys are used as teaching aides, remove them when you are finished.

Redirect behaviour positively - a student bounces a soccer ball around the classroom. "You can bounce your ball outside on the playground where there is more space to play."

In summary, hopefully you have learned a lot from this section, and have decided to try some new things in your classroom. We have learned that an effectively managed classroom, one that creates and support positive behaviours, is one in which:

1. You know what you want and what you don't want.
2. You show and tell your students what you want.
3. When you get what you want, acknowledge it.
4. When you get something else, act quickly, appropriately, and positively.

In the process, however, you need to make sure that:

1. Your expectations are clear.
2. Instruction is interesting for your students.
3. Your students see a purpose and value to what is being taught.
4. Instruction relates concepts and skills to a student's experience and is meaningful within his or her daily life.
5. Your teaching strategies are varied. Students can become bored, even if the topic is interesting, if you constantly use the same teaching methods.

Some important ways that you can begin creating an environment conducive to developing positive behaviours in your students include the following:⁶⁴

1. Hold and communicate high behavioural expectations for your students and yourself.
2. Establish clear rules and procedures, and instruct students in how to follow them; give primary-level children, in particular, a great deal of instruction, practice, and reminding.
3. Make clear to students the consequences of proper behaviour and misbehaviour.
4. Enforce classroom rules promptly, consistently, and equitably from the very first day of school.
5. Work to instill a sense of self-discipline in students; devote time to teaching self-monitoring skills.
6. Maintain a brisk instructional pace and make smooth transitions between activities.
7. Monitor classroom activities and give students feedback and reinforcement regarding their behaviour.
8. Create opportunities for students to experience success in their learning and social behaviour.
9. Identify students who seem to have low self-esteem and work to help them achieve better and be more confident.

⁶⁴ Cotton, Katherine. *Schoolwide and Classroom Discipline*. School Improvement Research Series. *Iclose-Up #9*. <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/5/cu9.html> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

10. Make use of cooperative learning groups, as appropriate.
11. Make use of humour, when suitable, to stimulate student interest or reduce classroom tensions.
12. Remove distracting materials from view when instruction is in progress.
13. Make the classroom comfortable, attractive, and welcoming for your students, their parents, and yourself.



Dealing with Challenging Students

What You Will Learn:

- ◆ How to Improve the Effectiveness of Positive Discipline Techniques
- ◆ Positive Discipline Tips
- ◆ Positive Classroom Teaching Tips
- ◆ Using Appropriate Consequences, Positive and Negative
- ◆ Use Caution in Using a "Timeout"
- ◆ Conflict Resolution
- ◆ Age-specific Positive Discipline Techniques
- ◆ Assisting Children with Special Needs

IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES

If a student misbehaves, positive techniques to reduce or eliminate that behaviour are needed. As we have learned, misbehaviours are those undesirable behaviours that place the child or others in danger, do not comply with our expectations or classroom rules, and interfere with positive social interactions and self-discipline. In this final section, we will talk more about what specific techniques can be used to reduce misbehaviour, and even prevent it. Whatever technique is chosen, its effectiveness can be increased:⁶⁵

- ◆ when both you and the student clearly understand what the problem behaviour is and what consequence the student can expect when this behaviour occurs;

⁶⁵ American Academy of Pediatrics. Guidance for Effective Discipline.
<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;101/4/723>
[accessed online on 12/2/2005]

- ◆ when you respond by providing a strong and immediate initial consequence when the undesirable behaviour first occurs (if a rule is broken, enforce it now, don't wait);
- ◆ when you consistently provide an appropriate consequence each time a targeted problematic behaviour occurs;
- ◆ when you deliver instruction and correction calmly and with empathy; and
- ◆ when you provide a reason for a consequence for a specific behaviour, which helps students to learn the appropriate behaviour and improve their overall compliance with requests from adults.

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE TIPS

Actually, the need for discipline does not necessarily need to arise. A great deal of good discipline simply involves avoiding problem situations or dealing with situations before they get out of control. How? Here are ten valuable tips. Some are new, while some were mentioned earlier, but let's look at them in more detail.^{66,67}

1. **Be sure of yourself; don't make a miscall.** As discussed above, true misbehaviour occurs when a student **chooses** to behave **inappropriately**. Before you take action, ask yourself the following questions:
 - A. Is the student doing something truly wrong? Is there a real problem here, or are you just tired and out of patience?
 - ◆ If there is no real problem, release your stress away from the student and class.
 - ◆ If there is a problem, go to the next question.

⁶⁶ Positive Discipline and Child Guidance. <http://www.kidsgrowth.com/resources/articleDetail.cfm?id=1211> [accessed online on 10/12/2005]

⁶⁷ Adapted from: Kelley, Laureen. The Discipline Dilemma. Parent Exchange Newsletter - October 1995. <http://www.kelleycom.com/articles/discipline.htm> [accessed online on 9/29/2005]

- B. Think for a moment. Is your student really capable of doing what you expect here?
- ◆ If you are not being fair, re-evaluate your expectations.
 - ◆ If your expectations are fair, go to the next question.
- C. Did your student know at the time that he or she was doing something wrong?
- ◆ If your student did not realize she (or he) was doing something wrong, help her understand what you expect, why, and how she can do that. Offer to help her.
 - ◆ If your student knew what she was doing was wrong, and she deliberately disregarded a reasonable expectation, your student misbehaved.

If the behaviour was an accident, it was not a misbehaviour. If the behaviour was not an accident, ask your student to tell you the reasons she has for doing what she did. Listen carefully and assess before you respond.

2. **Point out the positive.** Whenever a student does something helpful, caring, cooperative, or shows improvement, let them know you've noticed and give words of appreciation. For example, "Somsak, I was impressed with the way you solved your homework problem." Even in an incident, don't just find fault, identify what was OK and what wasn't. For example: "Nath, it was noble of you to stand up for your friend. Being a loyal friend is important. However, I can't allow you to hit others. How else could you have handled the situation?"
3. **Interact respectfully with students.** Treat them as you would like to be treated. Help them to do better. Be a guide, not a boss. Be the type of teacher you remember fondly from your school days.
4. **Communicate your expectations** to your students clearly and respectfully. Remind them of your expectations frequently, before the situation and during the situation. For example, at the start of the school year, tell your students: "When class time finishes for today, and every day, I want you to remain seated until I call your name. That way, everyone can leave the room safely and without

bumping into each other, and I can learn your names and faces more quickly." Remind your students every day until their orderly departure is a natural part of your class routine.

5. **Use humour or distraction.** Not every misbehaviour that a student commits needs disciplining. Children, like adults, get tired, frustrated, or bored. Disciplining may not work in such situations. Try using humour during your lesson to keep everyone interested, not bored. For example, during a science lesson, ask your students to solve a riddle in order to introduce the lesson. The riddle could be: "What begins life on all fours, lives life on two, and ends life on three?" The answer: a human. A baby crawls on all fours, then learns to walk on two legs, and, when elderly, some people use a cane as well; they have three legs! This riddle would be an interesting way to introduce the topic of how the human body develops or to talk about aging. For pre-school children, use distraction: "Look at the butterfly!" can divert attention from whining, flailing, and tantrums, and can lead to good developmental activities, such as asking the children to draw the butterfly. Use your imagination!
6. **Use proactive cooperation.** Give a direction that you know they will enjoy following *before* you give them directions that they might hesitate in doing. Get them in the cooperative mood first. For instance, say: "Everyone draw a capital 'I' in the air." "Hey, Maria, that was great!" "Everyone hold up your pointing finger. Now, stick it in the book where you think page 108 must be." Then tell them to open their books to page 108 and write the answers to the six questions on that page.⁶⁸
7. **Offer options or limited choices, and encourage group decision-making.** Most students hate to be bossed around; giving choices helps them to feel some *control* - although not too much. When examination time comes, you can say, "On Tuesday, we will have a reading test. Who would like to have a written test, and who would like to have an oral test? You can choose whichever one you want." This will give your children a feeling of control over the situation. If you only want to give one type of test, ask them to discuss what are the advantages and disadvantages of the two types of tests, and then vote on which they would prefer. The majority wins.

⁶⁸ Giving and Getting Respect. http://maxweber.hunter.cuny.edu/pub/eres/EDSPC715_MCINTYRE/respect_web_page_insert.html [accessed online on 10/10/2005]

If there are some students who become upset because they didn't get their choice - for instance, they wanted a written test, and the class voted for an oral test - on examination day, give written extra credit questions as well.

8. ***Allow for natural consequences, but safe ones.*** If a child repeatedly comes to class late, don't become upset. It is the child's responsibility to come to class on time. Tell him (or her) that if his tardiness continues, then you will have to send a note home to his parents. If he continues to be late, send the note home and let him face the consequences. He learns that he is responsible for his behaviour and its consequences.
9. ***Don't take a student's willful disobedience personally.*** Children need to express disobedience, and they need to test limits as part of their development. Don't feel that this is a threat to your authority. React in a calm fashion, applying discipline that will enhance self-control. Do you remember the case of Ramon at the start of this section? In the beginning, his teacher took his misbehaviour personally, and it made her very upset. But when she stopped taking Ramon's behaviour personally and understood when and why he was misbehaving, she could develop an effective strategy to deal with him, and with positive results.
10. ***Recognize effort, not correctness.*** If a student is giving you his or her best, you should be happy. Trying is the first step in learning. If a student doesn't want to attempt a hard task, talk about the times when his or her effort brought success. Encourage that display of effort again. Remember to tell him or her that as long as he or she tries hard, you are pleased. Let them know that you have faith in their ability.

POSITIVE CLASSROOM TEACHING TIPS

Positive discipline needs to be supported by positive teaching. There are many other positive ways that you can prevent misbehaviour when you're teaching, or at least deal with it effectively and without disrupting your class. Below are six tips.⁶⁹ Can you think of any more?

1. **Focusing and being soft spoken.** Be sure you have the attention of everyone in your classroom before you start your lesson. Wait to start class until everyone has quieted down. Experienced teachers know that silence on their part is very effective. They emphasize waiting by extending it 3 to 5 seconds after the classroom is completely quiet. Students soon realize that the more time the teacher waits for their attention, the less free time they have at the end of the hour. After the waiting time, begin your lesson using a quieter voice than normal. A soft spoken teacher often has a calmer, quieter classroom than one with a stronger voice. Her students sit still in order to hear what she says.
2. **Direct instruction.** Uncertainty increases the level of excitement in the classroom. Begin each class by telling your students exactly what will be happening. Outline what you and your students will be doing this period. You can set time limits for some tasks. You can combine direct instruction with focusing to include time at the end of the period for students to do activities of their choosing. You may finish the description of class time activities with: "And I think we will have some time at the end of the period for you to chat with your friends, go to the library, or catch up on work for other classes."
3. **Monitoring.** Circulate; get up and walk around the room, especially when students are doing written assignments or working in groups. Check on their progress. Don't interrupt or try to make general announcements unless you notice that several students have difficulty with the same thing. Use a quiet voice and your students will appreciate your personal and positive attention.

⁶⁹ Abstracted from: Discipline by Design. 11 Techniques for Better Classroom Discipline. <http://www.honorlevel.com/techniques.xml> [accessed online on 10/4/2005]

4. **Non-verbal cueing.** In some classrooms, teachers have a small bell on their desk. When they ring it, even softly, they have everyone's attention. Other teachers have shown a lot of ingenuity over the years in making use of non-verbal cues in the classroom. Some flip light switches. Others keep clickers in their pockets. Others tap the chalkboard with a piece of chalk or pencil. Non-verbal cues can also be facial expressions, body posture, and hand signals. Care should be given in choosing the types of cues you use in your classroom. Take time to explain what you want the students to do when you use your cues.
5. **Sharing.** Just as you should want to know about your students, young people often want to know about you and your interests. Include personal items in your classroom. A family picture or a few items from a hobby or collection on your desk will trigger personal conversations with your students. As they get to know you better, you will see fewer problems with discipline.
6. **Low-profile interventions.** An effective teacher will take care that a student is not rewarded for misbehaviour by becoming the focus of attention. He or she monitors the activity in her classroom, moving around the room and anticipates problems before they occur. The approach to a misbehaving student is inconspicuous. Others in the class are not distracted. For example, while lecturing to a class, this teacher makes effective use of name-dropping. If he or she sees a student talking or not participating, he or she simply drops the student's name into his or her dialogue in a natural way. "And you see, Chai, we carry the one to the tens column." Chai hears his name and is drawn back on task. The rest of the class doesn't seem to notice.

USING APPROPRIATE CONSEQUENCES, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE

An important aspect of learning is experiencing the consequences of our actions. If those consequences are good, we are likely to repeat the behaviour. If those consequences are bad, we are less likely to repeat the behaviour.

Many times when we set rules, we automatically decide what disciplinary action will be taken if the rules are broken. Yes, students who violate the rules must always receive appropriate negative consequences. But actually, there should be positive consequences or rewards for students who abide by the rules, even for older students. Below are examples of positive and negative consequences. These suggestions apply to a wide range of ages. Some may be better for one age group than another. The consequences found below are in no particular order of priority. ***All consequences should be developed with and agreed upon by your students*** and approved by the Principal. Work with your colleagues, students, and parents to find other positive and negative consequences.⁷⁰

Positive Consequences. In classrooms, the most common positive consequences centre around student satisfaction and building students' confidence and self-esteem. Students need to know and be praised for following the rules, as well as for their successes and accomplishments in learning. There are many simple ways to praise a student, such as a pat on the shoulder; an "I'm proud of you!" statement; selection as class leader for a day; selection as "teacher assistant" for a day; selector of a group activity or project; praising the student in front of other teachers or the school Principal; or asking the student to assist others. Can you think of any others that might work in your classroom?

Negative Consequences. Monitor yourself, as well as your students. The frequent use of negative consequences reflects poor classroom management and generally should be avoided. Monitor your students carefully and frequently so that you can detect misbehaviour before it becomes a big problem and maybe involves several students. To stop inappropriate

⁷⁰ Adapted from: Consequences. Collaborative for Excellence in Teacher Education (CETP), National Science Foundation.
http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/CM-conse.html#anchor40660 [access online on 11/28/2005]

behaviour so that you do not interrupt your teaching or call excessive attention to the student, try: (a) moving close to the offending student or students, making eye contact and giving a nonverbal signal to stop the misbehaviour; (b) calling a student's name or give a short verbal instruction to stop the behaviour; and (c) redirecting the student to the appropriate behaviour by stating what the student should be doing (don't give a "don't" command), and citing the rule that he or she should be following.

But despite our best efforts, sometimes it is necessary to discipline a student. Make sure that whatever action is taken, it focuses on the student's behaviour, not on the student; is a logical consequence of the misbehaviour; and is never done in haste or with anger. Depending upon the nature of the misbehaviour, some mild disciplinary methods could be among the list below. Can you think of any more that would be suitable for your classroom and students? Make sure that you do not choose a penalty that publicly humiliates a student!

- ◆ Loss of break period or play time with others
- ◆ Detention after school to discuss misbehaviour, why it arose, and what should be done to correct it
- ◆ Clean up the mess created
- ◆ Student apology to those offended
- ◆ Seating assignment changed
- ◆ Request student to repeat rule and to follow rule
- ◆ Notes home to parent(s) or home visits
- ◆ Removal to the Principal's office, especially for more serious, disruptive behaviours, such as fighting, continuous interruption of lessons, stealing, bullying, possession of drugs or other restricted substances, and possession of weapons.

USE CAUTION IN USING A "TIMEOUT"

One of the more popular, and controversial, disciplinary methods is known as the "timeout". During a timeout, the student must sit in one place and not play and not be allowed to talk to others. The only entertainment is watching the clock until the seconds of each minute have passed.

Timeout should not be a first choice, but a last resort technique for a student who is harming another or in danger of harming himself or herself. Used infrequently and for brief periods of time, timeout may give a student the opportunity to calm down and regain self-control after a frustrating situation. Used often or inappropriately, timeout may not only be ineffective, it may be damaging to the student, such as by increasing anger and aggression rather than controlling it or using timeout as a form of corporal punishment to induce psychological/emotional pain.

How long a timeout should last is a point of debate. Some experts say no longer than two to three minutes, while others recommend one minute for each year of a child's age, up to twelve. One minute per year of age was decided by trial and error. It appears to be just enough to accomplish good behaviour without the student feeling resentful.⁷¹

Before you give a student a timeout, make sure of the following:⁷²

- ◆ Avoid using timeouts for very young children who should not be isolated, nor should they be ignored or left without proper stimulation.

⁷¹ Goodkids: A Basic Parenting Guide. <http://home.flash.net/~goodkids/> [accessed online on 10/10/2005]

⁷² DCFS. Bureau of Regulation and Licensing. HFS 46 Group Day Care Manual. APPENDIX O. EARLY YEARS ARE LEARNING YEARS. Time out for "timeout" http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/rl_dcfs/GDC%20Manual/HFS46-Apdx-O.pdf#search='DCFS%20Bureau%20of%20Regulation%20and%20Licensing%20Early%20Years%20are%20Learning%20Years%20Time%20out%20for%20timeout' [accessed online on 10/10/2005]

- ◆ Consequences should immediately follow the student's behaviour. When students experience immediate repercussions for harming others, they understand more clearly why you are disciplining them. Whenever possible, you should offer students positive alternatives to their actions (asking a student to clean up a mess that he or she has made is more productive than removing him or her from the area entirely).
- ◆ Timeout should not be humiliating, nor should it make a student feel threatened or afraid. There should NOT be a special chair or area assigned for the timeout because this reinforces the idea that timeout is a punishment and may cause undue anxiety. You should NEVER make a student feel ridiculed or isolated during timeout periods.
- ◆ The student should not be left alone, unless he or she wants to be. Students, and especially younger ones, need the support of adults to work out their feelings. If you show your students that their feelings count, they will be more likely to respect the feelings of others.
- ◆ A timeout should not last longer than it takes for the student to calm down. After the student calms down, explain clearly what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. It must be absolutely clear to the student why you disciplined him or her, otherwise the student is more likely to repeat the undesirable behaviour.
- ◆ Avoid threats. Never say: "If you do that *again*, you will get a timeout." This is confusing to a student and is a form of negative punishment that is rarely effective.
- ◆ Tailor the method of discipline to the individual student. Children develop their abilities to control themselves at different rates. Take into consideration the needs of the particular student involved. No single technique will work with every child every time. Timeout is not used as a punishment. Timeout is an opportunity for the student to clear his or her mind and rejoin the group or activity in a more productive state. Teach a student how to solve his or her own problems with care and support, and timeout may no longer be necessary.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Despite your efforts, as well as those of your students and their parents, many disruptions in the classroom and school environment will arise from conflicts among students, and this issue is a common reason for holding parent-teacher meetings (though it is by no means the only one). These conflicts may take the form of put-downs (insults), teasing, fights, turn-taking problems, and conflicts regarding playground opportunities, access to or possession of materials, and even academic work. These conflicts arise especially from bullying, and the conflicts can escalate rapidly if they are not negotiated or mediated.

A good way to minimize disruptions and misbehaviour is to teach students how to resolve their own conflicts. In addition to solving classroom management problems, this approach teaches students useful skills that will serve them outside the classroom.⁷³

Research on conflict resolution among students has uncovered the following important points:⁷⁴

- (a) conflicts among students do occur frequently in schools (although the conflicts rarely result in serious injury);
- (b) untrained students usually use conflict strategies that create destructive outcomes, and these students ignore the importance of their ongoing relationships with others;
- (c) conflict resolution and peer mediation programmes do seem to be effective in teaching students integrated negotiation and mediation skills;
- (d) after training, students tend to use these conflict negotiation skills, which generally leads to constructive outcomes, and

⁷³ Classroom Management and Discipline. <http://education.calumet.purdue.edu/vockell/edps530/Chapter%2013.htm> [accessed online on 10/6/2005]

⁷⁴ Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., Dudley, B., and Burnett, R. "Teaching students to be peer mediators," *Educational Leadership*, 50(1), 10-13, 1992.

- (e) students' success in resolving their conflicts tends to reduce the numbers of student-student conflicts referred to teachers and administrators, which, in turn, reduces the need to use severe disciplinary actions.

The basic procedure for teaching your students to be peacemakers consists of three steps:

1. Teach children negotiation skills that enable them to:
 - (a) define their conflict ("what are we arguing about; why and how did the issue arise"),
 - (b) exchange positions and proposals ("I think it should be this way because ..."),
 - (c) view the situation from both perspectives (through role-playing, for example),
 - (d) decide on options where both children gain ("win-win" solutions, such as "we'll try it your way today and my way tomorrow to see which is best"), and
 - (e) reach a sensible agreement.
2. Teach students how to mediate constructive resolutions of their classmates' conflicts. Mediation is the process of using another person's services or abilities to help settle the dispute. To teach mediation, choose an issue that might arise, or has arisen, between two of your students. Have two students role-play the issue, and ask a third student to help her (or his) friends come to an agreement using her knowledge about her friends, about the issue, and what she thinks would be a good compromise.
3. Once all students have learned the skills of negotiation and mediation, two students each day (preferably one girl and one boy) are designated to serve as official mediators (peacemakers). These roles are rotated throughout the entire class, and these mediators mediate any conflicts that cannot be solved by the parties involved.

As a teacher, your role is to support these processes by teaching, modeling, and offering advice. A conflict resolution programme in your classroom not only reduces the amount of time you must spend resolving student-student conflicts; it also enables your students to develop skills that they can apply throughout the rest of their lives. Developing and practicing these skills continuously as part of your classroom management plan will result in "overlearning," which is good. In this case, the skills of negotiation and mediation become automatic, so that students naturally resort to them to solve or avoid problems.

AGE-SPECIFIC TEACHING AND POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Understanding how children develop will help you know what to expect. Children constantly change and develop as they grow. Researchers have found that young children pass through specific stages of development along the way. The idea behind these "ages and stages" is that certain behaviour is normal or appropriate at certain ages and not at others. The following table describes the development of children at certain ages and what teaching or disciplinary methods can be used for that age.

The Ages and Stages Approach to Discipline^{75,76}

Age	Development	Teaching/Disciplinary Tips
5 years	Tends to be calm, quiet, well-balanced. Usually tries only what she (or he) knows she can do, so is comfortably well-adjusted. Friendly, loving, appreciative, wants to please and do the right thing; wants and means to be good; not yet able to admit to wrongdoing and, as much as she tries, does not always tell the truth.	Let them know what is and is not reasonable to expect. Many things teachers consider bad are often simply immaturities. Prevention is much better than giving a negative consequence. If you do so, however, do it calmly. The student's wish to be good and do the right thing is strong. With luck, there should be relatively little need for negative consequences.

⁷⁵ Adapted from: Discipline that Works: The Ages and Stages Approach. Family Issues Facts. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension. <http://www.umext.maine.edu/onlinepubs/pdfpubs/4140.pdf> [accessed online on 10/11/2005]

⁷⁶ Adapted from Positive Parenting/Parenting Tips. <http://xpedio02.childrenshc.org/stellent/groups/public/@xcp/@web/@parentingresources/documents/policyreferenceprocedure/web009299.asp?src=overture> [accessed online on 10/12/2005]

Age	Development	Teaching/Disciplinary Tips
6 years	Highly emotional. Loves one minute, hates the next. Much confusion and trouble between self and others. May demand, rebel, argue, or fight. When in a good mood, is cheerful, energetic, and enthusiastic. Needs much praise, but behaviour often merits criticism. This only makes behaviour worse. Not able yet to tell the difference between mine and yours.	Patience. Ignore refusal or be impersonal when student answers with "I won't" or "I can't". Praise - it may not be easy to find something to praise, but try hard; avoid resistance and confrontations; avoid sensitive issues if possible; give in on occasion, especially if it will lead to a positive behaviour or learning experience.
7 years	Quiet, rather negative emotions. May be serious, self-absorbed, moody, worrisome, or suspicious. Very sensitive to others' emotions. May feel disliked by others and that they are critical or making fun of them. Procrastinates, has a short memory, and is easily distracted.	Obedience problem may be because student is distracted. To have the student do a simple activity, tell him or her in advance and make sure he or she heard the directions. Remind the student before he or she forgets and does something else. Give small rewards for successes.
8 years	Vigorous, dramatic, curious, impatient, and demanding. Not as moody as age 7, but still sensitive. Wants time, attention, and approval; beginning to think abstractly; interested in and concerned about own possessions.	Give instructions in ways acceptable to the student. Time, attention, and approval are good motivators. Use problem-solving activities as a means to develop abstract thinking. Give small rewards for successes.

Age	Development	Teaching/Disciplinary Tips
9 years	Quieter than at age 8. Seems to be independent, responsible, dependable, and cooperative. May sometimes be temperamental, but is basically reasonable. Will take criticism fairly well if carefully phrased; great interest in fairness; group standards may be more important than adult standards. Very involved with self and may not hear when spoken to. May appear absent-minded or indifferent. May show concern for others.	Promote responsibility through assigned (requested) tasks. Use cooperative learning, but monitor interpersonal activities. Use guided learning through projects, rather than constantly lecturing.
10 years	Emotionally direct, simple, clear-cut, usually well-balanced, yet still childlike. Less anxious and demanding than at age 9. Most often good-natured and pleased with life. But may show sharp, violent temper. Can be very affectionate. Not a worrying age, yet a few earlier fears remain. Enjoys own humour, which may not be very funny to others. Happy age	Involve the student's ability to distinguish good from bad, right from wrong, truth from untruth; best technique is to know what is reasonable to expect. Involve students in developing classroom committees, including disciplinary committees. Use humour in your teaching.
11-13 years	Early adolescence, time of rapid changes. Developing his or her own identity and becoming more independent. Need for privacy increases and may be very sensitive to teasing. Moody. Importance of friends increases.	Let your students know that you care. Arrange "sharing" sessions or activities (such as essays) concerning student's experiences and feelings. Model mutual respect. Limit criticism and nagging. Do not allow teasing or tolerate insults.

Age	Development	Teaching/Disciplinary Tips
14-16 years	Middle adolescence. Increasing independence, sexual development, and self-centredness. Very body or appearance conscious. Thinking is less childlike; they consider facts and can make good decisions.	Encourage positive relationships through sharing. Give ideas of creative things to do with their friends as part of learning. Set reasonable limits and be consistent and fair in enforcing rules. Make sure they know the rules and negotiate meaningful consequences. Give praise and recognize positive behaviour and accomplishments. Share your own beliefs, concerns, and values about the world. Encourage your students to call a respected adult friend when they need advice. Continue to give praise.
17-21 years	Late adolescence. Becoming more independent and self-reliant; less influenced by peer groups; developing adult-thinking capacity. Generally easier to handle than those experiencing early and middle adolescence. Exploring more long-term relationships. May have an opinion on everything. Self-consciousness about their appearance lessens.	Continue the actions for 14-16 year olds above. Regularly ask your students what they think and believe. Respect their uniqueness and encourage such respect for others. Encourage independent decision-making. Continue to give praise

ASSISTING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Providing for Emotionally and Behaviourally Challenged Students.⁷⁷

The following techniques can be especially effective with students exhibiting emotional and behavioural challenges.

1. **Planned ignoring.** Behaviours aimed at attention getting, and do not spread or interfere with safety or class functioning, are most effectively stopped through planned ignoring (such as in Ramon's case). This technique should never be used with aggressive behaviours. The class may need to be taught to do this as well, since peer attention can be even more powerful than adult attention for some students.
2. **Signal interference.** If a student is calm enough to respond, has a positive relationship with the teacher, and is free from uncontrollable pathological impulses, a non-verbal signal may be all that is necessary to assist him or her in regaining focus. See the section on non-verbal cueing presented above.
3. **Proximity and touch control.** Moving closer to a student in distress or placing a hand on the shoulder can be effective in showing support in a non-threatening way. When using this technique, refrain from pointing out inappropriate behaviour. Comment positively on anything that the student does that shows compliance.
4. **Interest boosting.** Change the tempo or activity, comment on the student's work, or inquire about a known interest related to the assignment if a student shows signs of restlessness.
5. **Strong affection.** Express genuine affection for, or appreciation of, a student to assist the student in regaining self-control.

⁷⁷ Classroom Organization. Techniques for Working with Emotionally and Behaviourally Challenged Students. <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/page/7242.html> [accessed online on 10/4/2005]

6. **Easing tension through humour.** As noted above, humour can often stop undesirable behaviour if it is used in a timely and positive manner. Sarcasm, cynicism, and aggression are not appropriate uses of humour.
7. **Hurdle help.** Before a student begins to misbehave, assist him or her with a difficult section of an assignment or task. Reassure him or her that you are willing to help, and together you can solve the problem.
8. **Regrouping.** Change the seating arrangement or the small-group assignments of students to avoid specific problems. Do this in a non-punitive and, if possible, undetectable way. See the section on "making the learning environment comfortable" earlier in this document for ideas.
9. **Restructuring.** If an activity is not successful, change it as quickly as possible. It is important to always have a backup plan. Sometimes it is best to move from an interactive game to one that requires no interaction. This can be done smoothly and non-punitively when a group is becoming over-stimulated. At other times, offering a choice might be more effective. Students could choose to cover information orally through discussion or copy notes from an overhead, for example.
10. **Direct appeal.** If a student or group has a positive relationship with the teacher, it is sometimes effective just to ask that a behaviour stop due to the problems that it is creating. No consequence or reward is intended or implied. This is a simple, straightforward request from one person to another.
11. **Prevention.** Remove a student from a distressing situation before inappropriate behaviours occur, such as asking him or her to assist you in distributing papers or taking attendance. Be careful not to inadvertently reward a student who is instigating a problem.
12. **Support from routine.** As we learned earlier, schedules and routines are important behaviour management interventions. Knowing what to do and when to do it provides structure, security, and predictability in the lives of students who may not experience such support in other areas of their lives.

Simple Ways to Help Children with "Special Needs"⁷⁸

Tips for Teachers

To Improve Attention

- ◆ Seat student near the front
- ◆ Seat student near good role model who can be a "peer study buddy"
- ◆ Cut assignments into segments giving a student one segment at a time (for instance, rather than giving a full page of math problems, which might discourage a student, cut the paper in half and ask the student to complete one half, and then turn it in; then give the student the other half.)
- ◆ Use cueing to regain student's attention (for example, holding up brightly coloured paper, tapping on desk, touching shoulder)
- ◆ Establish eye contact before giving instructions
- ◆ Give short direct instructions using both visual and oral cues when possible

To Reduce Impulsiveness

- ◆ Ignore minor inappropriate behaviors
- ◆ Give immediate reinforcements or consequences
- ◆ Supervise transition between classes or activities
- ◆ Acknowledge positive behaviors when possible
- ◆ Set up contract for behaviors that need monitoring
- ◆ Help child learn self-monitoring techniques

To Deal with Hyperactivity

- ◆ Allow student to stand at times
- ◆ Allow to run errands

To Improve Academic Success

- ◆ Provide extra time to complete work
- ◆ Shorten assignments
- ◆ Use multi-sensory methods of teaching (visual, oral and tactile)
- ◆ Remind student to check work to see if it is completed

⁷⁸ Classroom Management Index. <http://www.adda-sr.org/ClassroommanagementIndex.htm> [accessed online on 10/4/2005]

- ◆ Help student learn self-monitoring techniques
- ◆ Use daily assignment sheets

To Improve Organizational Skills

- ◆ Enlist parents help
- ◆ Use daily assignment sheets
- ◆ Use one notebook for everything
- ◆ Check notebook often and positively reinforce good notebooks

Classroom Management and Teaching Modifications

Other useful techniques include the following:

- ◆ Reduce or alternate assignments
- ◆ Extend time lines for when work is to be completed
- ◆ Use special materials that encourage and enhance abilities, such as graph paper, felt tip markers, special lined paper, etc.
- ◆ Use more visuals
- ◆ Read a test orally
- ◆ Use multiple choice or true/false versions of tests in lieu of essay completion
- ◆ Ask for oral reports (as opposed to written)
- ◆ Accept special projects in lieu of reports
- ◆ Provide a multiplication matrix and other matrices
- ◆ Provide a list of commonly misspelled words
- ◆ Develop a performance contract between teacher, child, and parent
- ◆ Give credit for class participation
- ◆ Give one-step, short, simple directions
- ◆ Call a student's name to remind him/her that he/she will answer next question
- ◆ Use highlighting and colour coding to help a student get the main point of information
- ◆ Above all, use frequent, positive reinforcement! Its benefits can last a lifetime!!



Suggested Readings

In addition to the many excellent publications and Internet resources mentioned in the text, you are encouraged to explore the following sources for more information.

Publications

Albert, Linda. *Cooperative Discipline: Implementation Guide*. American Guidance Service, 1996.

Albert, Linda. *A Teacher's Guide to Cooperative Discipline: How to Manage Your Classroom and Promote Self-Esteem*. American Guidance Service, 1989.

Boostrom, Robert. "The Nature and Functions of Classroom Rules," *Curriculum Inquiry*, Summer 1991, 193-216.

Coloroso, Barbara. *Kids Are Worth It! Giving Your Child the Gift of Inner Discipline*. Avon Books, 1995.

Curwin, Richard. *Am I in Trouble: Using Discipline to Teach Young Children Responsibility*. Santa Cruz, CA: Network Publications, 1990.

Curwin, Richard and Mendler, Allen N. *The Discipline Book: A Complete Guide to School and Classroom Management*. Reston, VA: Reston Pub., 1980.

Dinkmeyer, Don and Dreikurs, Rudolf. *Encouraging Children to Learn*. Taylor & Francis Group, 2000.

Dreikurs, Rudolf. *Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom; Classroom Management Techniques*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: Accelerated Development, 1998.

Dreikus, Rudolph and Chernoff, Marvin. "Parents and Teachers: Friends or Enemies?," *Education*, Vol. 91, No. 2, 147-54, Nov.-Dec., 1970

Emmer, E.T., Evertson, C.M., Sanford, J.P., Clements, B., and Worsham,

M.E. *Classroom Management for Secondary Teachers*. (2nd Ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1989.

Evertson, C.M., Emmer, E.T., Clements, B., Sanford, J.P., and Worsham, M.E., *Classroom Management for Elementary Teachers*. (2nd Ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1989.

Fontana, David. *Classroom Control: Understanding and Guiding Classroom Behavior*. London: Methuen, 1985.

Freiberg, H. Jerome. "From Tourists to Citizens in the Classroom," in *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 54, No. 1, p32-36, Sept., 1996.

Fuhr, Don. "Effective Classroom Discipline: Advice for Educators," *NASSP Bulletin*, January 1993, 82-86.

Galivan, Janice. "Discipline without Punishment," *Forum*, September/October 1987, 37-40.

Ginott, Haim G. *Teacher and Child: A Book for Parents and Teachers*. 1st Collier Books ed. New York: Colliers, 1993.

Golden, Diane Cordry. "Discipline of Students with Disabilities: A Decision-making Model for Principals," *NASSP Bulletin*, February 1993, 12-20.

Gordon, Thomas. *Discipline That Works: Promoting Self-Discipline in Children*. Plume, 1991.

Grossnickle, Donald R & Sesko, Frank P. *Preventive Discipline for Effective Teaching and Learning*. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1990.

Hart, Stuart N (ed.), *Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2005.

Hill, D.J. *Humor in the Classroom*. Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas, 1988.

Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T, Dudley, B., & Burnett, R. "Teaching Students to be Peer Mediators," *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 10-13, 1992.

Jones, Fredric H. *Positive Classroom Discipline*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1987.

Kounin, Jacob S. *Discipline and Group Management in Classrooms*. Huntington, N. Y.: R. E. Krieger, 1977.

MacKenzie, Robert J. "Setting Limits in the Classroom," *American Educator*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 32-43, Fall 1997.

Mendler, Allen N. *Discipline with Dignity for Challenging Youth*. National Educational Service, 1999.

Internet Resources

Alliance for Transforming the Lives of Children (www.atlc.org)

American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org)

AskDrSears.com (www.askdrsears.com)

Attachment Parenting International (www.attachmentparenting.org)

Aware Parenting Institute (www.awareparenting.com)

Behaviour UK (www.behaviouruk.com)

Center for Effective Discipline (www.stophitting.com)

Child and Family Canada (www.cfc-efc.ca)

Children are unbeatable! Alliance (www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk)

Children's Rights Information Network (www.crin.org)

Classroom Management Online (www.classroommanagementonline.com)

Education World (www.educationworld.com)

Empathic Parenting by the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (www.empathicparenting.org)

Family Works Inc. (www.familyworksinc.com)

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids (www.fightcrime.org)

The Forbidden Issue (www.alice-miller.com)

Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (www.endcorporalpunishment.org)

The No Spanking Page (www.neverhitachild.org)

Positive Discipline.com (www.positivediscipline.com)

The Positive Discipline Resource Center (http://joanneaz_2.tripod.com/positivedisciplineresourcecenter)

Project No Spank (www.nospank.net)

Save the Children Alliance (www.savethechildren.net/alliance/index.html)

UNESCO (www.unesco.org)

UNICEF (www.unicef.org) (www.unicef.org/teachers)

UNESCO Bangkok Office
Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

Mom Luang Pin Malakul Centenary Building
920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong, Klongtoey
Bangkok 10110, Thailand
Email: appeal.bgk@unesco.org
Website: www.unesco.org/bangkok
Tel: +66-2-3910577 Fax: +66-2-3910866