

## TIPS FOR MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Unfortunately, student behavior management doesn't just happen. It requires consistent expectations that foster a climate, which promotes responsibility and mutual respect. Every student has the potential to learn and improve. Your task is to create the environment where they can best learn. It can be challenging, yet with a few simple tips, you can experience success.

**Caught Being Good.** Focus on the good more than you focus on the bad. It's simple; praise motivates people more than criticism. Be consistent and challenge yourself to recognize good behavior 75% more often than you address negative behavior. It takes time and commitment, yet you and the children will benefit from such a positive environment

**"I" Statements.** Take the word "You" out of your vocabulary when you are addressing inappropriate behavior. Use "I" statements to describe what "I feel," what "I expect" or what "I need."

**Model the Way.** If you want students to practice a particular behavior show them the way by displaying it yourself. If you don't want them to yell, don't yell at them. If you don't want them to interrupt you, don't interrupt them. They believe that your behavior is what is acceptable. Make sure it is what you want them to apply.

**Short and Simple.** Don't lecture, just get to the point and state what you expect and how the student can change their behavior to meet that expectation. When you lecture about what the student is doing wrong, after a while all they hear is "blah, blah, blah." Make it short, to the point and move on.

**Put it in Writing.** Ask students to review and sign contracts that outline your behavioral expectations. If

time allows, facilitate ownership of the expectations by having the students brainstorm with you what rules would be mutually beneficial for everyone. People support what they help create!

**Tell Them What You Want.** We often tell children what we don't want them to do—"Don't run!" or "No yelling!" instead of what we actually want them to do—"Please walk!" or "Please be quiet!" Negative statements don't tell them what you want them to do. Students will hear the action word in what you say, therefore highlighting the action you want them to display.

**Special Helper.** Some students display disruptive behavior in an effort to gain attention. Give these students a special responsibility that gives them a bit of the limelight they are seeking while also providing a positive re-direct for their activities.

**Team Effort.** Create a climate in which students are rewarded for group success. The need for the entire group to succeed promotes a sense of self-accountability and positive peer pressure. Trust the group process!

**Empower!** Don't overpower students, empower them! Give them the information they need to be successful. They learn more by doing it themselves.

*Some ideas adapted from "Dr Mac's Amazing Behavior Management Advice Site" at <http://www.behavioradvisor.com/>*

**"If you keep doing what you are doing, you will keep getting what you are getting."**