

BEHAVIOR AWARENESS AND MODIFICATION STRATEGIES

Choose one specific behavior you would like to see changed to work on for several weeks or until improvement is noted, then select and work on one other behavior.

Spend some time before or after class talking with the student to discuss what you have observed in his behavior, stating any connections you see as to whether it is related to his increased frustration level when things get a little difficult or challenging, or to impulsivity or distractibility.

State specific behaviors that you consider to be inappropriate and suggest an alternate behavior that you consider to be appropriate in that setting.

#1 Use a 3x5 card for the student and teacher to each put down tally marks every time throughout the day that they observe this inappropriate behavior and circle the tally mark if the student “caught himself” and self corrected or adjusted his behavior accordingly

At the end of each day, student and teacher compare tally cards to see who noticed the most. Typically the teacher will have more marks, but it isn’t too long before the student begins to be a better observer of his own behavior.

After a student becomes aware of these behaviors, he can then begin to make choices about whether or not to control or change the behavior. Many students are truly not aware of their behavior or the effect it has on the class and punishing them for it only backfires. After they have built an awareness and are making more conscious and deliberate choices, then “natural consequences” for inappropriate behavior are warranted.

#2 Another technique a teacher can use is to develop a prearranged signal with a student, such as a light touch on his shoulder when he needs to slow down, calm down, listen, pay attention, think instead of guess, etc. Again only choose one of these verbal cues for a period of time and agree upon it in private with the student, then whenever you touch his shoulder that week, he should be recalling the message and act accordingly. If not, just give the brief verbal cue objectively and calmly.

#3 Alternately, the teacher may use three little colored squares of paper to use as signals. The student starts the day with the three squares on his desk and every time he needs a reminder about he agreed upon behavior, the teacher calmly removes one of the squares. He may try to keep all three for only an agreed up on portion of the day, such as an hour or until recess or until lunch, and gradually build it up until he can keep all three all day.

Compiled and borrowed ideas
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