

Implementing Assertive Discipline
In Today's Classroom

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For my classroom discipline I have chosen to focus on Canters' Assertive Discipline Plan. This plan will not only meet the students' needs in the classroom but also mine as a teacher. "The Canters' model focuses on establishing a classroom climate in which needs are met, behavior is managed humanely, and learning occurs as intended,"(Charles, 2005, p. 38) This discipline plan allows the teacher to do more teaching and less corrective discipline. The students are ultimately learning more because the teacher doesn't have to stop the class frequently. The students and teachers treat one another with respect at all times. The teacher does their best at the beginning of the school year to create a safe and structured classroom for their students. This will ensure the students and teacher will have a productive class. "Assertive teachers react confidently and quickly in situations that require behavior management. They have a few clearly stated classroom rules and give firm, clear, concise directions to students who are in need of outside control,"(Weber, 2001)

Preventative Discipline

Preventative discipline is the part of the discipline plan that removes factors from the classroom that will promote misbehavior. This part is essential for the teacher to teach the students exactly how they want the students to behave while in the classroom. Every part of the classroom should be clear and concise so as to not confuse the students.

Establish Structure and Identify Behavior Limits

Make sure there are clear, concise rules for the classroom before anything else is done. Rules that will be included in my classroom are:

1. Respect yourself
2. Respect classroom supplies
3. Respect others

There are three main strategies to use in order to have a successful classroom.

1. *Positive Recognition:* This is when the teacher gives sincere, personal attention to students who are behaving and following the rules. Positive recognition should be given frequently to help boost students' self-esteem. Good ways to recognize students would be to send positive letters home, positive calls home, or just by telling them during class time that you like how they are behaving.

2. *Corrective Action:* This is applied when students interfere with other students' right to learn. Corrective action is never harmful physically or mentally to the student. This is something that makes the student feel uncomfortable enough that they will not want to misbehave again. *Example: Patty is talking to her neighbor. The teacher goes and stands next to the students. This lets them know that this behavior is not welcome in the classroom.*

3. *Positive Support:* This is given when a student behaves appropriately during class. This is very much like positive recognition, but this is done mainly in the classroom with just the students. This is also done to model what good behavior is for the students. *Example: "Teddy, I like the way you raised your hand."* (Charles, 2005, p. 43)

Teach the Discipline Plan

At the beginning of the school year teach the students how they should act towards the teacher, the school supplies, and to other classmates. Make sure as the rules are being taught that each student understands how they work. Also, make sure the students understand the corrective actions if they do not follow the rules of the classroom. The teacher must check to make sure the

student understands the rules and corrective actions to ensure for the discipline plan to be effective. One main strategy that is used to continually teach the rules is positive repetition. Instead of always correcting a student, kindly remind them of the behavior that is desired. This will help to continue with the lesson and also model to all the students what is expected of them.

Supportive Discipline

This part of the discipline plan is where the teacher is reminding and encouraging student to behave properly while in the classroom.

Provide Positive Support

*Use verbal recognition: 4 strategies

1. Make sure when using verbal recognition that it is personal and using the students names.

This helps for students to see what behavior is accepted. *Example: "Tommy, I like the way you are cleaning up and being gentle with our toys."*

2. Verbal recognition should be genuine. The teacher must be convincing and really mean what they are saying to the student.

3. Verbal recognition should be descriptive and specific. It lets the students know when and why the behavior is appropriate. *Example: "Good, Geniar. You went right to work on your essay."*

4. Verbal recognition should be age appropriate. Know your students and how they respond to public recognition.

When the teacher points out a student for being good, it will help continue their good behavior. It will also show the other students how they should be behaving. Another effective positive reinforcement strategy is to write the names of students doing well on the chalkboard. This will help the students to know the teacher appreciates their good behavior. This strategy helps the children to feel more accountable for their actions. Overall, providing positive support will encourage the students' to behave in a good way more often.

Corrective Discipline

In the Canter's Assertive Discipline the teacher must provide corrective actions in a calm manner. The teacher must be consistent with every student. Redirecting is very productive and used a great deal in this program. After a student has received corrective discipline the teacher must find the first opportunity to recognize the student doing well. This will help the student to know the teacher cares. In this discipline plan because the students know what is expected of them there is very little corrective discipline that has to take place.

Redirecting Non-disruptive Off Task Behavior

Students will always break the rules in such a way that doesn't bother the other students but this type of behavior must be taken care of because the offending student isn't learning. There are four techniques the teacher can use to help fix this problem:

1. Use "the look" make eye contact and use an expression that shows awareness and disapproval.

2. Use physical proximity: Move beside the student. Usually there is no need to do more.

3. Mention the offending students' name. The teacher says, "I want all of you, including Tanya and Miguel, to come up with the answer to this problem."

4. Use proximity verbal recognition: Jason is not working, but Suni and Maria, seated nearby, are working. The teacher says, "Suni and Maria are doing a good job of completing their work."(Charles, 2005, p. 45)

The techniques for redirecting allow for the teacher to continue the lesson without stopping disciplining. The students are also continuing to learn without interruption. Through these four techniques the teacher is able to point out students doing a good job and also model the desired behavior.

Reaching out to Difficult Students

There are many students who are looking for just one person to reach out to them and care. These students are always the biggest challenges in the classroom but the most fun. At the beginning of the school year the teacher will begin to see the students who are not following the rules. These are the students the teacher must reach out to. The teacher starts by putting themselves in the students place. If the teacher can anticipate the behavior of the student, they can then better prepare how to handle the students' behavior. This technique helps the teacher to respond in a positive way and not get frustrated with the difficult student. The teacher must build trust with the difficult student. The teacher needs to find out the interest of the student and get to know them better. Make an effort to make the difficult student feel special, by greeting them individually as they come into class. Always approach the student in a positive way and make the guardians aware when the student is doing well. After building trust with the student re-teach how they should act and explain that they have a choice in how they behave. The teacher should

explain that they are willing to help the student with their behavior. Help them choose the right behavior. Reaching out to difficult students may be your biggest challenge but is the most important.

"The assertive teacher is more effective than the nonassertive or the hostile teacher. It is hostility and uncertainty of the teacher that causes confusion and psychological trauma in students, not calm, firm, consistent assertiveness. The assertive teacher is able to maintain a positive, caring, and productive climate in the classroom. A climate of care and support produces the climate for learning,"(Kizlik, 2001) Canters' Assertive Discipline ensures that the students and teachers needs are met in the classroom. The teacher must model the desired behavior. The assertive discipline plan must provide behavior limits and also structure in the classroom. The teacher should always use positive support for the students. The teachers must reach out to difficult students to ensure every student has the opportunity to learn in a safe and structured classroom.

Bibliography

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