

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BEHAVIORS

- A(3) Know how to communicate well with students and their families
- B(3) Create a supportive and safe learning environment for students



Even students in the most experienced teachers’ classroom misbehave. Teachers need to be prepared with solutions to guide students on how they should behave and participate in class. An effective teacher has thought about how to best respond to negative behaviors in a consistent way. A teacher should never threaten a student or use intimidation. There are many other more effective solutions to correct a student’s misbehavior.

PREVENTING MISBEHAVIOR

Below is a list of strategies and routines to prevent misbehavior before it happens

CLASSROOM RULES

- On your first day of school have a class discussion about what should be the rules of the class. Make sure the rules are specific.
- Write them down and keep them visible. Refer to them often.

For example:

- No speaking while someone else is talking
- Raise your hand if you wish to answer a question
- No cell phones in class



READ THE ROOM

Have different responses for when 1 student is misbehaving versus when half the class is not focused. It might be a good time to:

- take a short break
- stretch
- give students time to draw a picture
- tell a joke
- play a short icebreaker game if many students need to refocus.



MOVE AROUND THE ROOM

- Don’t just stand at the front of the room. Move around the room frequently and look at student’s work.
- Try teaching from the back of the class. If a student is misbehaving, stand close to them to let them know you are aware of their behavior.
- *Be aware of where you move around the room. It is a good practice to check every student’s work during class to monitor individual progress.*



BE FIRM AND FAIR

Be as consistent and strict as possible, while at the same time demonstrating that you care about your students and want the best for them. Share the reasons why you are being strict and have high expectations.

For example: Maung Zaw is using his cell phone while the teacher is teaching. Previously the class made a rule that no phones are to be used during the lesson. The rule is that if a student is caught with their phone, the teacher will put it into their desk until the end of class. After taking the phone ask the class, “So why do we not allow cell phones in class?”



PRAISE IN PUBLIC

Congratulate students when they demonstrate good behavior. Make sure the whole class knows when a student does something great. This will help create a positive classroom culture.

For example: While students are working on a set of questions, the teacher notices that Moe Moe is explaining something to a friend about one of the questions. The teacher shares, “Moe Moe is explaining to her friend about question 3, which is very challenging. Thank you for helping your friend Moe Moe; it shows great teamwork.”



OWN THE CLASSROOM

- Ensure that the class is organized and ready for learning before class begins.
- Move desks, clean up the classroom, and prepare all materials in advance to create a professional environment for learning.



ASSIGN STUDENTS' DESKS

- Organize where each student will sit in your classroom. You can think about students' needs as you plan the seats.
- Don't be afraid to change where students are sitting if there is a problem.

For example: If two students constantly talk to each other ask one of them to move to a different desk. It is important to keep students who frequently misbehave close to the front of the room to keep them focused.



CLEAR DIRECTIONS

- When giving students directions, make sure they are specific, clear and easy to follow.
- You may need to demonstrate or show an example to help the students understand.
- Ask a student to repeat your instructions to check their understanding.

For example: “Ok, everyone, I just explained what you will be doing for this activity. Mi Han can you please explain the steps in your own words to the class?”



CHOOSE WHO ANSWERS

- Encourage students to raise their hands to answer.
- Choose who will answer each question.
- Students should know they can be called anytime to answer questions and that they need to be ready.



MAKE GROUPS INTENTIONALLY

Once you know your students well, make specific groups based on abilities and who you think will work well together:

- *You can mix abilities to allow academically strong students support weaker students.*
- *You can stream students into leveled groups in order to better support their learning needs.*
- *You can make groups intentionally diverse, mixing ethnic groups, genders, etc. to help students develop empathy.*





MAKE MINOR CORRECTIONS

If you see even a minor misbehavior, it is a good idea to correct it right away. Stop a small problem before it gets bigger.

For example: When Aye Aye is drawing during the lecture, the teacher can tell her, “Aye Aye, this is not a drawing time yet; you need to listen to me while I am teaching. After this we will get a chance to draw.”



SIGNAL IMPORTANCE

Have a signal or routine to tell students when something important is about to happen. Share the value of the topic with students to keep them interested and engaged.

For example: Say something like, “*This* will be very useful for the test”, or “Put a star beside this picture” to signal to students that they need to remember a topic.



THE GOLDEN RULE

Ask students to, “Treat me with the same respect that I treat you.”
When students make mistakes, let them reflect on what they did that was wrong.

For example: When you hear a student being disrespectful to others in the class, ask the student to reflect, “How would you feel if someone treated you that same way?”



HANDLING MISBEHAVIOR

Below is a list of strategies and routines to prevent misbehavior before it happens

SPEAK PRIVATELY

- Don't embarrass students in front of the class when they misbehave.
- Ask them to speak with you after class or speak with them alone when the rest of the class is working.
- Don't be afraid to ask them to wait behind after the other students have left class to discuss their behavior.



DON'T SAY “DON'T”

- When a student misbehaves, try and correct them by giving them an example of what they should be doing.
- Do not repeat what they shouldn't be doing.

For example:

- DO: “Naing Win, please sit in your chair and work on question 5.”
- DON'T: “Naing Win, don't stand near the window.”



SANDWICH FEEDBACK

When giving students feedback,

- start with something the student does well
- share how that student can improve. Keep feedback positive and constructive.
- end with another thing that they did well.

For example: After reading an essay of a student, you can give sandwich feedback, such as:

- “Your handwriting is very nice.”
- “If you want to use sayings and quotes in your essay, it would be better if they are related to your essay topic and storyline.”
- “Your supporting facts for your points in the essay are very good.”



REFER TO THE RULES OFTEN

Refer to your classroom rules often when a student misbehaves and share why these rules are important.

For example: “You should not disturb friends beside you, because we cannot continue to our next topic if they don’t understand this part.”



DISTRIBUTE

If you have an overactive student or a student who often tries to answer all questions, make sure you intentionally share opportunities to answer with other students.

For example: “Thank you for your willingness to share, Tin Aye. Let’s give an opportunity for another student to answer this time.”



CORRECT THE BEHAVIOR

It is important to separate negative behavior from the children themselves. Only focus on the misbehavior, not the person.

For example:

DO: “Yan Aung, I like when you are active in class, but today your behavior is not appropriate”.

DON’T: “Yan Aung, you are always distracting other students.”



THROWBACK QUESTIONS

If a student asks a challenging question, put it back to the class for a discussion.

A teacher doesn’t need to have all the answers.

For example: When a student asks, “Is the mixture of salt and water a solvent or a solution?”, the teacher can turn to the other students and say “Ok, what do other students think about this question?”



WAIT AND NOTICE

If a student is misbehaving during class, stop speaking and look at them. Let that student know without words that they are not behaving appropriately. Once they have realized you are waiting for them, the student should stop what s/he is doing and refocus.



MANAGING YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR

Teachers have an incredibly difficult and stressful job. Each day a teacher makes hundreds of decisions on how to motivate and manage their students. Below are some important points to remember in challenging situations.

DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY

Each day make the decision to begin again and don't take student behavior personally. Often student misbehavior is the result of other situations in their life.

Effective teachers don't hold grudges.



BE CONSISTENT

Treat all students the same when they are misbehaving. Give the same consequence for the same misbehavior.

For example: You need to punish both students who are fighting. You should not punish only one student or give a lesser punishment to one of them.



DON'T ASSUME UNDERSTANDING

Sometimes students misbehave because they don't understand what to do, especially if the teacher has only explained one time.

When this happens, you need to rephrase or re-explain directions to help students complete a task.



CONTROL YOUR REACTION

You can always control how you respond, even when students are misbehaving. Make it your goal to avoid yelling or showing your negative emotions in front of the students.



MATCH THE CONSEQUENCE

Some misbehaviors just need a simple correction such as talking during the class; others, like students throwing objects at each other, require the teacher to stop the class to correct the behavior before someone gets hurt.

For example: If students are fighting during the class, stop the lesson and take proper action to make sure the argument has ended, and everyone is safe.



ASSUME THE BEST

All students can learn and be successful in your class.

Avoid labeling students and try every day to bring out the best in them and help them to succeed.

