



LOVEDALE INTL. KINDERGARTEN

AL-WUKAIR, DOHA - QATAR



NEGATIVE BEHAVIORAL POLICY

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When your students' behaviors go from annoying to out of control, use these steps.

Dealing with extreme student behaviors can be a disheartening experience for teachers, and diffusing small behaviors before they become big problems requires a skillful balance of concealing your emotions and using techniques to de-escalate the behavior. Here are some tips on how to handle challenging student behavior and get back to class.

1. Get to the Root of the Matter

Behavior is a form of communication, so consider what could be causing the disruptive behavior. Determining the cause can help teachers proactively meet student needs, while remaining in control and avoiding inadvertently reinforcing bad behavior.

While the type of behavior may vary, the function of behaviors typically serve one of two purposes: to get something (i.e., attention) or to avoid something (i.e., work). For instance, a student who constantly disrupts your class may be communicating a need for attention.

Rather than reinforcing this behavior by responding to a student blurting out—as negative attention is still attention—try anticipating the behavior and meeting the student's need beforehand. Meet with the student before class and ask them to help you with a special job. Make a point to have a one-on-one conversation about a subject of interest to the student. By meeting the student's need on your terms, you may stop the behavior from even occurring.

2. Reach Out to Colleagues for Support

If you're dealing with extreme student behavior, seek out these individuals and ask for their advice.

3. Remember to Remain Calm

While easier said than done, one of the most important things you can do when dealing with challenging behaviors is maintaining your own self-control. Visualize yourself somewhere relaxing to maintain the appearance of calm, and use conversational "diffusers," which are short phrases such as "I hear you," "Thanks for sharing," or "Nevertheless." Spoken matter-of-factly, these diffusers can de-escalate a situation and show you're still in control.

Silence is another useful de-escalation tool. If a student is challenging you, try waiting silently for about 10 seconds and see if the student doesn't give up. While it might feel like an eternity, the extended wait time has shown to be effective.

4. Have a Plan and Stick to It

Every teacher should have a plan for dealing with students when behaviors are chronic or continue to escalate. If you're working with a student who has an identified emotional or behavioral disability, consult with the special education teacher. The student's Individual anecdotal report should provide a detailed plan for handling their behavior.

Students will test boundaries, so teachers need to set clear limits that are consistently enforced. Whether it's a positive behavior system, rewards, or strikes, you need a classroom management system that rewards positive behavior and penalizes poor behavior choices.

5. Involve Administration When Necessary

When extreme behaviors occur, safety should be your primary concern. No teacher should tolerate being hurt or threatened. If students aren't responding to your attempts to correct their behavior, it may be time to involve administration.

With a violent incident, isolate the student and call for help. If you can't isolate the student, you may need to move the class away from the student for everyone's protection and safety. After the incident, allow yourself and your students time to cool down. Breathe and regain your composure, then be sure to write up a complete report detailing the behavior incident.

6. Document

If you're struggling with student behavior, make sure to document the behaviors and the interventions you've used to address them. Documentation is critical to establishing a pattern of behavior, and its pertinent information for administration if they need to become involved.