

Classroom Management Newsletter

Factors that Lead to Misbehaviour - Part 2

Alfie Kohn (1996) expresses his misgivings about analyzing student misbehaviours. He states that any attempt to systematically explain student misbehaviour will invariably present "a dark view of children" and circumvents "anything like an open-minded attempt to make sense of *what is going on in the classroom*" (p. 13, italics added). Kohn maintains that any exploration into why a student is misbehaving in the classroom ignores the "possibility that it may be the teacher's request, rather than the child's unwillingness to comply with it, that needs to be addressed" (p. 13). How teachers contribute to misbehaviours in the classroom, therefore, needs further examination.

There are various ways in which teachers cause the very disruptive behaviours they seek to prevent. Lack of planning regarding the structure and pace of learning activities, unclear or poorly specified student expectations, treating some students differently, being verbally abusive or using sarcasm, and responding to problem behaviours unfairly can all lead to increased tension and misbehaviour (Sylwester, 1971; Bullara, 1993). Even the added pressure of driving teachers to improve student performances on standardized tests, for example, restrict teachers' freedom to facilitate learning and act more controlling (Deci, 1982). Ultimately, when examining factors that

influence problem behaviours in the classroom, Kohn (1996) challenges teachers to reflect whether what is being asked of students is "truly necessary or productive, fair, or age-appropriate" (pp. 15-16).

Next month: Preventing Classroom Misbehaviour



"It's great to be a ventriloquist. I find that I can still talk in class, but I don't get in trouble."

A big thank you to all those who have supported and/or attended the Trust Level System workshops these past few months.

Your enthusiasm, insight and discoveries have been very much appreciated.

Happy Holidays

About the Trust Level System

How educators have students create rules and routines are strategies that foster community, critical thinking, and problem-solving, but when should students comply with things that should be taken for granted or are considered too trivial? In reality, what teacher has enough time to debate about where the extra pencils should be placed or why fighting is considered a bottomline offence? One must realize that not every problem that presents itself in the class or the playground can be dealt with in such a way. There are times when teacher or student-created rules must simply be adhered to when the child is not willing to discuss motivations behind his misbehaviour.

I believe that while some of Kohn's opinions have merit, there is ultimately the potential scenario of, after you've exhausted strategies and personal reflections that Kohn accepts, what do you do with the student who still does not comply with the most basic of instructions? Gossen (2001) refers to this as the "bottomline." There are behaviours that are simply not appropriate and very little discussion is involved in whether they are valued by the student or not. For this reason, the TLSIM is a leveled intervention method. The "bottomlines" are presented in a way that students may see, not only the degree of severity to which an infraction is considered in the classroom/school, but also how much discussion or opportunities for reflection do they have until the "bottomline" is finite.

TLSIM Strategies

By using a Trust Level System Reprimand Slip, a student is given a clear message that her behaviour is unacceptable. Such a slip could be quietly placed on the student's desk, rather than her name being written on the board - much to the chagrin of an attention-seeking child. Using the reprimand slip keeps incidences from escalating and preserves the student's dignity.

TRUST LEVEL SYSTEM REPRIMAND

This card indicates that you have ignored a previous reminder.

If misbehaviour continues, more serious consequences will result and your level in the Trust System may drop.

Good behaviour throughout the rest of the day will result in the withdrawal of this card and no consequences given.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, December 5:
 TLSIM Implementation Workshop
 Henry Grube Education Center
 5:30 - 7:00pm Room 3
 (prerequisite: TLSIM Introduction Workshop)

Please register at e-mail address below

Workshops & Manuals

Interested in learning more about the Trust Level System or purchasing TLSIM Manuals?

Book a workshop or order a set of manuals for your staff today.

TRUST LEVEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Phone: (250) 828-1965
 Email: TLSmanuals@hotmail.com