

Classroom Management Newsletter

Rules and Procedures - Part 1

A significant part of creating effective preventive measures relies on how rules and procedures are established in the classroom. A succinct definition of rules is provided by Charles (2002) stating that rules are "statements that indicate clearly how students are to behave" (p. 286). In a much broader sense, Morrish (1998) maintains that rules "bring structure and predictability to community living, allowing people to live with a reasonable sense of security" (p. 61). But one must point out the differences between rules and procedures. Whereas rules identify "general expectations or standards, ...procedures communicate expectations for specific behaviors" (Evertson, Emmer, & Worsham, 2003, p. 20) The best time for students to learn the rules and procedures is at the beginning of the year, and "the worst possible time to set up the rules are when students break the rules or to have no rules at all" (Bullara, 1993, p. 365). Indeed, Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering's (2003) meta-analysis found that "the average number of disruptions in classes where rules and procedures were effectively implemented was 28 percentile points lower than the average number of disruptions in classes where that was not the case" (p. 14). But how can teachers *effectively* implement classroom rules and procedures?

A majority of experts researched recommend that students play a part in the rule-making process (Kohn, 1996; Shukla-Mehta & Albin, 2003). There are many reasons why student involvement is necessary. First, "pupils who help set up the rules and regulations of the classroom better understand the necessity of having the rules and are more committed to

following them than pupils who have no voice in classroom rules (Palardy & Palardy, 2001, p. 87). Second, Shukla-Mehta and Albin (2003) state that knowledge of rules, and consequences, "at an early stage might prompt some students to make a responsible choice and discontinue problem behavior" (p. 52). Third, including students in making the rules and procedures avoids what Allen (2000) calls the "landmine effect," where students are treading carefully in every action they make, only learning they have made a mistake when the teacher reprimands them.

Next month: Rules and Procedures - Part 2



"I'm glad to hear that my son is the class clown."

Quote of the Month

"Everyone knows the three unwritten rules of real estate: Location! Location! Location! But fewer people have heard of the three equally important rules of classroom management: Relationships! Relationships! Relationships!"

- Jonathon C. Erwin

Frequently Asked Questions about the Trust Level System

In what situation could the TLS program be implemented?

Currently, the TLS method can be implemented in Grades K - 9. Forms contained within the new Trust Level System Intervention Method manual accommodate primary, intermediate and junior high classrooms and can also be adapted to any teacher's philosophy of discipline. The TLS can be used to address minor classroom disruptions to student behaviour requiring administrative intervention, from situations happening in the classroom to other areas in your school.

If you have the manual, do you need anything else to implement this program?

All forms that are necessary to implement the TLS Intervention Method are found in the manual. While there are suggestions and theories that accommodate the implementation of the method itself, teachers are urged to reflect on what kind of classroom they envision when implementing the TLS - a traditional-oriented or constructivist-oriented classroom.

Does it involve a lot of paper work and planning?

Initially, teachers must become familiar with (and practice) the TLS process. A simple flowchart outlining the process is provided in the TLS Intervention Manual. While there are forms to complete in order to document incidences and find patterns of misbehaviour, these are done with relative ease.

What Teachers Are Saying About the Trust Level System

"I have found the Trust Level System of classroom management to be a fabulous tool to help my class run smoothly. It was easy and straightforward to implement and enhanced and complemented my already existing classroom management strategies. The aspect of the program I feel is the most positive is it is based on respect, clear expectations, understanding and consistency.

- Christine McCauley, Grade 5/6, 11 years teaching experience

Upcoming Events

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