Office of Safety and Youth Development

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Overview of a Guided Discipline Approach and Building Student Resiliency

"I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized."

— Haim G. Ginott

Classroom Management and Discipline

The punishment approach

The do-nothing approach

The guided discipline approach

Know Yourself, Know Your Students, and Know Your School

Know Yourself

Know where your power comes from

Know if you are more authoritarian or authoritative

Know your teaching stance

Know your goals for discipline and personalized support

Know your no's, needs, and non -negotiables

know your communication style

Know how to manage your anger

Know how to recover

Know how to define disrespect

Know the teacher roles you want to strengthen

Know how to handle conflict in the classroom

Know Your Students

Know how to diagnose the underlying reasons for unwanted behaviors (get attention, seek power, seek revenge, hide inadequacy, etc.)

Know key essentials of child development (establishing a sense of autonomy, control, mastery of the world, establishing one's own identity)

Know the qualities and attributes of a developed student (relational development, cognitive development, self-actualization, character development)

Know Your School

Know your school's discipline policies and referral systems

Know colleagues and administrators whom you can count on for help and assistance

Create Group Norms

Establish positive group guidelines and agreements with student input

Discuss the issue of respect

Generate a list of rights and responsibilities

Explain your approach to discipline

Create Group Procedures

Be clear about the reasons for procedures and be consistent in enforcing them

Model, teach, practice, and assess the procedures you expect

Create Group Learning Protocols

Use group learning protocols to build intellectual, metacognitive, social and emotional competencies

Use group problem-solving protocols to help students manage conflict and negotiate learning

Support Individuals and the Group

Support Students' Social and Emotional Development

Teach students how to manage their emotions (conflict escalator; differences between aggressive, passive, and assertive behavior; role playing scripts to encourage students to say and do the right thing)

Provide personalized support and recognition (make personal connections, provide immediate meaningful feedback and encouragement, create opportunities for students to succeed, recognize individual accomplishments in and out of the classroom)

Provide group support and recognition (build cohesive groups, create classroom routines and rituals, use group incentives and reward, assess and monitor group participation)

Engagement and Cooperation: Five Essential Everyday Practices

Get the group's attention

Give clear instructions

Insist on silence when silence is required

Use proximity and physical prompts first when students are off task

Design well-paced, student-centered lessons

Help Students Get Ready to Learn and Focus

Help students settle in at the beginning of class

Help students wake up, energize, and recharge the mind and body

Do a quick check-in to read the group before a lesson begins

Set goals to get ready to learn

Avoid Pitfalls that Derail Discussion

Prepare students to participate responsibly in discussion

Redirect unproductive group talk behaviors

Defuse and deflate provocative behavior

Address Students' Negative Speech and Unacceptable Language

Review norms and consequences related to public speech

Interrupt negative speech using multiple strategies

Intervene immediately when students' speech is beyond correction

Invite Students to Cooperate and Self-Correct

Intervene when students are confused or stuck

Redirect students when they look bored or disengaged

When students are doing the wrong thing or doing it at the wrong time

Use Problem Solving and Logical Consequences when Self-Correction isn't Enough

Offer students chances to solve problems and make choices

Insist on problem solving and negotiation rather than complaints

Put the responsibility on the student when an unwanted behavior persists

Use logical consequences to correct minor problematic behaviors

Defuse Feelings of Anger, Frustration, and Discouragement

Help defuse students' anger and frustration

Let students know what they can do to cool down

Communicate your support and confidence when students feel discouraged

Plan, Organize, Document, and Track Guided Discipline Supports and Interventions

Track and document what you do and what students do

Implement supports and interventions everyweek

Address Persistent Unwanted Behaviors from Day 1

Prioritize problem behaviors you want to be ready for

Establish three levels of consequences and supportive interventions

Discuss the difference between punishment and accountable consequences

Diagnose problem behaviors accurately

Defuse and De-escalate Potential Confrontations and Power Struggles

Don't give students the opportunity to argue

Name the consequence, move on, and deal with it later

When the Group Makes a Mistake

Help the group get unstuck

Create an intervention plan

Teach desired target behaviors that replace unwanted behaviors

Make One-on-One Conferencing a Daily Practice

Use one-on-one conferences to link problem behaviors to desired target behaviors

Use one-on-one conferences to show concern when students are upset or personally distressed

Use one-on-one conferences to find out more about unmotivated and resistant students

Use one-one-one conferences to listen to "frequent fliers"

Use Behavior Report Forms/Contracts, Problem-Solving Protocols, Conduct Cards, and Learning Contracts

Make a Plan when the Class is "Off the Hook"

Take time to reflect on the situation

Choose a few strategies to get back on track (rearrange the room and how you work it, ask someone you trust to observe you and the class, keep classes simple but challenging, change two routines or procedures that students can do successfully, bring kids in on the solution)

Communicate with Parents in a Variety of Ways

Problem Solve with your Colleagues

Building Resiliency in the Environment

a.	Provide opportunities for meaningful participation

•	Include giving young people opportunities to demonstrate their competence and willingness to contribute in meaningful ways. Service learning engages youths in helpfulness and is a great way to build student self-esteem. Examples: use cooperative learning (jigsaw), create special jobs and rotate between students, etc.

b.	Set and communicate high expectations

•	Young people know we believe they can be successful as well as providing the resources for them to do so. Establish programs to provide the necessary support for students to be successful. Examples: offer tutorials, create cross-age tutorials (older kids assisting younger kids), etc.

Building Resiliency in the Environment

c.   Provide caring and support

•   Include unconditional positive regard, support, and encouragement. This part is critical because this is where relationships begin. As resiliency research indicates, the power of one person can never be underestimated. Examples: peer leadership groups, clubs, etc.

Mitigate Risk Factors in the Environment

a.   Increase prosocial bonding

•   Increasing positive connections between youths and their peers as well as between youths and adults in their environments. Create experiences for students that encourage understanding and acceptance for diversity. Examples: be open to students' suggestions and ideas, celebrate diversity schoolwide or classroom wide, create rituals, etc.

b.   Set clear, consistent boundaries

•   Include policies and rules that govern youth's behavior. They need to be fair and consistent and developed with youths' input. Have an instructional component for teaching student's self-control, social skills, or both. Involve students and staff members; administrative support is critical. Examples: survey school community about school experiences, make it safe for students to report issues, celebrate success, offer support for teachers experiencing difficult issues, use visuals to create the culture you want (posters, signage), etc.

Mitigate Risk Factors in the Environment

c.   Teach "life skills"

•   Include skills of decision making, communication, stress management, conflict management, and anger management. Schools need to prepare students for life after school. Social skills are a key ingredient for lifelong success. People who possess strong social competencies are very resilient. Examples: make it safe to deal with conflict (teach students to be assertive without being offensive), create peer leaders/mediators, intervene when you hear inappropriate comments, model respect, and teach self-advocacy, etc.

"If you want your children to improve, let them overhear the nice things you say about them to others."
— Haim G. Ginott

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