

This Issue:

WORKING WITH CHALLENGING STUDENTS

Teachers spend eighty percent of their time with twenty percent of the students. The students who present us with challenging behaviors are the ones to whom we pay the most attention. Because it really only takes one child to upset a class, disrupt a group and ruin a teacher's day, we are constantly trying to maintain control of that one child. Many of us use ineffective strategies with the challenging child that can actually exacerbate misbehaviors beyond what they are. Children today are different than when we were children. The fast pace of our society has created an impulsivity and lack of development of the skills required for delayed gratification. Our students today expect to have their needs and wants met immediately. Many children are also intensely aware of their "rights," although those same children are often unaware of the responsibilities that must go hand in hand with the maintenance of those rights. In addition to these differences of our youngest generation, challenging students can be disrespectful, non-compliant, outright defiant and even violent at times.

Kathryn Phillip's new book "Successful Strategies for Working with Challenging Elementary Students" is now available on line with dozens of strategies for working with the challenging elementary student including ideas for those who have oppositional defiance disorder, anger management problems, conduct disorders and emotional disturbances. It is filled with reproducibles, ideas and easy to implement interventions for the general education teacher as well as specialists.

Avoiding Power Struggles

1. Choose your battles carefully.
2. Develop and maintain positive relationships with difficult students.
3. Provide choices and allow time for choices to be made.
4. Work together to tone down the situation.
5. Don't pretend. Be honest with your feelings.
6. Give options for consequences.
7. Solve the problem on a one to one basis, not in front of others.
8. Remember that the child is probably under more stress than you.
9. Be aware of the factors that escalate this person's behavior.
10. Remain calm. It takes two to fight. DO NOT ARGUE.

Profile of the Challenging Student

- Defiant, lack of respect for authority, impulsive, easily incited to anger
- Lies, steals, poor school performance
- Substance abusing, vandalizing
- Truant, legal problems
- Low motivation, low frustration tolerance,
- Physically aggressive, oppositional, inattentive
- Distracting, disruptive, distractible, emotional, victim, victimizing

Also In This Issue:

- **3 Statements that can Calm the Angry Student**
- **Sample Self-Monitoring Form**
- **Reasons for Misbehavior**

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There are different purposes for misbehavior, although most of us believe that the primary reason for misbehaving is ATTENTION. Do you consider these causes for aggressive behavior?



Escape or Avoidance

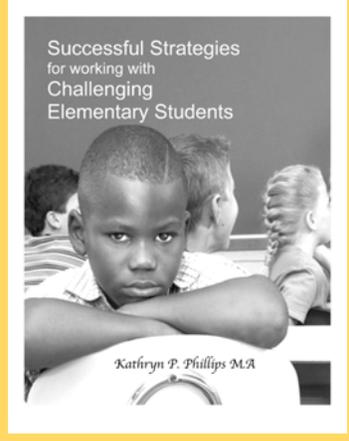
Hitting someone to get the other person to leave him alone.

Getting Something

Hitting someone to get him to give him the toy that he wants to play with.

Self-Regulation

Hitting someone as an impulsive action because he is excited to play with the other person.



Also in this **NECESSARY** survival guide for teachers:

ALL BEHAVIOR IS AN ATTEMPT TO COMMUNICATE SOMETHING.

Three Statements That Can Calm the Angry Student

Statement #1

I know this is a difficult time for you right now.
Hang in there.

Statement #2

I understand how you feel. I would be upset too.

Statement #3

Do you need to be alone for a while?

Sample Self-Monitoring Form

SELF-MONITORING FORM

Student Every time the teacher gives a direction:
Put a + if you think you are working
Put a - if you think you are off- task
Fill in one row completely

Teacher Debrief with student and count on-task (+). Award for 80% or greater on-task behavior

ACTIVITY						
Math						
Group						
Story						

- Discipline essays
- Problem solving forms
- Behavior tracking forms
- Carry cards
- Instructions for setting up an effective detention and in-school suspension rooms
- Techniques to involve parents
- How to simply and effectively increase supervision and hold students accountable for their actions
- What to do when a group of children disrupt
- What to do when you have "That Class"