

Behavior Crisis Management Tool # 16

Initiating Compliments

Purpose

The purpose of this technique is to avert negative behaviors that student exhibit for attention.

Examples

John calls out for the teacher's attention during a lesson and gets attention even though it is negative. Mary teases the student next to her and looks to see if the teacher is watching her because she needs to feel noticed. Mario wants to be noticed by the teacher so shows off at inappropriate times and is very silly.

What May Not Work

What may not work is trying to stop the need for attention through threats or serious disciplinary actions. This would be like trying to stop someone's hunger and need for food by threats. The asking may be temporarily contained by the need will eventually come out again, and may show with even more intensity.

Try This

To avoid students seeking out attention on their terms which may be in inappropriate and negative ways, go over to them as often as realistically possible and compliment them or engage them in some conversation. Going over and complimenting or making them feel important by using spontaneous actions should reduce their need to try to gain your attention negatively. Also you will want to quickly reinforce positive behaviors. However, try to focus on ones that are observed by you that you can spontaneously respond to so that the student feels you noticed the behavior even though there was no intention on his/her part to do so.

What may also work here is to teach these students how to ask for attention in healthy ways. What you will need to teach them is to ask you "When will you have time to speak with me", since you can provide this because you will determine a time that is right for both of you. Empowering students to ask for attention or reassurance is very healthy since they will get their needs fulfilled.

Classroom Management Series IV – Part 16

If a student cannot set his/her own boundaries and asks for this several times you will need to set a limit for the day and explain that you have to share your time with everyone but that he/she is important so use your request wisely.

Empowering children with options to ask for attention when they want, even if its limited, usually reduces their need for attention since they can get it anytime they want. Power is not having to use it, it is just the knowledge that you have it.