

Behavior Crisis Management Tool #6

Controlling Student Outcomes

Purpose

The purposes of this technique are to control student outcomes and foster a sense of task completion and sense of accomplishment.

Examples

As a teacher, you will be confronted with many attempts by students with emotional issues to control their environment by wanting things their way. In many cases, these students will want their needs provided for first before they are willing to conform to your rules or requests. For instance:

- a student may fight to promise you that if you let him/her talk to a friend he will do the math class work, or
- if you let a student text message her friend she will do what you are asking, or
- if you just let them work on the computer they promise to do what you are asking after they finish

While these are just examples, many attempts at manipulating the environment are exhibited every day by these students and place the teacher in difficult positions.

What May Not Work

What definitely does not work is allowing a student who is trying to manipulate you or the environment to determine the rules governing completion of rules or tasks. Some students can be persistent in their attempts to get you to let them do it their way and eventually you may give in. However, this will only reinforce the student's beliefs that he/she can change your rule at anytime.

Try This

The best rule for this type of situation is not to necessarily deny his/her request. After all, in some cases the request may be realistic and not unreasonable but doing it before the task is not acceptable. After all, this is very much like a child asking a parent for dessert before dinner but the parent lets them know they can still have the dessert but after dinner. So very calmly you tell the student, " You do this first , and then you get that." If the student comes up to you asking if he/she can now do what he/she wanted, you ask him/her, "Did you complete...". If he/she says that he/she did not you simply say, "Well come back to me when you have completed it and we will talk." This technique allows the student to understand priorities and delay of gratification. The technique of "You do and then you get" is an effort saving approach when working with students who have issues of control.