

Behavior Crisis Management Tool #7

Initiate a Vested Interest in The Student's Desire to Maintain Success

Purpose

The purpose of the tool is to help troubled students develop a sense of accomplishment and build an investment in being successful.

Example: Billy a student with emotional problems has never been successful in school because his issue prevent him from concentrating, focusing, attending to task, and completing assignments. His high levels of anxiety add to his perception that school is a waste and has no meaning for him. However, Billy's perception of school is based on his beliefs reinforced by his failure to succeed. With no investment or an identity that includes academic success, Billy will maintain the only identity he knows, a troubled, oppositional defiant young man.

What May Not Work

What does not work is exposing these troubled students to more and more work without first changing their negative perception of themselves and school. The only thing you will be doing here is to "build a house on water" and expect cooperation without first having a foundation of success.

Try This

Since success breeds success any child will welcome being validated in a positive way when it comes to school work. However, most troubled children have behaviors that prevent them from focusing and taking chances on doing academic work in which they have not been successful in the past. As a result, they rarely experience success in school and have nothing to lose since there is no investment or gains in their "success bank account." What is suggested is that you will need to initially present and use high success rate tasks to develop a sense of success, motivation, and control. The more consistent success a child has the less anxious they will be and therefore the more invested they will become in school. Try to put as many consecutive success rate tasks together (about 20-30) to begin changing the child's perception of him/herself and outlook on schoolwork.

High success rate tasks are adapted so that factors are added to increase the child's sense of accomplishment and positive experience. The use of changes in the following factors can greatly increase the rate of success necessary for a child to develop a vested interest in school:

1. Size = Adapt the number of items that the learner is expected to learn or complete.

For example: If student is to know the fifty states, have students only be responsible for remembering a certain number at a time. This would be dependent on the student's level of disability.

2. Time = Adapt the time allotted and allowed for learning, task completion, or testing.

For example: Allow student additional time to complete timed assignments. However, if the total project is due by a particular time, have the student complete each portion of the project over various intervals with the required finished project due at a later time.

3. Level of Support = Increase the amount of personal assistance with a specific learner.

For example: Allow for peer teaching. Pair the slower students with the more advanced students in order to provide support. Offer some sort of incentive to the more advanced student for assisting others. Design some type of contract with students that they could show to their parents indicating completion of their work and the assistance they are giving to others. Offer this as a bonus to their grades.

4. Input = Adapt the way instruction is delivered to the learner.

For example: Provide students with a audio and/or video tape of the lesson. Allow for field trips, guest speakers, peer teaching, computer support, video productions performed by students, Incorporate lesson in other subjects areas.

5. Difficulty = Adapt the skill level, problem type, or the rules on how the learner may approach the work.

For example: Allow the student to be creative providing that task is completed according to instructor's specifications. For example the student may draw a picture of the assignment, do an interview, etc. depending on subject. Allow the student to come up with the idea. Accept any reasonable modifications.

6. Output = Adapt how the student can respond to instruction.

For example: Allow students to draw pictures, write an essay, complete specific computer software program relating to lesson.

7. Participation = Adapt the extent to which a learner is actively involved in the task.

For example: Tailor the student's participation in a task to his or her abilities, whether intellectual or physical.

8. Alternate = Adapt the goals or outcome expectations while using the same materials.

For example: In a writing assignment, alter the expectations for a disabled student who takes longer to write a paragraph.

9. Substitute Curriculum = Provide different instruction and materials to meet a student's individual goals. *For example:* Instead of discussing the reasons for the civil war, have the disabled student work on a puzzle showing the Union and Confederate states.

from *Adapting Curriculum and Instruction in Inclusive Classrooms: A Teacher's Desk Reference*, by Deschenes, C., Ebeling, D., and Sprague, J., 1994.