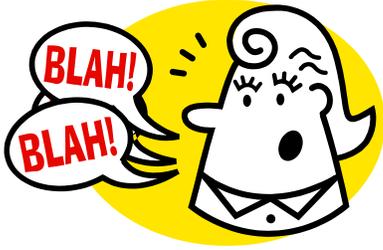


Positive Ways to Correct Behavior Part II

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1. Redirection: Steer the student in another direction, having nothing to do with the problem behavior.
 - a. Give a direction ("Come here," "look at me," "check your schedule," etc.). Ideally this is what the student should be doing anyways.
 - b. Give a choice between 2 things/activities/people, etc. ("Book or ball," "writing or take a break," "sit here or stand there," etc.). The choice can be between 2 preferred things or one preferred and one non-preferred. Be sure to follow through once a choice is made.
 - c. Element of surprise: make a noise, face, or gesture unrelated to the problem behavior in an attempt to distract the student.
 - i. *The goal of all types of redirection is to get the student back on task.*
2. Setting limits: It should be clear to the students at all times what is expected of them.
 - a. Avoid asking open-ended questions—if it is an instruction, present it that way. If it is a choice, present it that way (they are different things!).
 - b. If a student is off-task, first try giving him/her a brief instruction of what he/she should be doing—consider the possibility that he/she legitimately does not know. We all need reminders sometimes.
 - c. It is okay to deny a student access to something, as long as an alternative is presented, and the denial is consistent. For example, if one staff always allows a student to hug her, and another staff never does, the student will more likely only be compliant with one of the staff.
 - d. Physical boundaries can be helpful. Designate the available area and keep the student there using verbal directions, furniture, your body (blocking only, never holding).
3. Tone of voice: Use this tool to your advantage when communicating with the students
 - a. It is typically unacceptable to yell at the students. Exceptions would include unsafe situations such as alerting another staff to a student's dangerous behavior, calling out to a student in a dangerous community situation, or to stop an extremely dangerous behavior immediately. None of these examples involve yelling AT a student.
 - b. There should be a difference between a demand tone and a praise tone. This will be individual per person. A demand tone is typically flat and neutral with minimal facial expression or inflection. Conversely, when giving praise, try to be more animated and upbeat.
 - c. Some students respond very well and consistently to a firm tone of voice when directions are given. First give the direction in





a neutral tone, ensuring first that you have the student's full attention, that the expectation is clear, and that the student knows what he/she will get for complying. If that is unsuccessful, and the student

begins engaging in inappropriate behavior, repeating the direction in a slightly firmer (but still not yelling) tone can be helpful.

- d. Conversational tone should be a standard, socially-appropriate volume and tone—it is important to model this for the students and to ensure they use their tones of voice appropriately as well.
4. Follow-through: Any time you give a direction, you must ensure the student complies and obtains reinforcement for complying.
- a. If you are unable to follow-through with the direction, ask for team assistance, or wait to give the direction until a time when you can follow through.
 - b. There are three parts here: the direction, the target behavior, and the consequence (reinforcement). An example would be, "Sit down," the student sits, "Thanks for sitting!" The closer these three parts happen together in time, the more likely it is that the student will comply with the direction next time to gain the reinforcement.
 - c. Lack of follow-through is a problem because it results in the student escaping from a staff demand and missing out on a learning opportunity.
 - d. This goes for any interaction that is instructional. Remember, any occurrence of problem behavior is another instructional opportunity.
5. Use of reprimands: Reprimands can be a form of punishment, and if used must be used correctly.
- a. Only consider using a reprimand in a situation in which someone is going to get hurt if you do not intervene immediately.
 - b. If using a reprimand, it is for the purpose of immediately stopping the behavior *in order to give a positive direction*.
 - c. The ratio of 4 positives to 1 negative interaction still applies and reprimands fall into the negative category automatically.
 - d. The positive direction following the reprimand should be brief, clear, and simple to follow.
 - e. For example, a student is hitting another student. A staff member is several yards away and says firmly, "Johnny stop. Hands down." The next step is for the staff member to move closer and prompt the response of hands down if necessary, praise mildly, and get the student back on task.
 - i. A poor example might be, a student is hitting another student. A staff member is several yards away and yells, "Johnny stop that you're hurting him what are you doing you need to you need to you need



to....." The student keeps hitting and is not learning what to do instead.

- ii. **Reprimands should only be used few and far between.** If a positive direction can be given, that should be the first intervention. Always ask yourself what skill you are teaching the student and what he/she will get for compliance.