

General Strategies to Prevent Problem Behavior in a Special Day Class Setting

- Avoid “down time.”
 - Program every moment of the day, even Free Time, by ensuring the choices of activities are clear, facilitated by adults, and accessed appropriately.
 - Transitions are high-probability times for problem behavior—have a clear cue that signals a transition (a bell, word, picture card, etc.) and ensure that the transition happens immediately following that cue. Make sure the next activity is ready, including materials, staffing, and the work expectation for each student.
 - If students are left “alone” together, there is a possibility for problem behavior. Be sure to increase supervision when students who have a history of aggressive behavior are in close proximity to other students.
 - Have a back-up plan for your back-up plan and plan for that plan to not work out like you wanted (“Be prepared”).
- Supervision should be organized and structured **at all times**.
 - All staff should know for which students they are responsible. It may be useful to create a formal written schedule designating these assignments, especially at high probability times such as recess or playtime.
 - Create a culture of accountability in the classroom where each staff member knows exactly what is expected of them and knows when to make decisions about behavior themselves versus when to ask for support.
- Use visual strategies such as schedules, timers, and other communication tools consistently for the students who require them.
- Give 4 times more praise than criticism and recognize 4 times more appropriate behavior than inappropriate behavior.
 - Keep track of your own behavior modeling this strategy.
 - This will create a positive climate and atmosphere for staff and students!
- Treat misbehavior as a learning opportunity where the student will end up getting praise for appropriate behavior instead of punishment or reprimands.
- If students have Behavior Support Plans (BSP’s), know them, love them, do them. If they don’t work, ask your site administrator and psychologist for support (or a behavior analyst).
- Work as a team—when one staff member gives a direction and cannot follow through with it for some reason, another staff member can pick up and follow through to ensure the learning occurs.
 - Learning and engagement involve three parts:
 - Staff direction→Student response→reinforcement
 - The more these complete interactions occur, the more learning and positive behavior will occur.
- Use small group instruction as much as possible to ensure students get plenty of opportunities to respond to instruction.
- Gear all instruction around student IEP goals. Always ask yourself, “Is this activity functional for the student?” A lot of behavior occurs as an attempt to avoid or escape aversive demands. Be sure the activity you are asking the student to do is relevant to their skills and needs.

- Differentiate instruction based on student functioning levels. Utilize the concept of Partial Participation to ensure all students are accessing each activity to the best of their ability and with the necessary support.

ACTIVE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION ARE THE BEST PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES WHEN IT COMES TO PROBLEM BEHAVIOR!!!