

Behavior Newsletter

Questions or comments?

Email us at:

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Today's Topic: Disrespect

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Addressing Disrespect in the Classroom

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Internet Resources:

- www.disciplinehelp.com/
- www.interventioncentral.org
- www.positivebehaviorsupports.com



Johnny, where's your homework?" Miss Tanner said to the little boy while holding out her hand. "My dog ate it," was his reply. "Johnny, I've been a teacher for eighteen years. Do you really expect me to believe that?" "It's true, Miss Tanner, I swear," insisted the boy. "I had to force him, but he ate it!"

Do you have a "Johnny"?



What does a disrespectful child look like?

Reveals disrespect in the classroom in many ways: a pointed look, a sigh, a sneer, or a look of clear disdain.

Also reveals disrespect by what he/she doesn't do-usually through lack of common courtesy.

May act as if some people don't even exist.

May reveal disrespect in the form of ugly words.

Doesn't think very highly of anyone, including him/herself, even though he/she may act superior.

Often seems to be expressing frustration.

May have real problems at home or with friends.

May have basic primary needs which aren't being met. Appears unable to meet needs in a positive manner. Therefore, turns to disrespect out of

frustration, anger, or hostility.

Information from:
www.disciplinehelp.com/

How does disrespect effect your classroom environment?

Teacher may find that disrespect "gets to" him/her in a way that nothing else can, and that it takes a damaging toll. He/she may be unable to

respond in any way except by being disrespectful in return.

Teacher may feel helpless or insignificant.

Worse, teacher may become hateful.

Teacher may even become disrespectful toward other teachers-and especially toward administrators for not "taking care of" disrespectful students quickly and harshly.

Peers who experience disrespect from a classmate have similar feelings.

That's why the disrespectful student brings discord into the classroom.

Why is he/she disrespectful?

Primary Cause

Revenge

This student has been mistreated and therefore is mistreating others.

What can you do about it?

Always remember that disrespect is never given without reason. The reason may or may not have to do with the teacher. Yet, student disrespect will never be resolved unless we realize this fact-and do something about it.

Adopt the strategic position of acting in a positive rather than a negative way. Don't try to fight fire with fire. The behavior of this student can't be changed with such an approach.

Be aware that, more often than not, the teacher is not the cause of disrespect. It's an indicator that a child has problems, is experiencing failure, has been hurt, or has been indulged too often by adults. However, a close look will reveal that disrespect is often a result of a circumstance which could be altered rather than a permanent condition. It's an instant response which the student might withdraw immediately if so allowed.

Try responding to the offender with "What's wrong? Did I do something to offend? If I did, I'm sorry." This can set the stage to resolve rather than fuel the situation.

Keep the responsibility on the student. This is an important aspect of handling the disrespectful student. Retaliating only lets him/her off the hook.

A public confrontation may put the student on the spot and compel him/her to act even worse to save face or retain his/her image as one who "doesn't get pushed around by anyone." Whenever you can, move to the hall or a private place in the room to handle **disrespect.**