

# **INCREASING MOTIVATION AND SELF-ESTEEM IN STUDENTS**

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**

**A THREE CREDIT CLASS**

**#SS401p/#SS501p**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

**DR. MICHAEL SEDLER**

**Email:**

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**(509) 443-1605**

**THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE**

**Please Do Not send in no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time and I will send you back comments. Send them in numerical order (#1, #2, #3...). If you have signed up for multiple classes, please finish one before turning in work for the next one. And, there should be at least two weeks between course completions.**

**NOTE:** This is an online class and all work should be turned in through The Heritage Institute site. NO work should be sent directly to the instructor. When you registered, you should have received information as to how this process works. If you are still unsure how to do this, please contact [registrar@hol.edu](mailto:registrar@hol.edu) and they can help you with this issue.

Thank you for signing up for my independent study classes. You may take up to six months to complete this course and may obtain an additional 3 month extension. DO NOT send in any completed papers unless you have registered for the class!

The checklist in the manual is to help you plan your schedule to successfully complete this course. The last page of the manual includes a General Bibliography. If you prefer, you may choose an alternate book not on the suggested list.

On the following page, I have given you a brief biography/resume of my background. You will see that I have a Masters Degree in Social Work; my K-8 Teaching Certification and am a Licensed Social Worker with the State of Washington. My current primary role is as a consultant and trainer for schools, businesses and agencies. I also worked in education for 15 years as a Director of Special Education, a Behavior Intervention Specialist, School Social Worker, and Teacher.

I teach classes and seminars throughout the United States and in Canada. I am an adjunct professor through two Universities in Washington. I am available for on-site training, classes, and in services for agencies and schools. I anticipate this class will be enjoyable and full of learning. Please contact me if you would like me to be involved directly with your school or business.

Thank you, once again, for signing up for it and I look forward to working with you over the next weeks/months.

Sincerely,

Michael Sedler  
(509) 443-1605  
E-mail: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)  
Website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)  
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**\*\*** For those working in groups (400/500 level only!)- be sure to go to The Heritage Institute website at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu) and click on the "group collaboration" icon.

1. Each group member must pick a book to read (you may all choose the same book).
2. Each group member must read the entire manual.
3. Final evaluation/integration paper must be individually authored.

Please share about my classes with others. It is my main form of advertising.

●  
**MICHAEL SEDLER**

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website: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

**Education**

B.A., Political Science

Master Degree, Social Work

Master Degree, Divinity

Doctorate Degree, Ministry

Teaching Certificate

**Work Experience**

Consultant/Trainer/Counselor

Director of Special Education

Developmental Disabilities Administration, State of WA., Behavior Consultant

Supervisor, Educational Services

School Social Worker (K-12)

Behavior Intervention Specialist (K-12)

Classroom Teacher (elementary and middle school)

Assistant Pastor

**Other Experiences**

State Correctional Facility for Juveniles, Counselor and Supervisor

Community Mental Health Therapist

State Trainer in Autism (State of Washington)

Adjunct Professor for several Universities

Student Teacher Supervisor

Consultant for schools, business, churches throughout United States

Provide weekend marriage retreats

Interview and Speech Coach/Trainer for Miss Arizona, 3<sup>rd</sup> runner-up Miss America 2012

**Author**

***When to Speak Up and When To Shut Up.*** (Jan., 2006 Revell Books, \$5.99). Book from faith-based perspective.

Communication book discussing conflict, power struggles, listening strategies, asking questions.

**(Over 400,000 copies sold).**

***What To Do When Words Get Ugly.*** (October, 2016 Revell Books, \$5.99). (updated/edited version of "Stop The Runaway Conversation.") Two new chapters in addition to edits. Book from faith-based perspective.

Importance of not listening to negative discussions and how they impact a person's attitude.

Books are available through all bookstores, at [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com), by calling 800 877 2665, or by checking with various online book companies. Revell is a division of Baker Publishing Group. Both books are also available in CD format as audio books.

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)

MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR

Register for courses anytime. (6-month period for completion from the date you register). **Collaborate with fellow educators-only one set of assignments turned into instructor.** (Check out "Group Collaboration Guidelines" at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)). \*\*Clock hours/PDU's also available..

The following are **3 CREDIT CLASSES** (3 quarter credits = 2 semester credits)

**1. Increasing Motivation and Self-Esteem in Students** (SS401p/SS501p)

Strategies to help students feel confident and help educators find more successful approaches with them.

**2. Parents: Adversary or Ally--A Cooperative Approach** (SS401q/SS501q)

Specific ideas on connecting with parents and helping better communication between school and home.

**3. Social Skills: A Foundation For Learning** (SS401v/SS501v)

Activities and ideas to encourage students to improve their peer and social relations.

**4. Understanding & Connecting With Aggressive Students** (ED404d/ED504d)

Each person will increase their understanding of ways to de-escalate aggression and its' causes.

**3 CREDIT COST: \$280-400/500 level; \$195-clock hours (3 quarter = 2 semester)**

The following are **5 CREDIT CLASSES:** (5 quarter credits -3.3 semester credits)

**1. Bullying Behaviors: Enough is Enough** (ED437q/ED537q)

Identification and interventions to reduce bullying behaviors and victim mentality within schools and community.

**2. Counseling Skills For Educators** (ED409r/ED509r)

Helpful ideas on listening skills, asking questions, and communicating with students.

**3. High Maintenance Behaviors & Interactions** (SS409f/SS509f)

This course investigates the many aspects of high needs people, behaviors and effective interactions.

**4. Mental Health Issues and Students** (HE402n/HE502n)

Understand various disorders (oppositional defiant, obsessive compulsive, bi-polar) and interventions.

**5. Nurturing Compassion Within Our Schools** (ED434y/ED534y)

Ideas to help adults and children learn to be more sensitive, kind, and compassionate toward one another.

**6. Organizational Teaching Skills** (ED429w/ED529w)

Increase your own organizational and time management skills as well as helping students in these areas.

**7. Stress Reduction in Staff and Students** (HE401m/HE501m)

Strategies to reduce stress, become more effective in life, and teach these skills to students.

**8. Student, Classroom and Whole-School Discipline** (ED419g/ED519g)

Focus is on negative talk, gossip and rumors within schools. Behavioral strategies for each above area.

**9. Youth Suicide** (SS404u/SS504u)

Specific discussions on signs and interventions for suicide prevention.

**5- CREDIT COST: \$415-400/500 LEVEL; \$315-clock hours (5 quarter = 3.3 semester)**

**NEXT PAGE FOR MORE CLASSES AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

# **INDEPENDENT STUDY COLLEGE COURSES**

**THE HERITAGE INSTITUTE (credits through Antioch University, Seattle, WA)**

**MICHAEL SEDLER, INSTRUCTOR**

The following are **6 CREDIT CLASSES**: (6 quarter credits - 4 semester credits)

## **1. Autism: Questions and Answers (ED445y/ED545y)**

Understanding the general areas of autism, diagnosis, and overall strategies for interventions for children with special needs.

## **2. Establishing Rules and Boundaries (ED445x/ED545x)**

Ideas to assist educators in setting up a successful work environment for children (rules, procedures, teaching tools).

## **3. Inspirational Education (ED452f/ED552f)**

This course will re-charge the batteries and create a new excitement about teaching in each person.

## **4. The Impact Of Trauma and Loss in Students (ED464z/ED564z)**

Strategies to support children who have experienced traumatic situations in life.

## **5. Why Children Act Out (ED458t/ED558t)**

Recognize the underlying function of behaviors and interventions approaches.

**6- CREDIT COST**: \$495--400/500 LEVEL; \$380-clock hours (6 quarter = 4 semester)

**REGISTRATION**: Call The Heritage Institute--1 (360) 341-3020

*Or register on line at [www.hol.edu](http://www.hol.edu)*

**QUESTIONS**: Please call Michael Sedler at (509) 443-1605. Leave message when necessary.

**Email address**: [mike@communicationplus.net](mailto:mike@communicationplus.net)    **Website**: [www.michaelsedler.com](http://www.michaelsedler.com)

\*\*For clock hours, only complete the first section of the course. Remember, clock hours may not transfer to other districts or states. You cannot go back and acquire credit once clock hours have been earned for a class.

**COURSE TITLE: INCREASING MOTIVATION & SELF-ESTEEM IN STUDENTS**

**NUMBER OF CREDITS: 3 QUARTER CREDITS**  
[semester equivalent: 2.00]

**CLOCK: 30**  
**OREGON PDU'S: 30**  
**CEU'S: 3.0 (30 hrs)**  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48: 30**

**INSTRUCTOR: MICHAEL SEDLER, D.Min., M.S.W.**  
**P.O. BOX 30310**  
**SPOKANE, WA. 99223**  
**(509) 443-1605**  
**EMAIL: mike@communicationplus.net**

**ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST**

The assignment checklist will help you plan your schedule of work for this course. Check off items completed so that you can better monitor your progress. While you have six-months to complete your work, many will find a shorter time period convenient. **Complete no more than 2 to 3 assignments at a time for comments. Do NOT send further work until you receive comments from the instructor. Grades will be submitted once all assignments and the integration paper have been sent to instructor.**

***For Washington Clock Hours, Oregon Professional Development Units, Continuing Education Credits or Pennsylvania ACT 48, please complete the first 7 assignments.***

**Assignment #1:**

Read the entire manual and send a **one page summary** of what you hope to learn in this class. Everyone taking the class, including in groups, must complete this assignment.

**Assignment #2:**

Read a book from the bibliography or one of student's choice. If taking this course in a group, each person should read a book. Only one person needs to write a summary. Critique the book based on personal experiences. **Write a 2-3 page paper.**

**Assignment #3:**

Complete the following pages:

- a) Dominant/Dependent Learners (pgs. 13-14)
- b) Trust Based Relationships (pgs. 25-26)

**(Write a 1-2 page summary for each page)**

**Assignment #4:**

Discuss areas of focus and difficulty in motivating students and increasing self-esteem with other educators. Write a **1-2-page summary**.

**Assignment #5:**

Discuss with a sports coach at school or in community ways they motivate and build self-esteem. In a short report compile and summarize all responses from the person. **(2 pages).**

**Assignment #6:**

Review 3 separate journals or articles on the topic of motivation. Choose one and write a **1-2 page summary** of the article. Include the title of the article and the author.

**Assignment #7:**

Read the article 'Motivating Students in the Middle Years' (p. 19-22). Write a **1-2 page summary** including your personal perspective and insights.

***This completes the assignments required for Clock Hours, PDU's, CEU's, or Pennsylvania ACT 48.***

***Continue to the next section for additional assignments required for University Quarter Credit.***

## ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT

### A. LEARNING APPLICATION (summer options listed)

In this section you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you are not teaching in a classroom, please contact the instructor for course modifications. If you are a classroom teacher and start or need to complete this course during the summer, please try to apply your ideas when possible with youth from your neighborhood, at a local public library or parks department facility, choose a child of your own or a relative, or with students in another teacher's summer classroom in session.

#### Assignment #8: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

Choose a student who lacks in specific area(s) of motivation. Write out areas of concern and develop a program to help him/her (use examples in manual and from your chosen text).

Initiate the program over a 1-2 week period. (Sample outline in manual on page 18).

- To maintain privacy, please do not refer to students in your paper by their actual name, but rather use an alias or designation such as "Student A."

Write a **2-3 page paper** explaining the program developed for the student. (**send to instructor**)

#### Assignment #9: You must choose either "A" or "B" (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

Assignment #A:

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students in your classroom.
- Write a **2 page commentary** on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.

OR

Assignment #B:

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Develop a lesson to reflect what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a **2 page summary** concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students.

### 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT

#### Assignment #10: (500 Level only)

In addition to the 400 level assignments complete **one (1)** of the following options:

**Option A)** Mentor another individual in the concepts of this class. Have them share two or three key concepts that they would like to implement within their work or social setting. Develop a plan for the implementation of these ideas. (**1-2 pages**).

OR

**Option B)** Create a PowerPoint presentation for your staff based on this course and focused on perspectives or strategies you feel would be beneficial for your school. **Minimum of 15 slides**. Save this as a pdf.

OR

**Option C)** Another assignment of your own design, with instructor prior approval.

### 400 & 500 LEVEL ASSIGNMENT (To be completed by all participants taking this for credit) Integration Paper

#### Assignment #11: (Required for 400 and 500 Level Credit)

Write a **2 page** Integration Paper answering these specific questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**Must be individually authored (name and course title) for those taking in a group.**

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

Mike Sedler, M.S.W., D. Min., brings over 40 year of educational experience as a special education director, social worker, behavior specialist and teacher to each of his classes. He provides consultation and seminars throughout the United States and Canada for schools, agencies and businesses. He has a graduate degree in Social Work, a Doctoral degree in Ministry, a Counseling license, as well as his teaching certification. Mike has worked with children of all ages, specifically with children exhibiting behavioral challenges, mental health concerns, and characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition, he taught general education classes in the elementary school and middle school arenas. All of Mike's classes are practical and "field tested" in schools and classrooms. Educators have found success in implementing Mike's clear and concise approaches. All of his course material may be immediately implemented into a school or a home.

**NOTES:** You may work collaboratively and submit joint assignments on all but the Integration

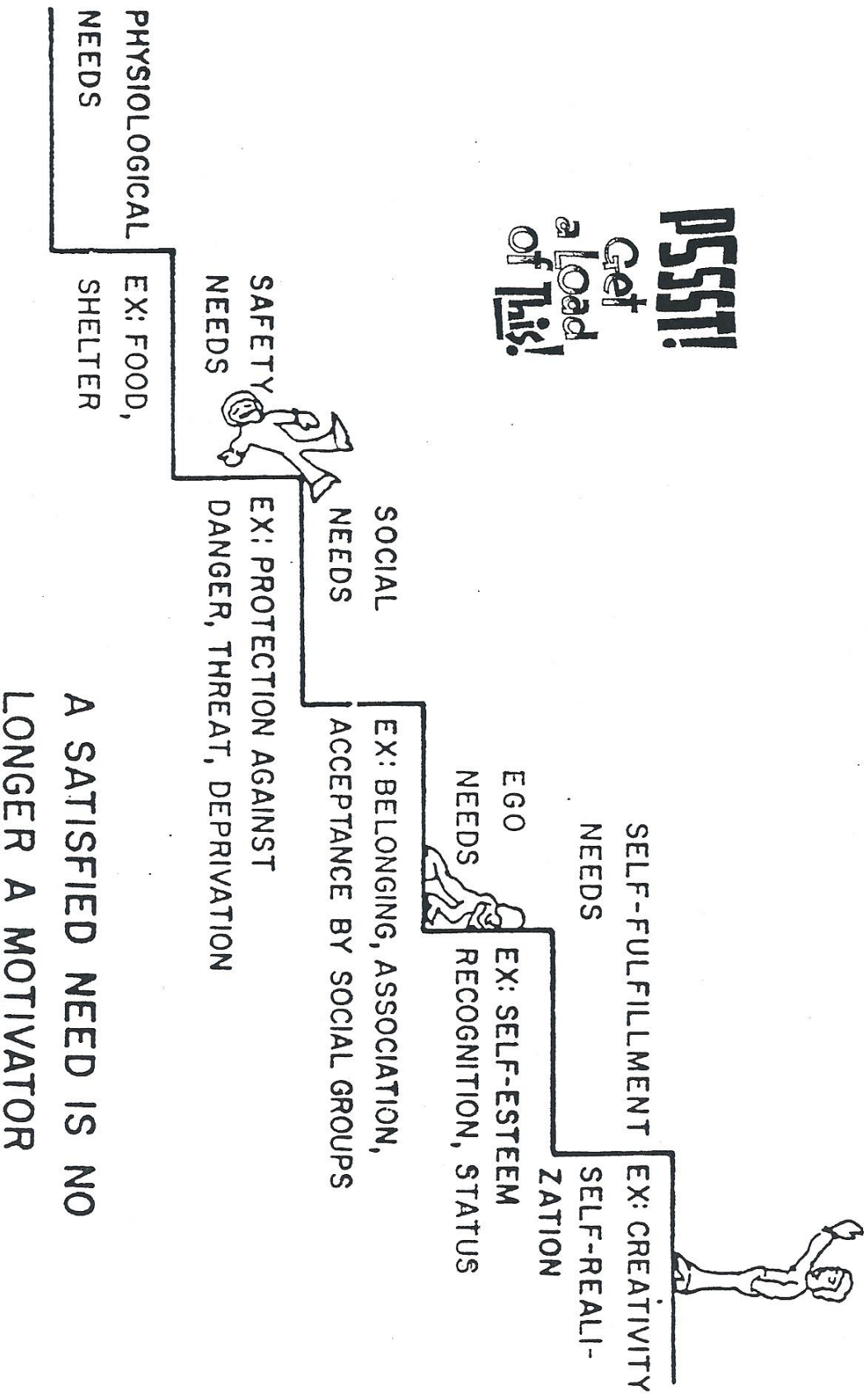
Paper portion which must be individually authored. Alternatives to written assignments such as a video, audio tape, photo collage, etc. are permissible with prior approval of instructor.

**Full credit will be given to each student as long as all work is turned in. If something is missing, I will be in contact with you. Failure is not an option. ☺**



# Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

**PSSST!**  
Get  
a Load  
of This!



WHAT IS  
UNDERACHIEVEMENT?

*PROBLEMS AND  
SOLUTIONS*

## UNDERACHIEVEMENT

When a child is in crisis, there seems to be a lost sense of self. They become anxious, have less energy to devote to life issues, and feel helpless. Repeated failures begin to set patterns for a lifestyle which includes power issues, underachievement, helplessness, hopelessness, and rebelling. In order to best understand these areas, we will explore facets of underachievement.

### 3 Forms Of Underachievement

1. "General Underachievement"- This is when there are many areas below achievement levels. The person may have several areas of struggle, but is generally willing to examine them and work on them. This is a common area for students in special education classes.
2. "Selective Underachievement"- There are specific areas of developed achievement. The person may do well in math, but poorly in spelling and English. They may have struggles academically, but talented in areas of music or art.
3. "Non-Achievement"- The individual has difficulties across areas. Poor social skills, academic struggles, low self-esteem lead to self-defeating behaviors. The child may choose to fail before he/she fails.

**There are many reasons for different types of underachievement. However, there appear to be 4 main sources of underachievement.**

1. **"Learning problems"- below average in basic academics lead to a sense of failure and lack of achievement.**
2. **"Family problems"- dissension in the home and stress put pressure on child. This leads to a distortion of life as a big weight around neck which can't be lifted.**
3. **"Emotional problems"- fear, anger, depression lead to an assault on emotions which makes jobs, school and relationships difficult.**
4. **"Cultural influences"- generational aspects which create invisible "traps" which children feel forced into entering. Poverty, gangs, abuse.**

It is said that Genetics + Environment + Psychological Factors = Potential Ability.  
If we add 2 more factors, we see ...  
Potential Ability + Desire + Effort = Developed Ability.

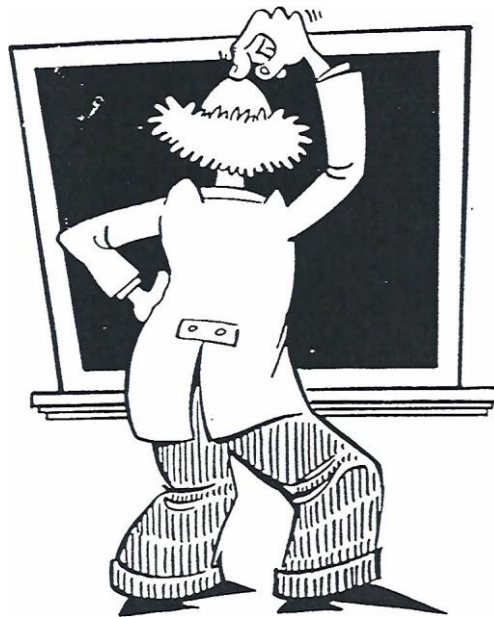
Desire is the fuel which transforms potential into developed ability and achievement.

The key is to tap into that desire and find ways to assist the child in developing that desire. It is helping them see a purpose for their life. They need a vision, a destiny. Motivation is simply finding a reason to do something, a purpose to accomplish ..

But perhaps first we should ask, do you have a vision? What is your destiny? Do you feel a calling to touch people's lives, to make a difference?

**Remember, you can't give what you don't have.**

# Does This



# Compute?!

**TWO TYPES OF UNDERACHIEVERS (Dependent and Dominant)**

*(to be used with Assignment #3)*

**THE DEPENDENT CHILD**

Help me  
Nag me  
Protect me  
Poor me  
Love me  
Shelter me

**THE DOMINANT CHILD**

Praise, admire, applaud me  
Don't criticize me  
Don't disagree with me  
Gimme  
Be Mine  
How far can I push

Dependent child characteristics- poor study habits, low self-esteem, poor organizational skills, lack of responsibility

Dominant child characteristics- reject before getting rejected, refuse to attempt work, often class "clown", finds other successful outlets (sports, art, music)

**SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTIONS**

Dependent learner-

1. Parent conferences- discuss attention addiction, help parent(s) and yourself see problem.
2. Avoid sympathy or continued one-to-one instruction (only increase dependence).
3. Wean them slowly off built-in attention. (don't pull back everything)
4. Require work (modified at times) with optimum success.
5. Target work completion, then quality.
6. Use of tangible reinforcers helpful (student notes, extra privileges)

AT TIMES, THESE KIDS DO NEED EXTRA HELP- USE YOUR JUDGMENT

Dominant learner-

1. Help with intrinsic motivation (when asked if you think they did a good job, turn it around and ask "what do you think?" Get response from them)
2. Use of pass/fail projects and papers may be helpful (more room for success).
3. Allow some papers and projects to be self-graded (they are usually harder on themselves than the teacher would be).
4. Individually selected projects (individualize programs).
5. Small group projects (or use of cooperative learning).
6. Discussion of personal hobbies- get to know them and encourage their interests.

Focus on positive behaviors. Be consistent and firm, yet flexible when necessary. Short term consequences useful. Help them focus energy.

## More information on "Dominant" and "Dependent" Learners

Remember, there is no neurological or biological explanation for poor school performance by capable children. However, students can be reinforced and rewarded for their underachievement prior to entering and during their school years. Sibling rivalry, difficult school years, family issues (illness, marriage, financial), and physical or emotional challenges all create learning blockages.

### Dependent Underachievement

These students need more than a vote of confidence. They need adults around them to positively insist on their independent activities and then give positive attention to their finished product. Challenge them with their work, but ensure the possibility of success. It is best if the parent(s) will provide a similar environment. The tendency will be to give them a little help, here and there, but this will undermine them. If testing and educational expertise state the child is capable, go with your gut feeling and push toward work completion first, then quality. Use stickers, stars, smiles, rewards for completed work. Send notes home and set up joint reward systems between school and home. Remind the parent(s) to leave the child alone to complete the work, but monitor their progress.

Again, all children need some guidance and help from time to time. Overly difficult tasks may lead to frustration without some help or support.

### Dominant Underachievement

These children seek control even when they are clearly too young to be comfortable making such decisions. These students put a high priority on social life, are "expert" manipulators, and don't accept "no" from an adult. They want to be the center of attention. Avoid trying to out-power the student. They need an ally not an enemy. Negotiate limits and write them out together. Be firm (not rigid) and speak to them of your desire to look out for their best interests. Give them choices and options when possible. Help them feel in control of their life. Rules may be bent from time to time (this is called flexibility). However, be careful not to fall into the trap of being manipulated by the student. Let them know you see their point of view, but may not agree. The parent(s) need to be reminded of the pitfalls of arguing with their child. "No" does not mean to argue more until I waver. Be watchful of this student as they may fall into traps of aggression or depression. They may need outside support and counseling.

**(Please share your perspective and thoughts about this topic, 1-2 pages)**

**HELPING THE UNDERACHIEVING STUDENT**  
**(suggestions and procedures for educators)**

*It is important to find out where each child is at in their ability. Each child must have an understanding regarding their own skill level. How you (as an educator) feel about the child and how you perceive yourself as an educator is significant in the progress of the student. Pupils sense how the teacher looks at them, whether the teacher and the school is “for” or “against” them. How important is the success of each child to you?*

What to do when:

*The student is easily distracted and has a short attention span-*

- Use short well motivated periods of learning
- Have materials which are interesting, attractive and ready to use
- Give specific directions
- Use peer "study buddy" to keep child focused and on task

*The student shows limited ability to generalize and utilize concepts*

- Develop skills through concrete experiences and first hand practical illustrations (tactile approach helpful)
- The child will respond to tangible "things" rather than ideas
- Scan material, prior to giving out, for complicated directions and confusing concepts

*The student tends to be slow to react*

- Maintain your own composure and patience
- Introduce only one step at a time
- Provide routine patterns and approaches
- Help them to know what to expect from you and the system
- Be sure your expectations match child's abilities (not too low or high)

*The student doesn't know how to attack educational problems (confusion)*

- Have student demonstrate to other students
- Explain to student, then have them repeat back to you
- Use supplemental materials (manipulatives for math, computers for writing, etc.)
- Use of cooperative learning and small group work
- Small incremental assignments

## **HELPING THE CREATIVE UNDERACHIEVER**

Many underachieving students exhibit a high degree of creativity. They may score average or above on standardized tests, have a high degree of verbal skills, be talented in the arts, sports or music and be popular within the peer culture, but their achievement within the classroom is below average. The pressure on them increases with each grade and they are seen as non-conformers, oppositional and defiant. Ideally, having parent(s) and teachers form an effective alliance will help this child the best. Here are a few recommendations:

1. Encourage the child to find at least one productive area of creative expression. Help them find an appropriate audience for their performance.
2. Find a peer environment that combines creativity and achievement so that the child may learn to blend both types of activities and be accepted by a variety of peer.
3. Find appropriate models or mentors in areas of children's creativity.
4. Educators and parents should avoid clashing over the issue of creativity.
5. Encourage intrinsic motivation while also teaching competition.
6. Use creative strengths to build up weaknesses.
7. Avoid power struggles and confrontations.
8. Help creative adolescents to plan for a creative future.



## WORKING WITH UNMOTIVATED TEENAGERS

*(Oh boy, doesn't this sound fun?)*

Remember, there is no such thing as an unmotivated person, only a person that doesn't do what we want them to do or what we think is best for them. Many "unmotivated" teens are very motivated---to fail. We need to find out what is the motivation behind their apparent lack of motivation.

**CHARACTERISTICS**- inconsistent work, poor study habits, lack of concentration, daydreaming, pokiness, disorganization, lack of completion of tasks. Behavior ranges from fine to poor with isolation to aggression.

**TYPES OF COMMENTS**- boring, teacher is bad, useless work, too high of expectations.

These students hide behind defenses. They don't believe they can be successful. They may manipulate home and school to hide low self-concept.

### STEPS TO IMPLEMENT

1. Divest yourself--don't be overachieving with them. At times, we push so hard that we end up having rigid expectations.
2. Be the one person who will let them be who they are, without the pressure to change for acceptance. In other words, develop a relationship based on who they are, not what you want them to be.
3. Work with the system (school and home) to be less punitive and more rewarding. "It is not the severity of the consequence that changes the behavior, it is the certainty of the consequence that changes the behavior". Set guidelines and expectations, but be flexible to facilitate success.
4. Help the teenager to see where the lack of motivation (or underachievement) comes from.
5. What is the teenager motivated to do? Find out and ask why? Begin to understand the teenager as an individual.
6. Try new, daring even outrageous ideas. It won't hurt. They like creative things. Let's face it, the old ruts haven't worked too well.
7. Remember, success may be in the process and the trial, not in the outcome. Even if the child does not turn in their papers each day, if they were willing to cooperate with you, establish goals, turn in a couple of papers and feel good about school, HOORAY.
8. Be gentle with the child. It is not uncommon that their lack of focus is due to hurts, rejection and confusion.

## **SAMPLE PROGRAM FOR STUDENT OF FOCUS**

Strategies to increase achievement. (Assignment #8)

THIS IS ONLY A GUIDELINE. FEEL FREE TO DEVIATE AND USE YOUR OWN PROCESS.

This is an example of what you might write out to send to the instructor.

State the area(s) of concern for the student.

- Tommy is an 8<sup>th</sup> grade boy that does not turn in his assignments in my English class. He seems to be capable of success, but deflects attempts to help him with humor and sarcasm. To date, he is failing one class, in danger of failing another (mine) and has average grades in the rest of his classes. However, he is achieving an "A" in art.

State area of focus.

- I am going to find a way to increase his turning in his work. My goal is to help Tommy find success in my class.

How do you plan to do this?

- I will sit down with Tommy and see if he is interested in doing an alternative type of assignment for our next 2 page paper project. One option will be for him to draw a picture or use some other form of art.
- Another idea will be for Tommy to choose another student to work on an assignment with and to turn in a joint assignment.
- Since Tommy seems to have excellent verbal skills, I will see if he is interested in doing a speech or presentation instead of a writing assignment.

While these will not all be implemented at the same time, I will give Tommy options and choices for an assignment. I will see if he will be willing to provide some work for the time being. My goal is to combine writing and alternative assignments for the next quarter of the year.

**Motivating Students in the Middle Years** by *Kathleen Kennedy Manzo*. **Education Week.**  
**(To be used for assignment #7)**

It's not easy to hide in Amber Cline's math class. Even the most skilled evaders among the 7th graders at Rogers-Herr Middle School here can't dodge the veteran teacher's questioning and prodding during a lesson on scale factors and ratios.

The earnest teacher has learned just how hard to push to keep her students focused on the illustrated math problems they are working on, and when to ease up if one gets frustrated or seems close to turning her off. She's honed that instinct throughout the school year as she's gotten to know each of her students' academic strengths and weaknesses, as well as their personalities, moods, and quirks.

"For the kids who aren't self-motivated and don't have support at home, we need to stand over them and say get this done," Ms. Cline said. "We know what each kid needs as far as applying pressure or giving support... They know we will not allow them to fail."

Ms. Cline and her colleagues in this school have worked at melding rigorous subject matter with the demands of test-driven accountability, while also attending to the developmental, family, and social issues their 625 predominantly minority and lower-income students face.

More than a decade after a prominent group of middle-grades reformers set out to infuse higher academic standards into what critics deemed the touchy-feely world of middle schools, many teachers are still grappling with ways to motivate students to excel intellectually while helping them adapt to the dramatic physical and emotional changes that come with puberty.

That mix of rigor, relevance, and responsiveness, experts say, is crucial for guiding students, particularly those most at risk of dropping out, on the path to high school graduation and later success. Too many schools serving 6th through 9th graders, however, have yet to find the right prescription for keeping those youngsters engaged at a time when their growing curiosity, independence, and need for the acceptance of their peers may lead them to act out or zone out in school.

"Our belief is they'll grow out of it. But the evidence shows that in high-poverty environments, they don't grow out of it" without intervention, said Robert Balfanz, a research scientist at the Center for the Social Organization of Schools, based at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. "As soon as kids are off track, we need to aggressively approach these issues."

In his studies on dropouts in large urban districts, Mr. Balfanz has found that tracking several classroom indicators for individual students and addressing problems in those areas early can prevent later troubles. Attendance rates, behavior, and grades, he concludes, are far more accurate predictors of who will graduate or drop out than test scores, race, or socioeconomic status.

About 40 percent of eventual dropouts could be identified in the 6th grade, he estimates. "The only way to intervene is if we know who the kids are," he said, and are familiar with their records in school.

Mr. Balfanz and his colleagues, like several researchers before them, contend that many students begin to go astray well before they reach high school. Middle schools, he believes, should be the first line of defense in tracking those warning signs and intervening.

"Some kids do OK in middle school, and it's the transition to high school that will get them in trouble," he said. Programs designed to support 9th graders with the transition, however, may not address the difficulties of those students who Mr. Balfanz says are already on their way to becoming dropout statistics.

"Now we can show that for a significant segment of kids, 9th grade doesn't throw them off track," he added, "it finishes them."

By many indications, middle schools are not heeding that message. Researchers and policymakers have pointed to the poor performance of 8th graders on national assessments as evidence that they are not prepared to meet high academic standards. On a National Assessment of Educational Progress, for example, only about three in 10 could demonstrate proficiency in reading and mathematics. Advocates of high school reform often point to the failure of middle schools to prepare students to tackle a challenging secondary-level curriculum.

"Why are schools not systematically monitoring early signs of academic withdrawal?" said Sandra L. Christenson, a professor of educational psychology at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in Minneapolis. "If you are systematically monitoring alterable variables, then you can target students for intervention to change their future."

Ms. Christenson helped develop the Check & Connect program more than a decade ago. The intervention program assigns a mentor to students considered at risk academically to check attendance, grades, and other concerns and to work with students and their families to head off school failure. Despite evidence of the success of her program and others like it, Ms. Christenson said, it has not spread to middle schools because of the time and expense. Check & Connect costs about \$1,300 per student.

Although still widely considered the weak link between elementary and secondary education, middle schools have not garnered as much attention as the earlier and later grades, which have begun to benefit from federal initiatives and privately financed school improvement efforts.

Last fall, legislation was introduced in Congress to support a middle-grades clearinghouse, research projects, and grants to districts using instructional models that have been found effective. Those bills were referred to the Senate education committee and a House subcommittee, and could be attached to proposals for reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The movement to create schools more responsive to the developmental needs of young adolescents began more than 30 years ago. Then in 1996, American middle and high school students lagged on the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, or TIMSS--results that put a harsh spotlight on the middle grades. The next year, a group of advocates formed the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform to help improve curricula, instruction, and research in the field.

Now, the accountability measures required under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, observers say, have been raising the stakes for middle school educators and again putting the focus on academic rigor.

Middle school advocates say that push requires more than an emphasis on test scores.

"While we prepare students for testing, it's also important to prepare them for other aspects of living and knowing," said Drew Sawyer, the principal of Rogers-Herr Middle School.

Here in North Carolina, the 33,000-student Durham school district is working with all its middle schools to do both. Officials here have instituted a number of strategies to ensure consistent monitoring and support of students, particularly those in the middle grades.

As part of its high school completion plan, the district has begun to track students' attendance, discipline records, and academic performance, and it sends that information to schools each month. School counselors and truancy officers have ramped up home visits for students who have missed a significant number of days and haven't responded to phone calls and letters. Local judges volunteer time once a week to hold truancy court for students with patterns of poor attendance, their parents, social workers, and school officials to outline state mandates and the potential consequences of flouting them.

"Truancy is often a symptom of other, underlying family and personal issues, and a lot of times that's brought out in truancy court," said Debra Pitman, the district's assistant superintendent for student-support services. "In truancy court, the problem-solvers are right there in a formal setting, and with a layer of compassion, the message is that this is very serious."

School officials have instituted more effective discipline approaches that have reduced suspension rates, and built formal partnerships with other agencies in Durham to help families get the health, legal, and financial services they need. They have also retrained school counselors to seek out students who need help, rather than waiting for them to knock on their doors. The counselors give extra attention to students who have a history of academic difficulties or attendance problems.

Each middle school offers after-school academic and recreation programs, as well as daily classes to help students catch up in their schoolwork or move ahead with a more challenging curriculum.

The district's dropout rate for seniors has fallen over the past several years--to 4.9 percent for the 2006-07 school year--and is now below the state average.

With its diverse enrollment--69 percent black, 16 percent white, 10 percent Hispanic, and nearly 40 percent low-income--Rogers-Herr Middle School has seen results from the district's efforts. Its attendance rate hovers above 96 percent, and it received a "high growth" designation from the state last year for its improved test scores. Last year, it also was recognized as one of North Carolina's "schools to watch" by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform in Champaign, Ill. The designation goes to schools that infuse academic excellence, developmental appropriateness, and democratic education principles.

Each day, students here are welcomed with hugs and handshakes from teachers and administrators--as well as reminders on the dress code and expectations for conduct. First period is "core plus," designed for catching up on classwork or doing extra-credit assignments.

One recent morning, Karine Thate, a 7th grade science teacher, checks a grade book that lists incomplete assignments, projects, and homework for each student. Ms. Thate moves from student to student, reviewing their homework binders, helping them organize their work, and clarifying instructions.

"Aren't you supposed to show your work?" she asks one boy as she checks his math homework. "This is your chance to change some of your zero grades by giving me a completed assignment," she tells her students just as the chatter grows louder. "You have 15 more minutes," she reminds them. "Use it well."

Several students are doing just that, as they prepare a multimedia presentation for an honors English/language arts class.

Later, during her science class, the teacher helps students produce video presentations that illustrate what they have been learning about the genetic characteristics of fruit flies. The stars of those movies--hundreds of red- and brown-eyed flies--flutter in the glass vials that line the windowsill of the science lab. Illustrations of the flies' life cycles, and the Punnett squares that show the probabilities of the genetic characteristics of their offspring, line the room.

"Raising the fruit flies and making the movie have really helped to bring [the lesson] to life," says Adam Brown, who sits in a computer lab with classmate Lionel Nelson recording the narration for their movie.

"I've learned a lot about how traits are passed down from generation to generation," Lionel says. Even this kind of interactive, multimedia project doesn't hold the attention of all students. Several pairs get distracted by the novel features of the software, while others sit idle, seemingly at a loss for what to record after having failed to prepare their scripts: Ms. Thate offers students a chance to catch up after school, but just a handful indicate they will use the extra lab time.

In other classes, similar signs of student indifference are on display. One boy spends much of the school day disrupting classes or distracting others. He loudly sharpens his pencil while the teacher lays out the day's lesson. He tugs at a girl's long hair, and shouts out inappropriate answers. One diligent student in the class complains that the teacher has to spend much of her time attending to the "troublemakers," making the class tedious or boring at times.

The boy's behavior and teachers' concerns about other students are raised later in a daily meeting Ms. Thate has with Ms. Cline and other members of their grade-level team.

"We have some kids who are working real hard to fail," Ms. Cline says. "We just keep trying to find what they're good at and use that to get them more involved. We tell them all the time that we care about them."

That philosophy carries throughout the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade corridors and other corners of the building, too, as is evident in the ease with which students and adults here interact.

Outside the lunchroom, for example, a group of 6th graders chats with Vince Bynum, a police officer assigned to the school, about their classes. Later, the officer shares a laugh with two students who volunteered to pick up trash in front of the school.

The principal's office is a stop-off for students throughout the day, but not because they're in trouble. Several sit at the table in Mr. Sawyer's office to discuss a conflict they have with their classmates. A student who has missed several weeks of school for medical reasons asks the principal to review his new class schedule. Another boy explains an argument he's had with a teacher, trying to convince Mr. Sawyer that there was no good reason for her to reject one of the boy's assignments.

"Now I know you didn't speak to [the teacher] in the same tone you're using now," the principal says, reminding the student to be respectful. He sends him off with some tips for continuing the discussion with the teacher.

Despite the progress, Mr. Sawyer still sees his share of discipline and academic problems.

But he and his colleagues are working at devising the strategies and building the relationships that can help head off those problems for most students.

"We are every other middle school, with the same challenges and celebrations," Mr. Sawyer said. "Our problems are just not as visible because we try to get out ahead of them."

**Write a 2 page summary of this article. Please include your own personal thoughts and ideas.**

INCREASING  
ACHIEVEMENT  
IDEAS FOR  
TEACHERS AND  
PARENTS

## **10 WAYS TO MAKE YOURSELF MISERABLE**

**Some people are just naturally happy while others have to work at being happy. Some people are just naturally unhappy. But there are a persistent few who actually have to work at being unhappy.**

**For such people we offer this systematic program for making misery a habit:**

- 1) Forget the good things in life and concentrate on the bad;**
- 2) Put an excessive value on money;**
- 3) Think you are indispensable to your job, your community, your friends;**
- 4) Think you are overburdened with work and that people tend to take advantage of you;**
- 5) Think that you are exceptional and entitled to special privileges;**
- 6) Think that you can control your autonomic nervous system by sheer will power;**
- 7) Forget the feelings and rights of other people;**
- 8) Cultivate a consistently pessimistic outlook;**
- 9) Never overlook a slight or forget a grudge;**
- 10) And don't forget to feel sorry for yourself.**

**"Happiness is that peculiar sensation you get when you are too busy to be miserable."**

**James Wood**



## **DEVELOP A TRUST-BASED RELATIONSHIP**

(to be used with Assignment #3)

1. **Create Student-to-Teacher Trust**  
Safety in the classroom means feeling nurtured and protected. It means understanding expectations knowing someone will listen.
  - Learn names quickly and use their names as often as possible.
  - Pay attention to moods, noting students with up/down tendencies.
  - Find a way to focus on positives.
2. **Promote Student-to-Student Trust**  
Help students understand the nature of the interdependence. Explain the aspects of teamwork and helping one another succeed.
  - Convey the idea that students are safe and have a right to learn.
  - Emphasize the importance of hearing each idea from students.
  - The "red flag" activity may help with cohesiveness.
3. **Give Time For Community Discussions**  
Set aside time each day or week for a discussion. It might only be 5 or 10 minutes, but the students will come to expect it.
  - For younger children, use an object to pass around. This will encourage shy children to talk and limit the "verbose" child. A puppet may also be used.
  - For older students, use of discussion starters or a "topic of the day" may be helpful.
4. **Honor Questions**  
Students must feel free to take intellectual risks in order to feel psychologically "safe."
  - Give positive comments for questions (especially early on).
  - If time does not permit answering a question, be sure to let the student know you will answer it later.
  - Use the group to help the student (this promotes student trust).

5. **Use Mistakes As Springboard For Risk-Taking**  
Freedom to make mistakes enhances a student's trust in the learning process and in the teacher.
  - After a test, have students pick out one question and as a group work it out.
  - Allow group decision making and problem solving.
  - Have the group come up with questions/answers for test.
  
6. **Use Mottoes And Banners**  
After a class discussion on values, attitudes, or personal viewpoints, challenge the class to come up with symbols or sayings that characterize these concepts.
  - Develop a class motto.
  - Have students display their symbols or sayings.

**(Please share how you would implement 2 of these areas within your setting, 1-2 pages).**

## ORGANIZATIONAL TIPS

This may be used in your classrooms to help students increase their motivational strategies. In addition, I have found kids feeling more confident about achieving when they are organized. However, this is for you also. As educators, we need help in organization.

### 1. MAKE YOURSELF GET STARTED

*This is often the most difficult part of organization. Once we get started, things begin to flow. Set a time to begin.*

### 2. KEEP A RUNNING LOG OF TASKS AND AMOUNT OF TIME NEEDED

*We often have an unrealistic sense of the time it takes to do a task (i.e. 30 minutes to mow lawn when really closer to 45 minutes). The more realistic our time frames are, the less we will procrastinate.*

### 3. WORK WITHIN YOUR GIVEN TIME FRAMES

*Do a little bit of work at a time. If a project takes three hours, you may not find a three hour block, but you may find six blocks of 30 minutes each. Chip away at projects. Even five minutes is good for a phone call or a note to someone.*

### 4. MAKE TIME

*If you want to exercise, get up earlier. If you want to read before you go to bed, set an earlier time to end the evening.*

### 5. START IN THE MIDDLE IF NECESSARY

*Don't: always feel you must start at the beginning. Some people like to get the hardest parts out of the way or begin with an area of interest.*

### 6. DO THINGS AS THEY COME TO YOU

*The more you accomplish when you initially think of it, the less you will have to do later.*

### 7. SEARCH FOR WAYS TO SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

*When you feel busy or overwhelmed, find ways to simplify. Instead of changing the oil yourself, take it to an oil station. Instead of scratch cakes, buy a mix. (I like vanilla cakes with cherry icing).*

### 8. ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

*Clear away distractions and things that get you sidetracked (phone, t.v., people, newspapers).*

### 9. MAKE IT EASY TO WORK

*Place items in accessible places. If you like to write, be sure the paper, computer, pencils, etc. are easy to access.*

10. EXPECT SETBACKS

*Anticipate problems and distractions. Don't wait to the last minute to finish a project.*

11. DELEGATE

*Is there anyone else who can help you? Can someone else do a task which will free you to do other activities? (One thing I began doing in the classroom was having students grade one another's papers, when appropriate. This saves an incredible amount of time over the week).*

12. USE LEISURE TIME FOR LEISURE

*Don't do work during play time. It is imperative for you to relax and enjoy. If you can leave your pager behind when golfing, do it (The person who is putting when it goes off will appreciate it ©.)*

13. BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

*If you keep procrastinating something, maybe you really don't want to do it. Ask why? If it is something that must be done, motivate yourself or get help.*

## **WHAT PARENTS AND TEACHERS CAN DO...**

1. A parent should not, if at all possible, ally with child against teacher (especially in front of the child). Parents need to communicate concerns with teacher/school in such a way as to not "put down" the educational atmosphere of the child. Remind parents (and teachers) that we are on the same team.
2. Encourage the child to find at least one area of competence and success. They can choose one at school and one at home. Focus on these areas and help the student feel successful. Through this process, you may be able to generalize to other areas for the student.
3. Find appropriate models or mentors for the child in specific areas. If the child is learning the guitar, the parent may be able to find a person to encourage them toward "general" life success. If the student is creative in art, set up special ways for them to work with the art teacher, to earn colored pencils, to draw instead of write a report. Have the student be peer or cross age tutored by someone talented in their area of interest.
4. Examine the peer environment and be sure it is conducive to success for the child. This is especially true for the school (control what you can control). Are the students making fun of him/her? Is there opportunity for success or are the classes too difficult with the underachievement firmly entrenched?
5. Encourage intrinsic motivation, not just extrinsic. When they come and ask if you like their project, ask them first "What do you think?". Get them to commit to their own competence, not just as a reaction to you as the educator or parent.
6. Avoid confrontations, especially if they lead to negative comments and frustrations. Only confront when there is a solution for the student. Help them to achieve that solution and avoid isolation.
7. Use "futuring". Ask the student what they see for themselves in the five years. What type of family will they have? Who will be their friends? Will they live in the United States? Help them set goals.

Adapted and Revised from article by Sylvia Rimm "Marching to the Beat of a Different Drummer"  
Gifted Children Today.



## **HELPING PARENTS WITH ORGANIZATION**

1. **STUDY AREA**-Is there a specific place for the child to study? Is it quiet? Are there materials? Does the child have access to help from parents, siblings, teacher's phone number, etc.?
2. **KEEP TRACK OF ASSIGNMENTS**-Sending home a daily or weekly log for parents can be very helpful. Is there a homework line for the parent to call? How does the parent know if the child has homework? (I know they can ask the student, but ... ). When I taught math, the students and parents knew there would be an assignment ~ Monday through Thursday, without fail.
3. **USE VISUAL ORGANIZERS**-Explain to the parents the importance of folders, portfolios for work, notebook organization, and homework charts,
4. **PARENT GUIDELINES**-The following ideas may help a parent prepare their child for success in the classroom. This outline allows the parent to understand specific strategies to successful study and homework habits.

- **Set a specific time**
- **Diminish distractions**
- **Take a break**
- **Keep a focus**
- **Watch homework overload**
- **Use a timer**
- **Avoid cramming and late nights**

## HOMWORK RESPONSES FOR PARENTS

### **1. "I don't know what my assignments are tonight." USE OF HOMEWORK LOGS.**

This little strategy makes all the difference in the world. Previously, many students saw this as "childish," but with the popularity of electronic organizers, it is viewed differently. Help each student to write out assignments or use some type of method to chart the homework. This may be done in a notebook, in an assignment log, or some other pre-determined way to write out homework. Children should be responsible to show it to the parents.

**2. "Can't I do it later?" SET ASIDE SPECIFIC TIMES FOR SCHOOL WORK.** The old "I'll get it done later" approach doesn't work for most students. Have them choose a time to do their homework. Right after school may be best for Dad or Mom, but not necessarily for the child. After all, this is a time to unwind, eat a snack, and play with friends. A popular time is right before or after dinner or a designated time in the early evening. The danger of waiting too late is that they might run over into their bedtime (or your bedtime). ☺

**3. "There's no place to study (or I don't have any paper, books, etc.)." CHOOSE A DESIGNATED STUDY AREA (WITH MATERIALS).** Whether the child wants to do their work at the kitchen table, on the floor of their bedroom, or in front of the television set is not the issue. The first step is to get them to have their homework, materials, and books. Have a supply of paper and writing material in an easy accessible place. If necessary, check with the school to see if they have an extra book to check out for a while. This will take away an excuse. Once they choose an area, parents can monitor the effectiveness of the chosen space. For example, if the child is doing math, they may be able to lie on the bed, listen to music, and work. If they are reading a book, it may be difficult to watch television at the same time (although they will swear they can do it). To avoid power struggles, allow them to read in this manner, then check their comprehension.

**4. "I don't understand how to do it." CONNECT WITH OTHER STUDENTS.** It is helpful to share answers and check work with one another. As long as each student is doing work, comparing approaches and answers is a part of learning. Too often, students see this as cheating instead of learning. Encourage them to work together, help one another, and ask questions when they are stuck on problems or situations. Find out from the teacher the process of clarifying assignments (early morning time with teacher, phone calls, emails). And, of course, if possible the parent should be available to assist them in understanding.

**5. "I'm tired of this. I will never finish."** ALLOW BREAKS. The child needs to understand that taking a break is helpful. If we stay on a task too long, mistakes will invariably occur. The student can set their own schedule ... after I read this chapter, I will get a drink, text a friend, get a snack. These short term goals (and motivational challenges) help the student to work through the homework quickly and with less stress.

**6. "I have too much homework."** MONITOR THEIR HOMEWORK. How much is too much? Be aware of their time frames for homework, their ability levels, and frustration levels. Each child has a different tolerance for frustration. Getting a partial assignment done is better than no assignment. Help the school be aware of your child and his/her frustration threshold. Advocate for your child, but avoid rescuing them.

**7. "It is due tomorrow. I will be up all night."** DON'T OVERLOAD YOUR NIGHT. Waiting until the last minute to complete a major project will increase the chances of failure. Do a little bit at a time. Set short term goals each night for them to finish. Use of a checklist will help to see what has been completed and what needs to still be finished. This means, as a parent, you need to find out what their assignments are in school especially for large projects.

Find out from the school the process for homework information. Does the teacher send home a weekly assignment log? Are they available via computer to obtain homework information? What communication process is in place to help each parent know what is assigned in class?



## **PROVIDING POSITIVE SUPPORT**

*If positive reinforcement and support is so good for students, why do I respond so often to difficult student's negative behavior?*

### **CHANGING THE ADULT BEHAVIOR**

#### 1. USE YOUR LESSON PLAN OR PLANNING BOOK

- notes or comments as reminders
- outline of your plan

#### 2. PLACE REMINDERS IN THE CLASSROOM

- place reminder by clock
- put cues in other strategic places

#### 3. COUNT THE COMMENTS

- keep track of positive statements to specific students
- have a goal to meet, reward self

### **PRAISING STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

#### 1. Tie the praise to a specific behavior (student needing attention)

*"You are doing a great job on your report. Keep it up." "Tony, your group is making excellent progress. I see you are really helping them"*

#### 2. Avoid over-praising (student who needs limits)

- a. note on the homework
- b. eye contact, smile, nod
- c. thumbs up and smile
- d. discreet verbal praise

#### 3. Connect support to academic efforts (student needing motivation)

*"Excellent job of turning in your work. It looks like you got problems #2, #4, and #5 correct. All right! I'll bet together we can figure out #1 and #3. Let's give it a shot."*

#### 4. Look for the micro gains (student who is trapped in failure)

- a. your book is out, good
- b. having paper and pencil is a good start
- c. you look like you are ready to begin, great

## **GRADING SYSTEMS - WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T**

### **COMMON REASONS GRADING SYSTEMS DON'T MOTIVATE SOME STUDENTS:**

SOME OF THE STUDENTS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FOLLOW SOME COMPLEX SYSTEMS OF GRADING

THE GRADING SYSTEM MAY LACK CLARITY

THE GRADING SYSTEM MAY LACK OBJECTIVITY

TEACHER FEEDBACK REGARDING STUDENT PERFORMANCE MAY NOT BE IMMEDIATE ENOUGH

THE SYSTEM MAY BE DESIGNED SO DAILY ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION HAVE NO IMPACT ON THE STUDENT'S GRADE

THE GRADING SYSTEM COMPARES THE STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE TO THE PERFORMANCE OF OTHER STUDENTS

### **FEATURES OF AN EFFECTIVE GRADING SYSTEM**

CLEAR COURSE OBJECTIVES

COMMUNICATION OF THOSE OBJECTIVES TO STUDENTS

EVALUATION PROCEDURES THAT ARE DESIGNED TO REFLECT COURSE OBJECTIVES

A SYSTEM DESIGN THAT MAKES STUDENTS AWARE THAT THEIR DAILY ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION WILL CONTRIBUTE TO GETTING A GOOD GRADE (INVOLVEMENT ENCOURAGES LEARNING)

A SAMPLE GRADE HANDOUT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR (SEMESTER)

PROCEDURES FOR KEEPING STUDENTS INVOLVED IN KEEPING TRACK OF THEIR OWN GRADES

FREQUENT WRITTEN AND VERBAL FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS REGARDING THEIR BEHAVIORAL AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

RECORD KEEPING PROCEDURES FOR THE TEACHER THAT KEEP TRACK OF LARGE AMOUNTS OF DATA WITHOUT CREATING A LOT OF EXTRA WORK

The forms on this page may be used at all grade levels. They help monitor each student on a daily or weekly basis.

**DAILY EVALUATION FORM**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TEACHER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ASSIGNMENTS COMPLETE:  ALL  MOST  HALF  LESS THAN HALF

QUALITY OF GENERAL CLASS WORK:  EXCELLENT  SATISFACTORY  
 FAIR  UNSATISFACTORY

BEHAVIOR:  EXCELLENT  SATISFACTORY  FAIR  
 UNSATISFACTORY

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**WEEKLY EVALUATION FORM**

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TEACHER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT \_\_\_\_\_

APPROXIMATE GRADE FOR WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_

ASSIGNMENTS COMPLETE:  ALL  MOST  HALF  LESS THAN HALF

BEHAVIOR:  EXCELLENT  SATISFACTORY  FAIR  
 UNSATISFACTORY

COMMENTS AND MISSING ASSIGNMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Why Bright Kids Get Poor Grades. Sylvia Rimm)

*HELPING  
CHILDREN  
DEVELOP A  
FOUNDATION OF  
SELF-ESTEEM*

# ON SELF-ESTEEM

1. SENSE OF CONNECTEDNESS- *Satisfaction received from people, places--family and friends.*  
**In School Ideas—Groups of three can allow one student to be pushed out. Groups of four to five ideal. Assigning roles is helpful (cooperative learning). Involvement with others allows connectedness.**
2. SENSE OF UNIQUENESS- *Appreciate the quality of being different. Sense of respect for uniqueness for who one is.*  
**In School Ideas—Emphasis on ability and grading. Use of creative writing, art projects. Look at expression, organization, following directions. Writing, drawing, speaking alternatives.**
3. SENSE OF POWER- *Ability to influence important circumstances in life in positive way. Important for child to feel "his/her world" depends upon them.*  
**In School IDEAS—Projects that leave details to child. Choose your own assignments. Class involved in decision making of assignments, discipline, curriculum approach .**
4. SENSE OF MODELS- *Role models, what is right and wrong. Decision-making discussions and development of personal standards.*  
**In School Ideas—Classroom visitors, speakers. Set goals on number of pages to be read, problems to be accomplished. Futuring.**

## **TYPE YOUR BEHAVIOR**

**ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY INDICATING WHAT MOST OFTEN APPLIES TO YOU:**

<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
_____	_____	1. Do you feel compelled to do most things in a hurry?
_____	_____	2. Are you usually the first one through during a meal?
_____	_____	3. Is it difficult for you to relax, even for a few hours?
_____	_____	4. Do you hate to wait in line at a restaurant, bank, or store?
_____	_____	5. Do you frequently try to do several things at the same time?
_____	_____	6. Are you generally dissatisfied with what you have accomplished in life?
_____	_____	7. Do you enjoy competition and feel you always have to win?
_____	_____	8. When other people speak slowly do you find yourself trying to rush them along by finishing the sentence for them?
_____	_____	9. Do you become impatient when someone does the job slowly?
_____	_____	10. When engaged in conversation, do you usually feel compelled to tell others about your own interests?
_____	_____	11. Do you become irritated when something is not done exactly right?
_____	_____	12. Do you rush through your tasks to get them done as quickly as possible?
_____	_____	13. Do you feel you are constantly under pressure to get more done?
_____	_____	14. In the past few years, have you taken less than your allotted vacation time?
_____	_____	15. While listening to other people, do you usually find your mind wandering to other tasks and subjects?
_____	_____	16. When you meet aggressive people, do you usually feel compelled to compete with them?
_____	_____	17. Do you tend to talk fast?
_____	_____	18. Are you too busy with your job to have time for hobbies and outside activities?
_____	_____	19. Do you seek and need recognition from your boss and peers?
_____	_____	20. Do you take pride in working best "under pressure?"

	A+	A-	B+	B-							
	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	2	0
	(NUMBER OF "YES" ANSWERS)										

The greater propensity to "hurry up and go", the more apt you will be to be an "A" personality.

PLEASE WRITE SHORT ANSWER PHRASES IN EACH SECTION BELOW. THIS IS FOR YOUR OWN FILE. YOU **WILL NOT** TURN THIS IN.

## **NOT OKAY**

THINGS I SAY OR DO THAT MAKE ME FEEL NOT OKAY

## **OKAY**

THINGS I SAY OR DO THAT MAKE ME FEEL OKAY



THINGS OTHERS SAY OR DO TO ME THAT MAKE ME FEEL NOT OKAY

THINGS OTHERS SAY OR DO TO ME THAT MAKE ME FEEL OKAY

## ***BUILDING POSITIVE STUDENT SELF-CONCEPT***

1. SPECIAL FOCUS ON ONE STUDENT PER WEEK
  - Choose a student to encourage (not in your class).
2. CHANGING SEATING ARRANGEMENT REGULARLY
  - Allow students to connect with others inside the class.
3. DISPLAY EXAMPLES OF WORK
  - Allow students to visually connect with positive examples of work-plus feel good about themselves.
4. HAVE STUDENT WRITE LETTERS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT TO PARENT
  - Send letters periodically. A great way to connect with parents.
5. ALLOW STUDENTS TO TEACH THE CLASS
  - The best way to learn is to teach and get feedback.
6. ALLOW SELF-GRADING TO OCCUR
  - Students must learn evaluative tools for academics. This will help them in the future.
7. USE OF RATING SCALE FOR STUDENTS' INTRINSIC EVALUATION
  - Scale of 1 to 5 allows them to self-evaluate and begin to make incremental gains in behavior/academics/etc.
8. TEACH THE CONCEPT OF FAILING (AND THEN CONTINUING)
  - Most students see setbacks as failure and need help to see the learning potential.
9. ALLOW STUDENTS TO EARN OR GAIN REWARDS
  - People need incentives to press forward into difficult areas.



## **THE ONE-MINUTE APPROACH**

(adapted from "The One Minute Teacher" by Spencer Johnson, William Morrow Company)

**Each day is made up of minutes. How we spend each minute will impact each hour and in turn each day. Organization and time management is a minute by minute evaluation of our day. This outline may help you get started on the right path, each minute of the day.**

### **One Minute Beginning of Day:**

- Getting a focus for the day:
  - New day
  - New perspective
  - New ideas
  - (Same students ... sorry)

### **One Minute Goal Setting-**

- Goal for the day:
  - What are my goals for today?
  - Do I have weekly goals?
  - Where do I want my students to be in a month, two months ...

### **One Minute Praising-**

- Praise self immediately:
  - Self-talk. Positive comments to self
  - Look for the positive in your day

### **One Minute Recovery-**

- Remind myself of what my goal was to start the day
  - Is there a discrepancy between my earlier goal and the present reality?
- Redirect my behavior and speak positive affirmations to myself
  - Examine positive approaches. What have I done right?

### **One Minute Team Approach-**

- Focus on working together:
  - How can I work together with my students? How can I co-opt them toward my goals for the class?

### **One Minute End Of Day Evaluation-**

- Ending the day and preparing for tomorrow:
  - Evaluate the day. On a scale of 1 to 5, did I meet my goals?
  - Did I encourage my students?
  - Did I model areas of life that I desire to place in their lives?

## TEACHING CHARACTER TRAITS

### Trait: Resilience, Kindness, Compassion

**Steven Spielberg** is the most successful filmmaker ever. Everyone knows some of his blockbusters, such as *Schindler's List*, *Jurassic Park*, *Indiana Jones*, *Men in Black* and *ET*. What you may *not* know is how some of his early heartaches taught him to emotionally connect with his audience.

Once, when young 24-year-old Spielberg was directing a TV episode at Universal, the head of the camera department stopped an associate and said, "You've got to go down to the soundstage. It's something you'll never see again. Your friend Spielberg is directing." The associate responded, "I've seen people directing before." The camera man insisted, "You've never seen a crew stand there and cry"

So how did he learn the empathy that can't be taught in film school? Spielberg says that as a young person he experienced his grandmother's death with his family at her bedside. As a minority Jew in school, he experienced anti-Semitism through bullies. He learned what it's like to be an outcast, to be rejected. Fellow students thought he looked goofy and called him "Spielbug."

He learned the anguish of divorce by seeing his parents go through it his senior year. No one wants to experience these tragedies, but I doubt Spielberg could have learned to produce heart-felt films without them.

Says Spielberg, "E. T. was about the divorce of my parents, how I felt when my parents broke up .... My wish list included having a friend who could be both the brother I never had and a father that I didn't feel I had anymore. And that's how E. T. was born. "

### **For Discussion:**

- 1) How did personal adversity help Spielberg empathize with others?
- 2) How do you think this helped his film career?
- 3) Can adversity help us with other careers besides filmmaking? In what way?
- 4) How can you identify with the way Spielberg felt put down during his school days?
- 5) How can understanding the benefits of adversity help us to deal with the adversities we now face?

### Trait: Tolerance

As a child he began talking later than normal. In school, he was regarded as a freak by his classmates because of his lack of interest in sports. His teachers considered him dull because he was poor at memorizing by rote. One teacher told him in exasperation that he wouldn't amount to anything, was wasting everyone's time, and should drop out of school immediately. Would you have looked down on him? If so, you would have snubbed **young Albert Einstein**.

### **For Discussion:**

- 1) How is it possible to be so smart, yet not recognized as intelligent by teachers or fellow students? (All of us have strengths and weaknesses. Some types of intelligence don't work well with school systems and don't translate into high grades.)
- 2) How do you think young Einstein would have fit in at our school? Would he have found a group of friends here, or would he have been an outcast?
- 3) How can understanding Einstein's background guard us from putting people into boxes?
- 4) **Personal Reflection:** What types of people that you snub and put into boxes? How can you overcome this lack of tolerance?

## Traits: Learning, Cooperation, Diligence

Basketball superstar Michael Jordan reigns as one of America's most popular athlete. He's mastered the game to such an extent that pro player Magic Johnson would say, "*There's Michael- and then there's the rest of us.*" But he didn't just wake up one morning, pick up a basketball, and begin his lightning fast moves and stratospheric jumps, dunking baskets against giant defenders. Believe it or not, he was cut from the Varsity team his sophomore year in high school. So what did he do to improve?

One could argue that without the fierce, daily, one-on-one, back yard competitions with his older brother Larry, who was a better athlete at the time, Michael would have never developed his ability and confidence enough to compete at the game. Larry was his mentor as well as best friend.

### **For Discussion**

1. *How might Michael's life had been different had he never looked up to a mentor, or chosen the wrong mentor?*
2. *How can mentors help us succeed?*
3. *What should we look for in a mentor?*
4. *Is it okay to have more than one mentor?*
5. *Do you have a mentor? If not, who would be a good one?*

## Traits: Learning, Cooperation, Diligence

Basketball great **Kareem Abdul Jabbar** once said,

*"You can't let people who aren't going anywhere influence your opinions."*

The opposite is also true. *Make sure the people who are going somewhere do influence your opinions.* This is a pattern in many successful people. They sharpen their skills and keep motivated by hanging out with those who have similar interests.

- **The world's best known theoretical physicist:** Twenty-two year old **Albert Einstein** and like- minded friends met frequently in each other's homes or talked on hikes, sometimes all the way through the night. These conversations had an enormous impact on his future work. They called themselves "*The Olympia Academy.*"
- **The most successful entrepreneur:** Fifteen-year old **Bill Gates** met regularly with other computer enthusiasts who called themselves "*The Lakeside Programmers Group.*"
- **One of the wisest men of his time: Benjamin Franklin** met every Friday for decades with a diverse group of civic-minded thinkers called "*Junto.*" Many of his great accomplishments were a result of cross-pollination from this group.
  - Two of the most popular writers: **J.R.R. Tolkien** (Think: *Lord of the Rings*) and **C.S. Lewis** (Think: *The Chronicles of Narnia*) met with a group called "*The Inklings,*" on a weekday morning in a pub and Thursday evenings at Lewis' house, often reading their manuscripts aloud to get input.

### **For Discussion:**

1. *How do you think these people's success was impacted by the people they hung around?*
2. *How can we often accomplish more with others than as a "lone ranger."*
3. *What is some area of interest you'd like to pursue?*
4. *How could you find others with similar interests? (School clubs, etc.)*

## Trait: Acceptance

You'd think that Drew Barrymore had it all. Her acting success began by appearing on TV before her first birthday, then again at ages 2 and 4. She hit stardom at age 7 playing the little girl in Spielberg's smash hit, "E.T." At 7 years, she was the youngest person to ever host *Saturday Night Live*. You'd think she was living every child's dream. She had talent. She was famous. But inside, the little star was hurting.

Like a lot of us, she let the put downs of others, both at school and at home, make her see herself as worthless. When she botched up an in-class assignment, her teacher called her stupid and said she would never amount to anything. Like most of us, she acted like it didn't bother her. But in her own words,

*"I wanted to crawl inside myself and die. But there was no escape. I vowed not to show any emotion. I sat there, stone-faced, crying on the inside and completely humiliated."*

The words of the insensitive teacher were reinforced by a group of cruel students who delighted in tormenting her. They hit her with books and called her names like pig, fatso, or saying her nose looked like Porky Pig's.

She countered by trying like everything to fit in. One day she got some surfer shorts with a spaceman design that she thought everyone would like. Instead, they burst out laughing when she walked into class, calling her a "cosmic cow." Rather than realizing that she was important and could make something of her life, she believed their cutting words. In her own words,

"I just took their cutting remarks until, eventually, I let them completely undermine everything I knew to be true." She ended up "feeling like the lowliest, homeliest, and dumbest creature."

Let's reflect for a minute on what happened to Drew's picture of herself. Although she had a gift for acting and achieved fame by age 7, she believed people's cutting remarks to the point that she felt totally worthless. With the people around her as her only mirror to see herself, she felt dumb and ugly. Was her impression right? Not at all.

Ironically, this little girl who saw herself as a worthless failure, a "cosmic cow," "pig" and "fatso" would later be chosen by "People" magazine as one of the 50 most beautiful people in the world. The girl that the teacher called "stupid" and "headed for failure" would be paid \$26 million to star in the movies "Ever After" and both "Charlie's Angels" movies.

But at the time, she couldn't see her bright future. So, she turned to drugs to numb the pain. Big mistake. According to Drew, "The higher I got, the happier I imagined myself, the more miserable I actually was." Alcohol and cocaine put her in a rehabilitation facility by the age of 13.

**What can we learn from Drew?** Here are some thoughts.

**First**, don't believe people's put-downs. Your conception of yourself may look nothing like you really are. Some of the most successful people in the world were put down mercilessly during their school years. **Second**, drugs and drinking only make things worse.

**Third**, don't ever put students or teachers down, even if on the outside they seem to not care.

**For Discussion:**

1. *Why do we put others' down?*
2. *What could motivate us to stop?*
3. *Do you think most people are really hurt by put downs, even if they act like they're not?*
4. *Why don't they tell people if it hurts?*
5. *What are some ways you see people putting others down at school or in your neighborhoods?*
6. *How did Drew allow the putdowns to make her feel like a hopeless failure?*
7. *How can we keep from letting putdown's ruin our self-esteem, making us feel like worthless failures?*

## **FOUR PHASES FOR SUCCESSFUL PLANNING**

(where do I start in changing motivation)

1. **COMMUNICATION**-Choose a realistic number of students to focus on in your classroom (2 or 3 kids). If possible, choose children with parent(s) who you find to be supportive. Remember, both school and home contribute to underachievement. Using the daily or weekly evaluation form (see next page) may be helpful.

2. **EXPECTATIONS**- Children must be shown clearly and specifically what will happen if they do achieve. Set short term as well as long term goals (one day at a time; each week at a time). Explain to child they may feel some pressure, stress, or frustration as they begin the process, but you will be there to explain and support them. They will need affirmations from school and home. Written notes home may help. Placing a positive note in their desk; a phone call home, a pat on the back, a smile face on their paper will all be encouraging to the student. Private support is more meaningful than public support. Don't overreact to success, keep it in perspective and go slowly.

3. **IDENTIFICATION**- How do children learn appropriate behaviors? When underachievement is changed, students frequently cite pivotal people in their lives who were models. There are too many "unreal" models in our society (rock stars, sports, movie stars, etc.). Help the child see someone who is a support to them, a model for their life (relative, friend, neighbor, teacher). For most children, family can be the best identification source for positive models. When encouraging the identification with another person, emphasize the character of the person, not them. Point out 2 or 3 behavior to emulate and encourage them to write them out.

4. **CORRECTION OF DEFICIENCIES**- Be careful when tutoring the child in academic deficiencies. Avoid fostering dependency. Explain purpose of helping is to re-teach skills. Provide goals and times of independent learning. Move them through short term goals quickly to enhance success.

THIS MAY BE USED TO HELP A CHILD DEVELOP A PLAN FOR INCREASING SELF-  
IMAGE OR PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

**MIRROR IMAGE OF SELF ANALYSIS**

EXAMPLE-- Socially

**I am** isolating myself more and more

**I can** see myself distancing myself further over the coming months

**I need** to stay in contact with friends

**I will** call one person a week and meet with them

*Physically*

**I am** \_\_\_\_\_

**I can** \_\_\_\_\_

**I need** \_\_\_\_\_

**I will** \_\_\_\_\_

*Emotionally*

**I am** \_\_\_\_\_

**I can** \_\_\_\_\_

**I need** \_\_\_\_\_

**I will** \_\_\_\_\_

*Socially*

**I am** \_\_\_\_\_

**I can** \_\_\_\_\_

**I need** \_\_\_\_\_

**I will**

## **CREATING AN ALLIANCE WITH THE CHILD**

**EMPATHY-** Place yourself in their shoes. Remember what it was like to be 6 years old, 10 years old, or 17 years old. Avoid lecturing on "reality." Instead come alongside the child and their anxiety.

**DEMYSTIFY ANXIETY-** It is not an emotional weakness or mental problem. Explain what it is ... "an emotional and physical response to a situation one is uncomfortable with in life." It is normal. Discuss some of the physical reactions, mental aspects, and emotional responses.

### **TEACHING THOUGHTS, BEHAVIORS, FEELINGS-**

Help the child understand the connection between their thoughts and actions. Use of handouts or social skill tools may be helpful. Teaching "cause and effect" is utilized during this section.

### **SET UP A "WORRY SCALE OR THERMOMETER"-**

Using visual reminders or guidelines may be very helpful. Self-discovery is an important part of anxiety reduction. The child will self-monitor their thoughts and actions.

### **DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR THE CHILD-**

Problem solving strategies will help the child choose more effective approaches to anxiety. Children should be taught a variety of problem solving approaches. Role-playing, journaling, or other ways of practicing these skills will be needed.

**CHANGING NEGATIVE MINDSETS-** Helping the child to develop an optimistic mindset is critical. Help the child evaluate his/her life and change the negative to the positive. Self-talk statements and thoughts should be evaluated.



## COMMON ADULT PROBLEMS THAT INTERFERE WITH SUCCESS

1. Impatience-remember, progress takes time. It will not change overnight. Baby steps, baby steps. What is your goal? Are you moving closer to success?
2. Too Much Reassurance-we may saturate the child with too much support in an effort to reduce the anxiety. Don't overwhelm them with your voice, allow them to feel their own success.
3. Making Excuses-overprotecting the child from hurt and pain. Be careful not to rescue the child, to blame others (teachers, students), or to allow them to manipulate your emotions.
4. Being Too Directive-attempting to solve the problem for them and telling them what to do may short circuit their learning. It is okay for them to struggle a bit, to process the learning.
5. Becoming Frustrated and Angry-it is easy to become exasperated at the child when demonstrating a lack of progress. Becoming too emotional will only interfere with learning.

## **HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH STRESS**

Karen Fallin, Charlotte Wallinga, Mick Coleman  
Childhood Education

Stress is a part of even the youngest students' lives, making the concept of a carefree childhood nearly obsolete. Many school-age children are subject to school related stressors such as falling grades, overly demanding classroom environments, athletic requirements, peer relationships, tests, and conflict with teachers. Teachers witness many of these stressors and their effects on the classroom. Academic problems, behavioral problems, children's complaints of stomachaches or headaches, and drug use all may be related to excessive levels of stress in children's lives.

A stressor is any event in which environmental demands, internal demands or both exceed the adaptive resources of an individual. Stressors may be divided into major life events (e.g. the death of a parent or the birth of a sibling), chronic strain (e.g. living in poverty, ongoing abuse, or chronic illness), and daily stressors (e.g. taking a test or arguing with a sibling). This article will focus on daily stressors.

Daily stressors are the irritating, frustrating, distressing demands that to some degree characterize everyday transactions with the environment. For the school age child, daily stressors may include anxiety about school, conflicts with teachers, competition with peers or siblings, lack of parental interest, personal injury or loss, poor grades, fear of success or failure, and fear of medical visits and procedures. The occurrence of daily stressors in childhood appears to be related to the adaptational outcomes such as depression, sense of self-worth, and overall health status.

Children use a variety of coping strategies in response to daily stressors. Some strategies are directed at changing stressors, while others are directed at managing the emotions triggered by stressors. When a stressful event occurs, children mobilize their resources in response to the situation.

Classroom teachers can play a vital role in helping students manage daily stress effectively. Because so many stressors are directly related to the school environment and because stress related problems affect students' performance in school, topics of stress and coping should be considered part of the curriculum. Lessons about stress and coping can be incorporated into various subject areas. For example, biological responses to stress can be taught in science, and skills for coping with stress and for enhancing social support can be taught in health and wellness classes. Children read and write about stressors in language arts, and can express their feelings about stressors through artwork.

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the stressors that commonly affect children, keeping in mind that what is stressful for one child may not be stressful for another child. Identifying stressors in the classroom is the first step teachers can take in helping their students manage stress. Teachers can accomplish this through graffiti boards, group discussions, and behavioral observations.

**A graffiti board** is a bulletin board covered with paper. It can be useful for assessing stressors by providing students with an opportunity for self-expression. Label the paper with a title like "Things that are stressful for me," and encourage the children to anonymously describe their stressors. Students will feel some release by writing down their problems, and they will learn what their classmates find stressful. A graffiti board may be used in conjunction with lessons on stress and coping, especially during particularly stressful times of the school year. In a similar technique, teachers provide a box in which children can anonymously submit stressors they would like to hear discussed in class. Teachers will gain a general sense of the types of stressors experienced by the students.

**A large group discussion** is an effective classroom dialogue that can generate conversation around specific questions such as:

- What makes you feel bad, nervous, or worried?
- How often has this happened in the last (time frame)?
- How did this make you feel?

This questioning technique will likely elicit comparable responses from different children. It can be reassuring for children to know that their peers also find certain events to be stressful.

Some children may not be comfortable sharing their stressors in a group setting. As an alternative, have children submit written responses. For younger children, they can draw pictures. Teachers then can lead a group discussion and share the student stressors without identifying anyone. A fun activity to complement such a group discussion is to have children draw, decorate, and cut out pictures of bugs. On their pictures, they can write down the things that "bug" them.

**Observations** may be used by teachers to detect signs or symptoms of stress, such as regressive behaviors, withdrawal, irritability, inability to concentrate in school, and difficulty getting along with peers. If a teacher finds that a child is demonstrating ongoing stress related symptoms, it may be useful to document firsthand observations and seek the observations of other school professionals. Communication with the student and parents about the observed behavior is vital.

One way to reduce the severity of stressors is to change or remove them, although this is not always possible. Educators can help a student who complains that he is bored by assignments that are too easy, for example, by providing more challenging ones. Also, teachers may be able to intervene in peer related stress by separating children who persistently tease or annoy one another, or who compete with one another.

Another way to reduce the severity of stressors is to help change children's perceptions of stressors. Such a process is difficult and may require the child to undergo counseling. Within the classroom, teachers could ask the children to role-play their perceptions of various stressful situations. Scenarios of different stressors may be read to children (e.g. Imagine you have a spelling test the next day and you forget your book at school). Children state their perceptions of such a situation and describe how it would make them feel (e.g., My day would be ruined. I would be afraid I would be in trouble). A group discussion could generate alternative ideas to such a situation.

And finally, children's appraisals of daily events can help them focus on positive experiences. This may be accomplished by having children brainstorm the people, places, times, and events in their lives that make them happy. The teacher can facilitate the brainstorming session and write down all the suggestions on a colorful display.

## INCREASING MOTIVATION AND SELF-ESTEEM IN STUDENTS BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**The following two books are written by your instructor and contain a faith based perspective and biblical references.** These are available on line or through bookstores. Both books are available in CD format as audio books.

*What To Do When Words Get Ugly*. Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2016 (edited/revised edition). Examines the topic of gossip and how it impacts people. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665

*When to Speak Up and When to Shut Up*. Michael Sedler. Revell Books, 2006. Communication book discussing conflict and encouragement. (Adult) [www.bakerbooks.com](http://www.bakerbooks.com) 1-800-877-2665 (over 400,000 copies sold).