

SOME PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHERS THAT HAVE
PROVEN TO BE HELPFUL WHEN USED WITH CHILDREN
MANIFESTING ADHD SYMPTOMS

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- Use a few clear, concise rules for management of the classroom.
- Understand the tremendous influence upon the child's behavior of his or her underdeveloped concern for and sense of connection to fellow human beings.
- It is common for the belief system of these children to contain one or more of the following convictions: I should be the center of attention; I will do what I want to do when I want to do it without regard for others; I will not let anyone control me. Be creative in developing discipline and guidance techniques that are directed towards helping a child modify troublesome aspects of his or her belief system. Some specific techniques that have proven helpful are as follows:
 - The teacher may wish to place guidelines such as the following in a prominent place:
 1. Let's be friendly to each other.
 2. It will be a help to our class if we pay attention to the quiet sign.
 3. If one of us is unfriendly, it may help our class if he or she sits alone until ready to be friendly again.
- Do not be overambitious in your concern for teaching subject matter. A child's interest in learning will increase dramatically as he learns to care about others, respects the rights of others, learns specific actions that are of help to him and to the group, and finds specific ways to live the style he wishes to live in a fashion that is of help to himself and others, and that selfish behavior simply does not work in the classroom.

Maximize use of techniques that are 100% within your control.

- Stop teaching, wait for cooperative behavior.
- Comment upon behavior that is friendly or helpful or respectful.
- Do not think in terms of punishment, rather put children in touch with the consequences of their acts or allow them to experience the consequences of these acts when practical eg., "We can continue when everyone helps us by being a friend to our class, by being kind to each other" or perhaps ". . . by giving us time to finish this lesson." "We can open up this teaching center (or add this experience) when Jimmy can help us by doing so and so".
- Let your own emotion be a signal to you of your intentions: if you are angry, you probably are getting ready to fight with the child. If you feel hurt, you may be getting ready to punish or hurt back.

- Use your awareness of your emotions as a choice point - a point where you can choose to change your thinking Perhaps stop teaching for a few moments, take a brief break, even without leaving the room, as a parent might do. Perhaps look out the window, or pretend you are examining some paperwork at your desk. Encourage yourself by reminding yourself how your desire is to help and not win or punish. Think of what you are doing as an act of love, come back to the situation when your effort is to help — not to defeat or punish.
- Bring a pleasant expression to the situation. Remember, your tone and expression will follow your thoughts.
- Be firm, be in control of yourself, but be kind.
- Let the child who is capable of being most obnoxious feel your caring. We often can do this when we think of the gift we are capable of giving by way of helping to win the child over for society.
- Use a quiet sign that all children can learn and rehearse - perhaps a raised hand as a signal. All in class are asked to raise their hand when the teacher raises her hand.
- Practice waiting for quiet. Even if it takes a long time, you can wait. After all are quiet, thank the children for helping.
- Make the primary value in the classroom friendship.
- Use some small group discussion to help children learn to be a better friend. If available, ask the school counselor if he or she may lead such groups.
- Use stories or puppets to demonstrate the importance of helping each other. Give specific examples of behavior (manifested in your classroom) that present obstacles to friendship. Present positive alternatives.
- When necessary, remove some children from area near the offending child. If the offending child is power-oriented, it is better to remove others nearby, or wait, or call attention to helpful behavior.
- With child above, experiment with declaring bankruptcy and asking for help: "Jimmy, I guess you want to show me I cannot make you do so and so, you know, you are right, I don't even want to try, but it sure would be a help to me if you would be willing to. . . ." This technique can have a profound impact when a child wishes to defeat you, and you help him discover no one is again him
- If a child is more attention-oriented, it is often helpful to ask the child to sit in an isolated place for a while.
- In either case (power or attention) invite the child or children back to the normal setting arrangement one time shortly after the offending behavior subsides or the child says he is ready to be a friend. (The point is not to punish or humiliate, but only to solve the problem.)