

Class Management Suggestions

It is expected that students in physical education will:

- Enjoy and seek out physical activity
- Develop a variety of basic movement and manipulative skills so they will experience success and feel comfortable during present and future physical activity pursuits, particularly as they relate to individual and team sports
- Develop and maintain acceptable levels of physical fitness
- Develop the ability to get along with others in movement environments (e.g., share space and equipment, employ the golden rule of competition -- be a good sport, and demonstrate cooperative behavior)

INCREASING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

First attempts at decreasing inappropriate behavior should be to increase **appropriate** behavior. Here are some techniques for doing so:

Treat Everyone Fairly: Although every group leader may feel this is being done, observations of activity sessions frequently tell otherwise.

Here are a few "do's:"

- Use both girls and boys to demonstrate
- Have individuals of varying skill levels model activities
- Call on girls as often as boys
- Don't favor some children over others
- Provide positive/specific comments to every participant
- Make comments that are non-gender specific (e.g., Good Sporting Behavior rather than Good Sportsmanship).

Positive Interactions: These may be verbal or non-verbal. For example:

Verbal positive statements Non-verbal positive interactions

Terrific High 5

Right Smiling

Nice job Clapping

Way to go Thumbs-up

You did it

Handshake

If a leader gives **positive and specific** verbal feedback, the behavior is more effectively shaped and/or reinforced. For example, "Jose, your wrist snap is perfect on that follow through; way to go." Or, "Tameka, that high kick you added to your dance is terrific!"

Complimenting those doing well has also been shown to be effective. Leaders should give attention to those on task and following directions, rather than those that are not.

Prompts: Prompting is a leader behavior that reminds individuals what is expected of them. For example, it is better to say, "Remember to walk as you go to pick up equipment," rather than, "I told you to WALK!"

Selective Ignoring: Children may misbehave to draw attention to themselves. If the learning/playing environment is not being disrupted, simply ignoring the child may be sufficient. Criteria for selective ignoring:

- Short duration and not likely to spread (e.g., child talking softly to friend)
- Minor deviation (e.g., looking away briefly during instruction)
- Your reaction to it would interrupt a lesson or call attention to the behavior

Proximity Control: If the behavior continues after selective ignoring, try moving physically closer to the child. This is best done when other participants are active and not aware of the misbehaving child.

Person-to-Person Dialogue: Arrange to meet with a child away from the session. You might say, "Rasheed, you don't seem to be enjoying our activity time. I'd like to meet with you later to talk about it." Away from the influence of others, it may be easier to find out why the child is disruptive. Once a leader understands why a child is reluctant to participate, an informed decision about the appropriate action can be made.

DECREASING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Although our first approach is to increase appropriate behavior, this does not always work. There are times when a leader must decrease inappropriate behavior. The following techniques may be useful:

Desists: A desist is a verbal statement that tells a child to stop doing something. A desist must be:

Clear: "Leticia, stop doing that" isn't enough. "Leticia, stop hitting the basketball with the softball bat; you'll ruin the ball," is clear and specific.

Firm: Use body language that shows your seriousness -- move closer, look directly at the child, keep a straight face.

Well Timed: Provide the desist immediately before it spreads.

Appropriately Targeted: Direct desists at the original defender, not a second or third party.

Time-outs: A time-out is like a penalty box in hockey. During a time-out, a child is removed from the group for a specified time. Time-out protocols should be explained at the beginning of the year.

An individual in time-out should:

Leave the boundaries of the activity area and go to a location designated for a time-out

- Not have any equipment with her/him
- Be alone
- Continue to listen and observe

A leader giving a time-out should:

- Use it only when it will serve as a deterrent
- Ensure the time-out is in a designated place where contact with others is impossible
- Let the child know what the consequence will be if the behavior is repeated

Note: Time-outs are not an effective deterrent with the child who does not enjoy participating.

Planning Time: Planning time is a peer-directed alternative to time-outs, designed for inappropriate behavior involving two or more people. When children are separated in a time-out, they are alone, and do not have the opportunity to discuss and resolve their conflict. During planning time, pairs (or groups) go to a planning area where they are required to develop a resolution. To be allowed to join the others, they must present to the leader a verbal plan on how to work together or how to change their behavior. In other words, "No plan, no play."

Behavior Contracts: A behavior contract is a formal agreement between a child and an activity leader. It should include a statement of the desired behavior, contingencies (e.g., how long, how much), and rewards that will be earned if the behavior and contingencies are met. Children must have a role in defining all aspects of the contract: behavior, contingencies, and rewards.

Contacting a Parent: Desists, time-outs, planning time, and behavior contracts work with some children but not with others. When a child continues to misbehave, a written report or phone call to a parent can be effective. This technique should be used only after other approaches have been unsuccessful. The report should list specific violations, be signed by a parent, and returned to the teacher. It is suggested that a phone call to the parent informing her/him that a report is coming home be done first.

Every physical activity session instructed should include these B-A-S-I-C-S:

B - BOUNDARIES AND ROUTINES

Boundaries refer to the physical borders of the activity area. If no existing lines or clear area designations exist, cones or other objects may be used to identify perimeters. In the lesson, this is often referred to as “Four cones for boundaries.”

An example of a routine is always allocating 2 to 3 minutes at the end of every session for cool-down/closure.

A - ACTIVITY FROM THE GET-GO

Children should begin moving as quickly as possible. For example: “Pick up a beanbag, find your personal space, and explore safely while the music plays.”

S - START-AND-STOP SIGNALS

Children must be taught to respond quickly and consistently to start and stop signals. Use music whenever appropriate (e.g., music begins, children move/practice; music stops, children stop) although other sound producing objects (e.g., tambourine, chimes) and visual signals (e.g., hand, number of fingers) may be used.

I - INVOLVEMENT BY ALL

Are all children participating? Ensure lessons provide ample practice opportunities for everyone – regardless of size, gender, or ability.

C - CONCISE INSTRUCTIONAL CUES

How few words can you use to initiate activity? “The object of the game is _____; you do that by _____; ready, go!” Use the 80/20

Rule: After instruction, assume 80% of the children “get it.” Instead of using valuable time to answer questions, get started. Then, once all are active, be a “plumber”— move and fix leaks.

S - SUPERVISION

Once children are moving, teachers have much to do. In addition to being plumbers, an instructor should keep her/his back to the wall inside (to remain open and facing the group), and face the sun when giving instructions outside. Additionally, it is important to provide positive, specific feedback at least 4:1 over a corrective statement.

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