

Globally, there is growing recognition of students' rights to discipline that respects their dignity, and of the role of positive discipline in children's learning. Increasingly teachers are being instructed not to use physical or humiliating punishment, and to use positive discipline instead. But teachers often ask, "What is positive discipline and how do I do it?"

This manual sets out the foundations and principles of positive discipline in the classroom. Positive discipline is about understanding how students learn, building their skills and fostering the self-discipline they need in order to be successful learners. To practice these skills, exercises are provided to help teachers put these principles into practice across a wide range of situations. Ultimately the use of positive discipline reduces the time teachers spend on behavioural issues, so they can spend more time on teaching.

This manual is aimed at teachers of students at all levels, as well as principals, school managers, student teachers, teaching assistants, and other professionals involved in the education system.

1. Children have the right to education with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity.
2. School discipline must be administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

Article 28

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN EVERYDAY TEACHING

GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATORS



Save the Children

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Joan E. Durrant, Ph.D



Save the Children

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SAVE THE CHILDREN is the world's leading independent organisation for children.

OUR VISION is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

OUR MISSION is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

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**“We commit ourselves to peaceful means
and vow to keep from harm or neglect, these, our most vulnerable citizens.”**

*Raffi Cavoukian, founder of The Centre for Child Honouring,
from his “Covenant for Honouring Children”.*

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To Jonah, my greatest teacher.

Preface

This manual is a response to the 2006 World Report on Violence against Children, a global study of violence against children carried out by the United Nations.

The study found that violence is a common experience in the lives of school children around the world – and that it is often based in long-held beliefs about how children learn, as well as a lack of awareness of children's human rights.

The World Report on Violence against Children makes recommendations for reducing violence against children in schools.

The recommendations emphasize the importance of:

- Prohibiting violence in schools, including corporal punishment.
- Training and supporting school staff in the use of non-violent approaches to teaching and classroom management.
- Revising curricula to model non-violent conflict resolution.
- Implementing violence prevention programmes for all school staff.
- Establishing codes of conduct based on child rights principles.

For more information on the World Report on Violence against Children, visit www.violencestudy.org

What are children's rights?

All people have basic rights. These rights apply to everyone regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability.

Not only adults have human rights – children also have rights. But because children are small and dependent, adults often do not consider them to be full human beings with rights.

In 1989, world leaders approved a treaty that sets out the basic human rights of every child. They wanted to ensure that everyone in the world knows that children do have rights.

This treaty, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, has been ratified by almost all of the countries of the world. Any country that ratifies this treaty is committed to ensuring that children's rights are protected.

The Convention recognizes that children are developing people who depend on adults to guide them.

But adults do not own children. Human rights principles guarantee that no person may be the property of another.

The Convention guarantees children the following rights:

- The right to survival and full development of their potential:
 - o Adequate food, shelter and clean water
 - o Education
 - o Health care
 - o Leisure and recreation
 - o Cultural activities, including language
 - o Information about their rights
 - o Dignity
- The right to protection from:
 - o Violence and neglect
 - o Exploitation
 - o Cruelty
 - o Discrimination

- The right to participate in decision-making by:
 - o Expressing their opinions and having their opinions respected
 - o Having a say in matters affecting them
 - o Having access to information
 - o Freely associating with other people

Positive discipline is based on children's rights to healthy development, protection from violence, and participation in their learning.

This manual shows teachers how to educate while respecting their students' human rights.

For more information on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, visit www.unicef.org/crc



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Introduction to the Manual

"My job is to teach, not to discipline."

"I have to complete the curriculum;
I don't have time for positive discipline."

These statements reflect a common belief that teaching and discipline are two different activities. In fact, effective teaching requires effective discipline.

Positive discipline increases students' motivation, so they pay attention more, study more and perform better academically.

Positive discipline reduces the time teachers spend on behavioural issues, so they can spend more time on teaching the curriculum.

Positive discipline aids teaching. It is about understanding how students learn, building their skills and fostering the self-discipline they need in order to be successful.

Positive discipline is about creating and maintaining a positive and effective learning environment where all children are respected and are successful learners.

It is true that the responsibilities and challenges of teaching are immense – to guide a group of individual children, each with her or his own strengths, difficulties, talents and family background, from one learning stage to the next. Teachers have the responsibility to nurture, support, motivate, and impart knowledge to a diverse group of learners, often with inadequate resources.

But teaching can be one of life's most gratifying, rewarding experiences. The privilege of having children placed in one's care and entrusted with their learning can inspire teachers to be powerfully positive influences in the lives of their students.

But in every teacher's life, there also is frustration and the experience of not knowing how to reach particular children. There can be moments of helplessness or frustration and of feeling unprepared to face the challenge. Sometimes the addition of teachers' own personal stresses can make the situation overwhelming.

Many teachers are not trained in classroom management, conflict resolution or child development. As a result, we often rely on our own early school experiences, or local ideas of good teaching, to guide us. In some cases, those experiences and ideas are positive and inspiring ones. But many times they are negative or even violent ones.

If our training was inadequate, our experiences were harsh or local ideas are limited, we might come to believe that classroom discipline is no more than scolding and hitting. But there is another way.

What is positive discipline?

In many cultures and languages, the word "discipline" has come to be equated with control and punishment - particularly physical punishment. But this is not the true meaning of "discipline".

Effective discipline is positive and constructive. It involves setting goals for learning and finding constructive solutions to challenging situations.

Positive discipline supports teaching and education.

Positive discipline builds students' **self-confidence** and instils a love of learning that can last a lifetime.



Positive discipline:

- *motivates*
- *encourages*
- *supports*
- *fosters love of learning*
- *leads to self-discipline*
- *increases competence and confidence*

Punishment is not discipline. Punishment can discourage students, erode their self-confidence and lead them to dislike, or even hate school. Physical punishment and humiliation can leave lasting scars on students' self-confidence.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires children's protection from all forms of violence, including physical and emotional or humiliating punishment. It also requires that school discipline is respectful of children's dignity.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that children are protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse" (Article 19).

Physical punishment includes:

- *slapping*
- *smacking*
- *punching*
- *hitting with objects*
- *pulling ears or hair*
- *forcing a child to hold an uncomfortable position*
- *forcing a child to stand in the heat or cold*
- *putting a child into a closet or cupboard*

Emotional punishment includes:

- *shouting*
- *yelling*
- *name-calling*
- *put-downs*
- *ignoring*
- *embarrassing*
- *shaming*

"Positive discipline" is non-violent and respectful of the child as a learner. It is an *approach to teaching* that helps children succeed, gives them the information they need to learn, and supports their development.

Decades of research has taught us a great deal about how children learn and develop. The approach presented in this manual is based on that research.

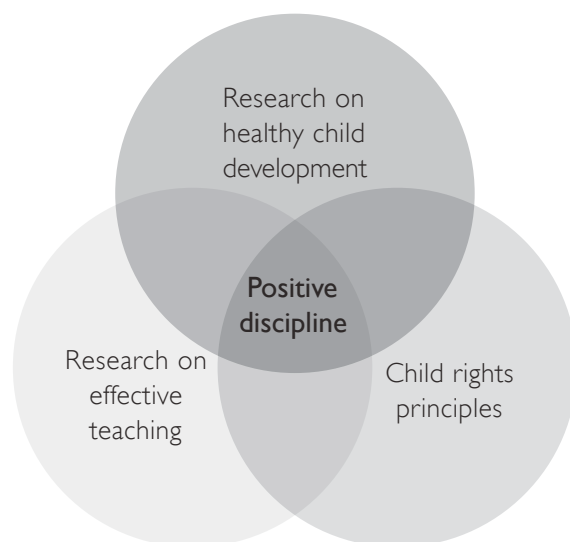
Positive discipline is:

- non-violent
- solution-focused
- respectful
- based on child development principles

Positive discipline is a set of principles that can be applied in a wide range of situations. These principles can guide *all* of your interactions with your students, not just the challenging ones. They also can guide your teaching of academic skills, not just social and behavioural skills.

Positive discipline brings together:

- what we know about children's healthy development
- findings of research on effective teaching, and
- child rights principles

**Positive discipline is not:**

- permissiveness
- letting students do whatever they want
- about having no rules, limits or expectations
- about short-term reactions
- alternative punishments to slapping, hitting and shaming

Positive discipline is:

- long-term solutions that develop students' own self-discipline
- clear and consistent communication
- consistent reinforcement of your expectations, rules and limits
- based on knowing your students and being fair
- building a mutually respectful relationship with your students
- teaching students life-long skills and fostering their love of learning
- teaching courtesy, non-violence, empathy, self-respect and respect for others and their rights
- increasing students' competence and confidence to handle academic challenges and difficult social situations

Who this Manual is for

This manual is for teachers of students at all levels. It addresses common issues that arise between school entry and high school graduation. The information can be helpful for all teachers of all subjects.

This manual is also for future teachers. Even before they enter a classroom for the first time, teachers need to be prepared to respond constructively in the challenging situations they will face.

This manual is also for those who educate and support teachers, including faculty in teachers colleges, school administrators, teaching assistants, and ministries of education.

It can be used in college/university-level teacher education classes, in professional development workshops for experienced teachers and in schools, as a guide for fostering a mutually respectful learning environment.

Some children have particular challenges that are not typical for their age.

These include:

- learning disabilities
- autism
- attention deficit disorder
- fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD)
- developmental delays
- brain damage
- trauma
- grief
- mental health issues

If a student's behaviour is of particular concern, you should seek the advice of a specialist as early as possible.

While the information in this manual can be helpful in any classroom, teachers of children with atypical conditions should seek additional guidance from school psychologists, special education teachers, speech-language therapists, and others with specialized knowledge of conditions that can interfere with students' learning.

It is particularly important for school directors/principals to understand the positive discipline approach so that they can identify institutional barriers that can block teachers' attempts to implement it. These barriers can include:

- a rigid academic curriculum
- an exclusive focus on completing the curriculum within rigid timelines
- basing teachers' pay and promotions on the scores their students attain on standardized tests
- lack of recognition of teachers' positive influence on students' lives
- a school culture that denigrates new approaches and ideas
- reluctance to invest in teachers' professional development

By understanding the strong connection between positive discipline and academic achievement, school managers can begin to identify ways to support teachers in their efforts to create a positive learning environment. A positive learning environment is one in which students are respected, and supported to be active and successful learners.

Some teachers have particular challenges that make their work more difficult. They might have experienced trauma; work in conflict situations, disaster areas or refugee camps; be socially isolated or depressed; or have fragile mental health. In such situations, teachers can feel frustrated, powerless or even desperate.

If you feel that your own emotional conflicts are affecting your teaching, you should **access mental health services** in your community.

If you feel overwhelmed by the demands of your job, you can **form a group with other teachers** to share ideas, resources, materials and emotional support.

If you are new to teaching, **find a mentor** - an experienced teacher who relates well to students and has developed effective teaching and coping strategies.

You also can **seek out local resources** in your community. By networking with community leaders, connecting with parents and grandparents, and forming school-community councils, you can harness resources and build both school and community capacity.

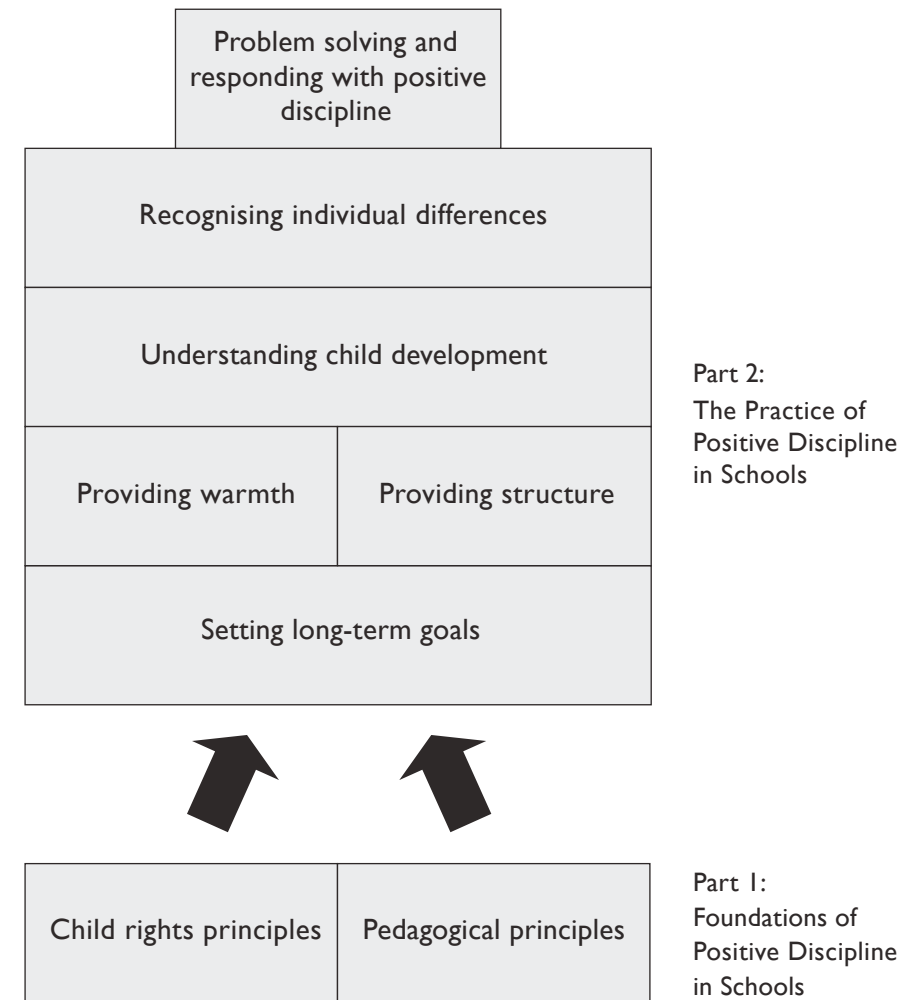
It can be very beneficial **to link with other sectors**. For example, health organizations and agriculture departments often have helpful resources. They also can provide in-service training on topics of particular relevance to your school and community.

How this Manual is organized

This manual is organized according to a sequence of steps. Each step builds on the ones before it. Therefore, it will be most helpful if you read the entire manual and do the exercises as they appear.

The manual is divided into two main parts. The first part explains the principles that underlie the positive discipline approach. Chapter 1 presents the child rights principles, and Chapter 2 explains the educational and pedagogical principles on which the positive discipline approach is based.

The second part of the manual describes how positive discipline is put into practice. Chapters 3 to 7 address the building blocks of positive discipline in the classroom – setting long-term goals, providing warmth and structure, understanding child development, identifying individual differences, and problem solving and responding with positive discipline.



It is recommended that you put your skills into practice gradually. It is important to understand all of the principles of positive discipline before trying to do it.

But as you interact with your students, start thinking about your long-term learning goals, the ways you could provide warmth and structure, and why a particular student might be behaving as he does. Gradually, your way of thinking will begin to change. Then, with practice, your skills will improve.

As you develop your positive discipline skills, remember that all of us – teachers and students alike – are learners. We all try, fail, try again, and ultimately succeed.



PART I FOUNDATIONS OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Child rights principles

Pedagogical principles

CHAPTER I

CHILD RIGHTS PRINCIPLES

One of the fundamental principles underlying positive discipline is that children are full human beings with basic human rights.

Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

*Preamble
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*

Child rights principles	
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The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child specifies several rights that are particularly relevant to education. These are:

1. The right to education (Article 28.1)

Primary education must be compulsory and free to all, secondary education must be available and accessible to every child, and higher education must be accessible to all on the basis of capacity. In addition:

- governments must work to improve school attendance and to reduce dropout rates
- schools must provide educational and vocational guidance to students



All children have the right to education.

2. The right to have decisions made in one's best interests (Article 3)



In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

All decisions concerning children should be based on the best interests of the child. This means that educators must consider the impact of their decisions and actions on children's:

- physical health
- mental and emotional health
- social relationships
- family relationships
- academic achievement

Is positive discipline a Western idea without relevance for non-Western Cultures?

Actually, positive discipline is a human rights issue that applies universally.

Children are human beings who hold human rights that must be respected.

Also, children are smaller and more vulnerable than adults, so they are in particular need of protection from physical and mental violence.

Are child rights a Western idea that is foreign to non-Western Cultures?

Every country in the world was involved in drafting the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They negotiated its articles over a 10-year period.

It is now the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. It has been ratified by all countries of the world except for two.

Any country that has ratified the Convention is obligated to implement it.

3. The right to non-discrimination (Article 2)

All rights of children must be respected without discrimination based on the child's (or parent/guardian's):

- race
- colour
- sex
- language
- religion
- political or other opinions
- national, ethnic or social origin
- property
- disability
- birth or other status



All children have the right to the same standard of education and the same educational opportunities.

4. The right to protection from all forms of violence (Article 19)

Countries must take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence while in the care of adults. This means that:

- corporal punishment, including pulling ears and pinching, must be prohibited
- shouting, name-calling, insulting or otherwise treating children in a way that could harm them emotionally must be prohibited
- teacher training programs must provide instruction in non-violent educational methods
- governments must provide support for teachers and other school personnel



Children have the right to a learning environment free from physical and mental violence.

5. The right to school discipline that respects one's human dignity (Article 28.2)

This means that:

- students must not be humiliated, shamed or degraded
- approaches to discipline based on embarrassing or belittling students must be abandoned

Students have the right to respect for their dignity.

6. The right to respect for one's individuality and quality inclusive education (Article 29)

Education must be directed to developing each student's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.



Students should have their unique personalities, talents and abilities nurtured at school.

This means that educators should know each student as an individual, recognize their strengths and nurture their competence.

The Question of Culture

Around the world, the argument is made that physical punishment is a cultural tradition and, therefore, should not or cannot be eliminated.

A "tradition" is a belief or action that is taught by one generation to the next. Many traditions are important to maintain, as they preserve unique cultural knowledge and values. Other traditions need to be questioned if they harm members of the culture.

Physical punishment is not unique to any culture. It is found all over the world. It does not pass on unique cultural knowledge. It harms children physically and emotionally.

Recognition of its harms has led more than 120 countries to abolish it from their schools

More than 24 countries have prohibited it in all settings (schools, homes, child care, juvenile detention, etc.) In all these countries, physical punishment was once viewed as "traditional."

These countries include:

- Costa Rica
- Germany
- Greece
- Portugal
- Sweden
- Uruguay
- Cyprus
- Romania
- Croatia
- Israel

For an up-to-date list of countries that have banned physical punishment, see www.endcorporalpunishment.org

7. The right to education that fosters respect for other people (Article 29)

Education must aim to develop children's respect for:

- human rights
- their parents
- their cultural identities, languages and values
- the national values of the country in which they live, the countries from which they originate, and cultures different from their own
- the natural environment



8. The right to play (Article 31)

Countries must ensure that children are able to rest, have leisure time, play and engage in recreational activities. They also must ensure that children are able to participate in cultural and artistic life. This means that:

- teachers must consider the activities and responsibilities of their students outside of school hours
- teachers should ensure that their expectations do not require students to give up outside interests or eliminate their leisure time
- schools should provide opportunities for students to engage in cultural, artistic and recreational activities



Students have the right to rest, play, leisure and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

9. The right to express one's views (Article 12)

Countries must respect children's rights to express their views freely in all matters affecting them. Their views should be given weight appropriate to their age and maturity. This means that teachers must:

- listen to, consider and respect the opinions of their students
- involve the participation of their students in classroom decision-making



Students have the right to express their opinions about matters affecting them.

Positive discipline begins with a commitment to respect children's rights.

When we make that commitment, we immediately begin to approach teaching and classroom discipline in a more positive and constructive way.

The Question of Religion

Among many faith groups, religious texts have been interpreted by some as justifying – or even prescribing – physical punishment. Many religious scholars disagree with those interpretations.

- In 2006, A Multi-Religious Commitment to Confront Violence against Children was endorsed by religious leaders from 30 countries and many faiths (Buddhist, Christian, Hindu Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and others). This Declaration calls on governments to end all physical punishment of children.
- In 2006, a multi-faith group of religious leaders endorsed the Coventry Charter for Children and Non-violence, which calls for the abolition of physical punishment and the promotion of positive discipline.
- In May 2009, the Network of Imams of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania carried out a study to assess whether corporal punishment is allowed in Islam. Overwhelming, the study found that corporal punishment of children has no place in Islam.
- In Bhutan, Chief Justice Lyonpo Sonam Tobgye stated “Developing a child is like building a healthy nation. The three pillars of the UNCRC – nondiscrimination, the best interest rule and participation – are inherent in Bhutan’s Buddhist values. These social values protect the dignity, the equality and the fundamental rights of the child.”

- In 2007, the South African Council of Churches declared support for the abolition of physical punishment and the promotion of positive discipline. This organization represents over 16 million Christians of 26 denominations.
- In 2004, the United Methodist Church in the US adopted two policies calling for the elimination of physical punishment in homes, schools and child care settings.
- A Covenant for Honouring Children (www.childhonouring.org) suggests nine guiding principles for living that can form the basis for a multi-faith consensus on societal renewal.

See the Appendix for some religious perspectives on education and discipline.

For more information on physical punishment and religion:

www.churchesfornon-violence.org/links.html

CHAPTER 2

Child rights principles

Pedagogical principles

PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Once the human rights foundation of education is established, we can build an approach to discipline that respects students' rights and teaches them what they need to learn.

Effective teaching requires that we identify the pedagogical principles on which our educational approach is based. These principles then become our guideposts as we create a positive learning environment for our students.

In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Article 3
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The positive discipline approach is based on several pedagogical principles:

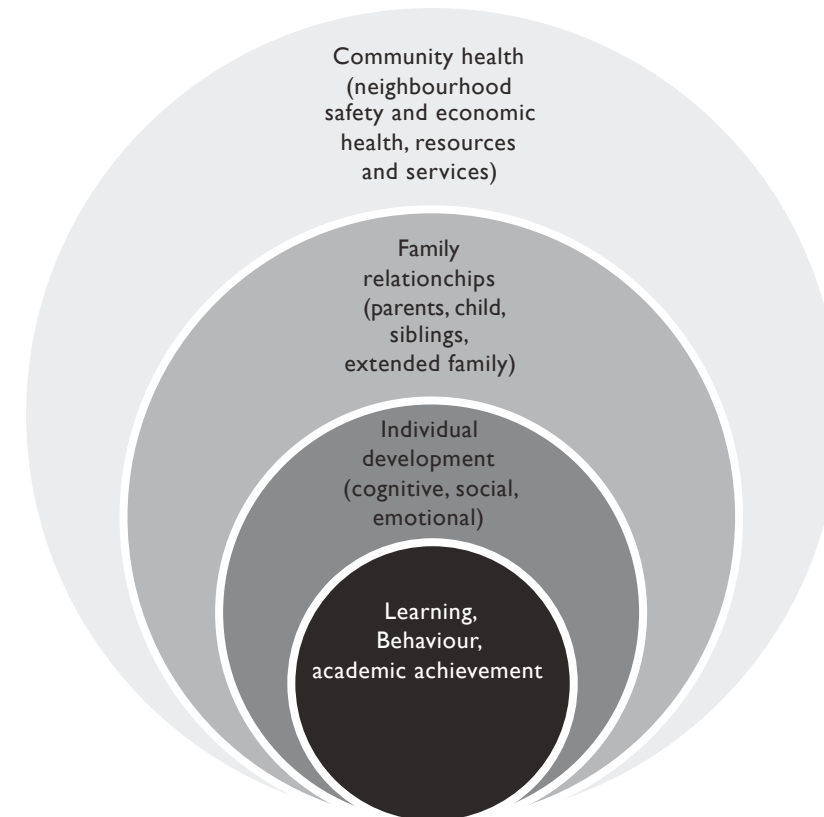
1. The positive discipline approach is holistic.

A holistic approach to education recognizes that all aspects of children's learning and development are interrelated. For example, when we understand how children's thinking develops, we can better understand why they behave as they do at different ages. When we understand children's social development, we can better understand why their motivation levels might fluctuate over time.

This approach enables us to respond to discipline issues positively. It also enables us to create a positive learning environment which prevents most discipline problems before they happen.

The positive discipline approach is based on understanding the interrelationships among:

- individual development
- learning, behaviour and academic achievement
- family relationships
- community health



Each of these domains is constantly influencing what the child brings to the classroom. When we are aware of these interrelationships, we are much better able to find effective solutions to children's learning and behavioural difficulties.

Because all aspects of children's learning and development are interrelated, positive discipline must be integrated into all aspects of teaching, including:

- the presentation of academic material
- the assessment of students' learning
- communication in the classroom
- communication with students' caregivers
- enhancing students' motivation
- resolving teacher-student conflicts
- resolving peer conflicts



Positive discipline is not just about children's behaviour. It applies to all aspects of their learning and all interactions among teachers, students and families.

2. The positive discipline approach is strengths-based.

A strengths-based approach to education recognizes that every child has strengths, competencies and talents. The positive discipline approach emphasizes and builds on students' abilities, efforts and improvements.



Positive discipline builds on students' strengths.

In this approach, mistakes are not seen as failures, but as opportunities to learn and improve one's skills. Mistakes, difficulties and challenges are not weaknesses, but springboards for learning.

3. The positive discipline approach is constructive.

When children's strengths are recognized, their motivation increases and they view themselves as increasingly competent.

Positive discipline emphasizes the teacher's role in building students' self-esteem and confidence, nurturing their independence, and fostering their sense of self-efficacy.

In the positive discipline approach, the teacher is a coach who supports students in their learning.

Rather than punishing students' academic or behavioural mistakes, the teacher explains, demonstrates and models the concepts and behaviours to be learned.

Rather than trying to control students' behaviour, the teacher seeks to understand it and to guide it in a positive direction.

Positive discipline builds students' self-esteem and confidence.

4. The positive discipline approach is inclusive.

Positive discipline is respectful of children's individual differences and equal rights. All children are included in the educational process, and all are entitled to the same standard of education.

Assessment and diagnosis are used to:

- identify particular learning challenges
- better understand those challenges
- make adaptations in the classroom environment to maximize every child's success
- help educators identify ways to teach every child effectively

Assessment and diagnosis are *not* used to:

- label or categorize children
- stereotype children
- segregate children

In positive discipline, the emphasis is on teaching to children's individual needs, strengths, social skills and learning styles within an integrated classroom – to the best of the school's ability.

Positive discipline respects the diversity of students.

Questioning Old Assumptions

Sometimes teachers' responses are based on outdated assumptions about children. The positive discipline approach provides an alternative view that calls many old assumption into question.

Old Assumption: *Physical punishment is necessary to maintain control in the classroom.*

Positive Discipline View: When we exert power over students, we create power struggles. Over time, many students will resist our control by acting out, lying, skipping school or dropping out. Teachers should focus on facilitating learning, not trying to control it. Learning should be active and enjoyable for students within a warm and structured learning environment created by the teacher.

Old Assumption: *Without physical punishment, I will lose my authority and the students' respect.*

Positive Discipline View: Authority and respect are often confused with fear. Authority comes from knowledge and wisdom; fear comes from coercion. Respect is earned and freely given; fear is an involuntary response to pain and humiliation. Respect builds relationships and strengthens bonds; fear erodes them.

Old Assumption: *Physical punishment has worked for decades, so why should we stop it now?*

Positive Discipline View: Throughout those decades, many students hated school and dropped out. Many with great potential lost their motivation to learn. Many have painful memories and suffer from low self-confidence and depression. Some carry resentment and hostility throughout their lives.

Old Assumption: *It is the teacher's job to give information and the student's job to remember it. They have to sit still and be quiet so that they can learn.*

Positive Discipline View: Children are active learners. They learn and understand best when they are actively involved in the learning process. When they are required to sit quietly and listen, their active minds wander. Children need to use their learning constructively, not just to remember facts. Teachers need to provide many opportunities for students to experiment, discover and construct their knowledge. This is how they learn and remember best.

Old Assumption: *My students' silence in the classroom is a sign of their respect for me. When they speak or ask questions in class, they are challenging my authority.*

Positive Discipline View: Children build their own understanding of the world and all of the people and objects in it. Their curiosity is innate. They are born wanting to learn and understand everything. Their questions and curiosity should be encouraged and nurtured so that they continue to want to learn throughout their lives. Students' silence is not a sign of respect. Usually it indicates fear, anxiety, disinterest, boredom or lack of understanding.

Old Assumption: *Children are incomplete beings. Teachers help to build them into complete people.*

Positive Discipline View: Children are complete human beings. They might understand things differently than adults do, but they are just as intelligent and have all the same feelings as adults. Children are worthy of respect and they have inherent rights, including the right to participation.

5. The positive discipline approach is proactive.

Teachers are much more effective when they plan to help children succeed over the long term than when they react to short-term difficulties.

Proactive education involves:

- understanding and addressing the roots of learning and behavioural difficulties
- identifying and implementing strategies that promote success and prevent conflict
- avoiding short-term reactions



Does Positive Discipline Take a Lot of Teachers' Time?

It does take time to understand the approach and learn the skills. But by investing this time now, you will save time later. Why?

- Students will become increasingly self-disciplined, so you will have fewer behaviour problems to handle.
- Students' interest and motivation will increase, so they will pay attention more, study more and achieve higher grades.

In contrast, physical and emotional punishment:

- breeds resentment and hostility which increase behaviour problems.
- lowers interest and motivation, so students pay attention less, study less and achieve lower grades.
- can create resistance, so they have to be repeated and intensified over time.

**Positive discipline is an investment
in nurturing a life-long motivation to learn.**

6. The positive discipline approach is participatory.

Students are motivated to learn when they feel engaged in the learning process. Positive discipline involves student participation in decision-making and respect for students' viewpoints.

Rather than emphasizing coercion and control, this approach seeks out students' opinions and perspectives, and involves them in creating the classroom environment.



Positive discipline engages students in the learning process.

When we have a set of principles to guide us, we are not only better equipped to resolve conflicts constructively, we can prevent many conflicts from arising and we can create a challenging, motivating learning environment. In the next section, we will examine the key components of effective planning for reaching our goals.

PART 2

THE PRACTICE OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Problem solving and
responding with positive discipline

Identifying individual differences

Understanding child development

Providing warmth

Providing structure

Identifying long-term goals

IDENTIFYING LONG-TERM GOALS

Teaching children all they need to learn in order to be successful in life is one of the worlds' most important jobs. But many teachers begin a new school year without thinking about the impact they will have on their students' later lives. We tend to focus on our immediate objectives while neglecting to consider how our interactions with our students affect the paths they will take long after they have left our classrooms.

In this chapter, you will think about your goals. These goals will be the foundation on which you will build your positive discipline skills.

The child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.

Preamble
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

CHAPTER 3

Identifying long-term goals

Imagine this ...

Tomorrow, your students are going to write a national examination. You have been working with them for two months to master the material. This is your last day to help them prepare.

Some of the students are not concentrating today. They are whispering to each other, laughing and disrupting the class.

You have told them to settle down, but they continue to make noise and distract the other students.

Think about what is going on inside of you.

How are you feeling?

What do you want to make happen at this moment?

What will you do to make these things happen right away?

Exercise – Your Feelings

How do you feel at this moment? Write down the words that best describe your feelings in this situation.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

Exercise – Your Short-term Goals

What do you want to make happen in this moment? Write down the things that you want your students to do right now.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

Exercise – Your Behaviour

How are you likely to try to make the students do what you want them to do at this moment? Write down the ways you are likely to react in this situation.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

When you thought about your feelings in the situation, did you include:

- stress?
- frustration?
- anger?
- exasperation?
- rising blood pressure?
- physical tension?
- powerlessness?
- desperation?

When you thought about what you wanted your students to do in the situation, did you include:

- being quiet?
- paying attention?
- showing respect?
- listening to you?
- doing what you say?

When you thought about how you would try to make the students do what you want them to do, did you include:

- yelling?
- threatening?
- sending students out of the classroom?
- hitting?
- storming out of the room?
- telling the students they are stupid, useless, lazy or bound to fail?

This situation is one of **short-term stress**.

These situations have three main features:

1. You want your students to change their behaviour *now*.
2. You are in an emotional state of *frustration, anger* and *powerlessness*.
3. You try to force the students to change their behaviour through regaining *power and control*.

Situations of short-term stress are common in classrooms around the world. And teachers' reactions to them are often harsh and punitive.

Now think about your current students and imagine this . . .

They are all grown up. They are 20 years old now.

Tomorrow, your school is hosting a reunion. Many of your former students plan to attend.

Close your eyes and imagine what your students will look like at that age.

Think about what is going on inside of you at this moment.

What will you feel when you see them at that age?

What kind of people do you hope they will be?

What do you hope they will have accomplished by then?

What kinds of relationships do you hope they will have?

How do you hope they will feel about you?

Exercise – Your Long-term Vision

1. How will you feel when you see your students grown up?

2. What kind of people do you hope they will be?

3. What do you hope they will have accomplished?

4. What kinds of relationships do you hope they will have?

5. How do you hope they will feel about you?

When you thought about **how you will feel**, did you include:

- happiness?
- excitement?
- pride in the positive role you played in their lives?

When you thought about **the kinds of people you hope they will be**, did you include:

- confident?
- good at communicating?
- having a love of learning?
- courteous?
- able to think independently?
- good at resolving personal conflicts?
- kind and empathic?
- honest?
- resilient to stress and adversity?

When you thought about **what you hope they will have accomplished**, did you include:

- getting an advanced education?
- contributing positively to their community?
- mastering challenges in their lives?
- achieving their dreams?

When you thought about the **kinds of relationships you hope they will have**, did you include:

- happy?
- trusting?
- mutually respectful?
- non-violent?

When you thought about **the feelings you hope they will have about you**, did you include:

- affection?
- thinking of you as a positive force in their lives?
- remembering you as kind and supportive?
- attribution their success to your wise guidance?

These are **long-term goals**.

As teachers, we aren't always able to witness our students' development over the long term. But each of us has an impact on their adult lives. Long-term goals are those lasting impacts that we hope to have on our students.

As teachers, we are in a position to not only impart academic knowledge to students, but also to equip them with the self-image, motivation, and social skills they will need for a successful and happy life.

Often, we are not conscious of our long-term goals. There are so many facts to teach, assignments to mark and projects to create each day. But the ultimate aim of education is to prepare students for success in their adult lives

Long-term goals are the impacts that teachers want to have on their students' adults lives.

The problem is that the way we react to short-term stress often interferes with our long-term goals.

For example:

- When you yell at your students, are you teaching them how to be courteous and respectful?
- When you hit your students, are you teaching them how to resolve conflict without violence?
- When you call your students stupid, lazy or useless, are you building their confidence?
- When you embarrass your students, are you fostering their love of learning?

Teachers can easily react to short-term frustration in a way that blocks their long-term goals. Yelling, humiliating and hitting will teach your students the opposite of what you want them to learn in the long run.

Every time you react this way, you lose an opportunity to show your students a better way – and to strengthen their interest and motivation.

This is one of the hardest challenges for teachers – to handle short-term stress in a way that helps them to achieve their long-term goals.

How well do your short-term reactions lead you toward your long-term goals?

Short-term Reactions	Long-term Goals
criticizing	building self-esteem
slapping	teaching non-violence
name-calling	building resilience
threatening	creating a positive attitude toward learning
embarrassing	inspiring happy memories of school and of you

How can you meet both your short-term goals **and** your long-term goals?

The key is to see short-term challenges as **opportunities** to work toward your long-term goals.

Every short-term challenge is an opportunity to work toward your long-term goals.

When you feel yourself becoming frustrated, this is a signal that you have an opportunity to teach your students something important.

You have an opportunity to teach your students how to:

- manage stress,
- communicate respectfully,
- handle conflict without yelling or hitting,
- consider other people's feelings, and
- achieve your goals without harming others physically or emotionally

You can do all of this while also fostering their interest and motivation to learn.

How is this possible? It is possible through using the tools of positive discipline – warmth and structure.

CHAPTER 4

PROVIDING WARMTH AND STRUCTURE

Your long-term goals are your blueprints. They keep you focused on the impact you want to have on your students. Achieving those goals requires two tools – warmth and structure.

In this chapter, you will learn what warmth and structure are and why they are important. You will think about how you can provide warmth and structure to your students in ways that will lead you toward your long-term goals.

All appropriate measures shall be taken to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence.

Article 19
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Providing warmth

Providing structure

Identifying long-term goals

Providing warmth

What is warmth?

- respect for the student's developmental level
- sensitivity to the child's academic and social needs
- empathy with the child's feelings
- emotional security
- expressions of caring and affection

Warmth affects students academically, emotionally and behaviorally.

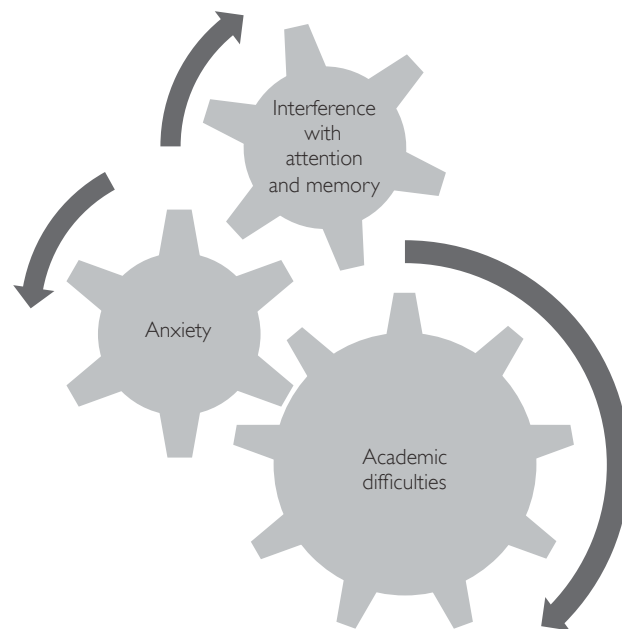


Exercise – Why is Warmth Important?

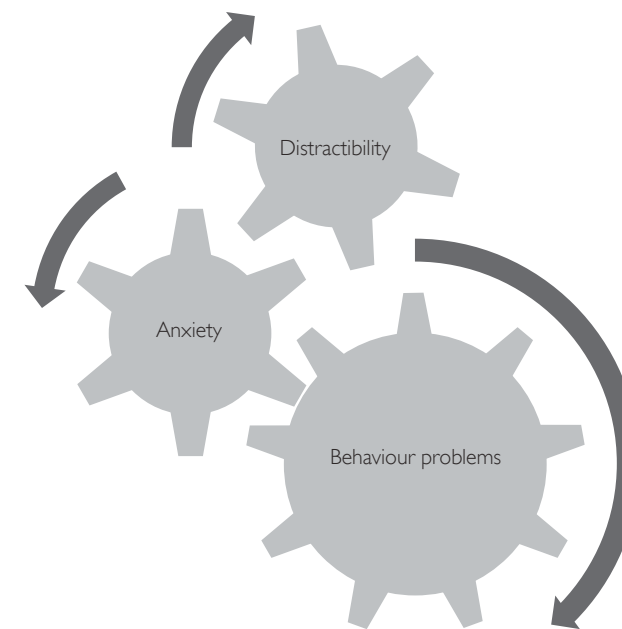
To understand why warmth is such an important part of school discipline, imagine that you are learning a new language.

- Will you learn better if your teacher:
 - tells you what you are doing right, or ☐
 - tells you only what you are doing wrong? ☐
- Will you learn better if you feel:
 - safe with your teacher, or ☐
 - afraid that she will hit you if you make a mistake? ☐
- Will you learn better if you think:
 - your teacher will stay with you and support you no matter how many mistakes you make, or ☐
 - he will storm out of the room in anger when you make errors? ☐
- Will you want to please a teacher who:
 - is kind and understanding, or ☐
 - yells at, embarrasses and criticizes you? ☐
- Will you want to learn other languages if your teacher:
 - tells you how capable you are, or ☐
 - tells you that you're stupid? ☐
- Will you want to tell your teacher when you're having problems if you expect:
 - he will listen and help, or ☐
 - he will get angry and punish you? ☐

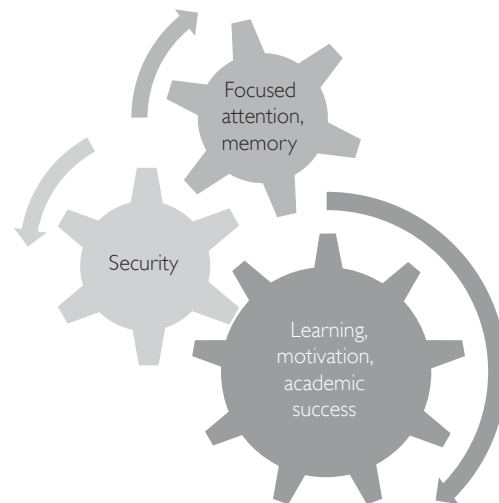
If you chose the “warm” teacher in each case, you are aware that anxiety interferes with attention, learning and memory. If students are anxious, much of their energy is diverted from concentrating on their work to managing their anxiety. This means that much of the information being taught is not attended to, so it cannot be remembered. The resulting academic failure creates more anxiety, which compounds the learning problem.



As this process continues, students are likely to show behavioural problems. Anxiety contributes to distractibility which can make children restless and fidgety. When teachers punish this behaviour, the students' anxiety is increased, which compounds their restlessness.



All people learn best when they feel relaxed and secure. Their energy can be focused on paying attention, so they are more likely to process the information and to remember it. They also feel safe to make mistakes, which is an important part of learning. And they are comfortable saying when they are confused. This situation promotes learning.



In a warm classroom climate, students are much more likely to be cooperative and to have fewer behaviour problems. Their academic success fuels their interest, so they are less distractible. They are not anxious, so they are less restless. And they come to associate the classroom with positive feelings, so their love of learning grows.

Warmth increases learning, encourages cooperation and teaches long-term values.

Some ways that teachers create a warm classroom climate are:

- getting to know their students as people and where they are from
- encouraging them when they are having difficulty
- recognizing their efforts and successes
- supporting them when they are facing challenges in their lives
- telling them that they believe in them
- looking at things from their point of view
- sharing humour with them
- listening to them
- having fun with them
- showing them that they are respected even when they make mistakes

Exercise – Creating a Warm Classroom Climate

List 5 ways that you create a climate of warmth in your classroom.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Providing structure

What is structure?

- clear guidelines for behaviour and for academic tasks
- clearly consistently stated and reasonable expectations
- clearly explained reasons for rules
- opportunities to fix mistakes
- encouragement of independent thinking
- negotiation

Structure is the information that students need in order to succeed academically and behaviourally. It gives students the tools they need to solve problems when you are not present.

Structure shows students how to work out conflicts with other people in a constructive, nonviolent way. It also informs them about how they can succeed academically.

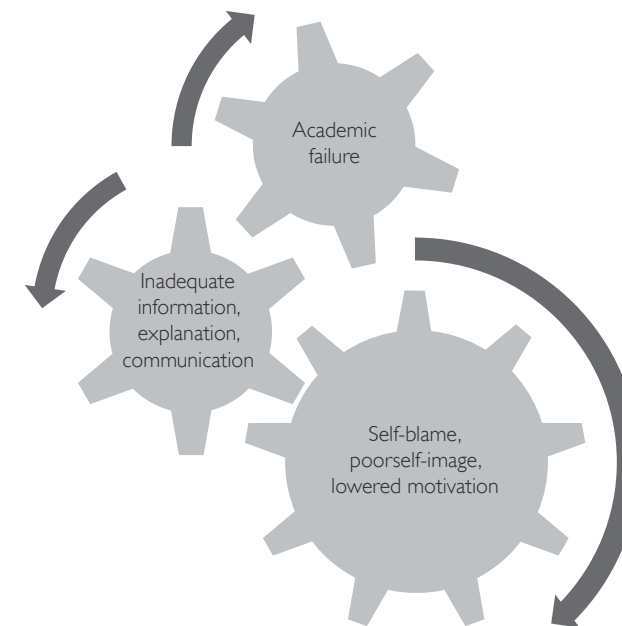
Like warmth, structure affects students academically, emotionally and behaviourally.

Exercise – Why is Structure Important?

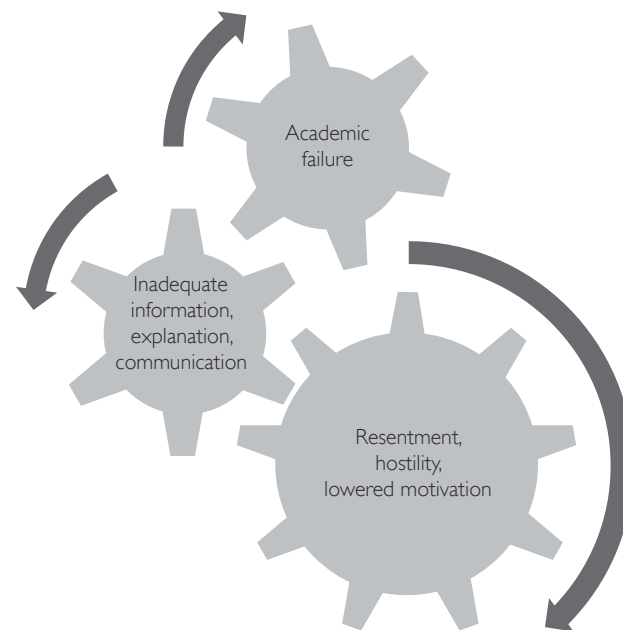
To understand why structure is such an important part of classroom discipline, imagine again that you are learning a new language.

1. Will you learn better if your teacher:
 - a) teaches you the rules of spelling, or ☐
 - b) expects you to figure out how to spell new words and punishes you when you make mistakes? ☐
2. Will you want to learn more if your teacher:
 - a) recognizes and appreciates your attempts, even if they're not perfect, or ☐
 - b) threatens to punish you if you make a mistake? ☐
3. Will you learn better if your teacher:
 - a) gives you the information you need to pass a test or, ☐
 - b) doesn't give you the information you need and then gets angry when you fail the test? ☐
4. Will you want to please a teacher who:
 - a) talks your mistakes over with you and shows you how to improve next time, or ☐
 - b) hits you when you make mistakes? ☐
5. Will you want to learn more languages if your teacher:
 - a) gives you advice and encouragement to try, or ☐
 - b) tells you that you'll never be able to learn? ☐
6. Will you want to tell your teacher when you're having problems if you expect:
 - a) he will try to understand why you are having difficulty and help you find a new approach, or ☐
 - b) he will get angry and punish you? ☐

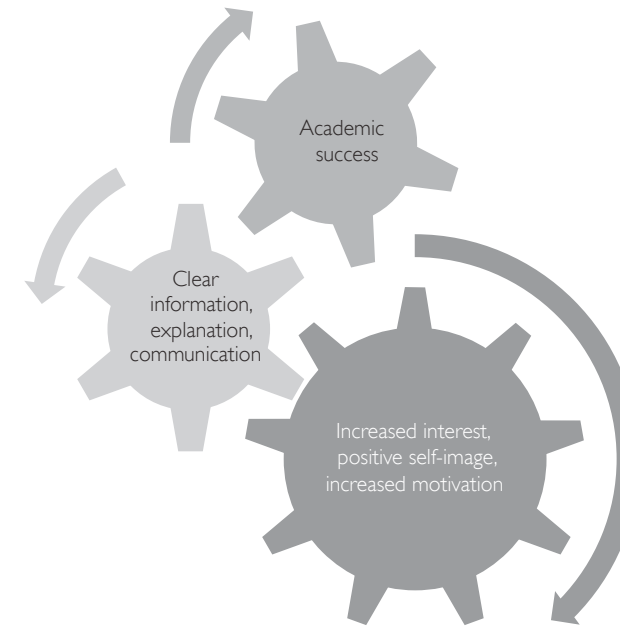
If you chose the “structured” teacher in each case, you are aware that lack of information and poor communication interfere with learning. If students don't have the information they need to succeed, they are likely to fail. If a teacher then punishes them for their failure, they can start to see themselves as stupid and lose their interest and motivation.



Or, they might begin to resent the teacher for not providing the information they need in a way that they can understand. These students are likely to lose interest in and dislike the subject being taught.



All people learn best when they know what is expected of them, if those expectations are fair and reasonable, and if they are given the information they need to meet those expectations. When we succeed, our interest in the subject grows, our self-image improves and our motivation increases.



When students know what is expected of them, and believe they will get the information needed to meet those expectations, they become more confident in their learning ability and they want to learn more. They are less confused and frustrated, so they can concentrate on their learning. Their success gives them positive feelings about school and the subject being taught. And their behaviour improves.



In a structured classroom, students are given the information they need to succeed.

Some ways that teachers provide structure for their students are:

- involving students in setting rules for the classroom
- helping students find ways to fix their mistakes in a way that helps them to learn
- explaining the reasons for rules
- being consistent, but also fair and flexible
- controlling their anger
- avoiding threats and punishments
- explaining their point of view and listening to their students' points of view
- teaching them about the effects of their actions on other people
- giving them the information they need to make good decisions
- talking with them and learning about the challenges in their lives
- acting as a positive role model and a guide

Exercise – Providing Structure

List 5 ways that you provide structure for your students

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Positive discipline combines warmth and structure throughout each student's school years.

It is a way of thinking that helps teachers to meet their short-term goals, while having a positive life-long impact on their students.

It is a way of teaching students how to:

- solve problems
- think for themselves
- get along with others
- resolve conflict without violence
- do the right thing when no adults are present

It also is a way of increasing students' interest in learning, strengthening their motivation to achieve and promoting their academic success.



Positive discipline is based on the idea that children are constantly changing, growing and developing. They are learners. They learn best when they have support and information.

Warmth = Support
Structure = Information

But children of different ages need different kinds of support and information. The next chapter will describe how children develop so that you can consider the kinds of warmth and structure they need at different ages.

UNDERSTANDING CHILD DEVELOPMENT

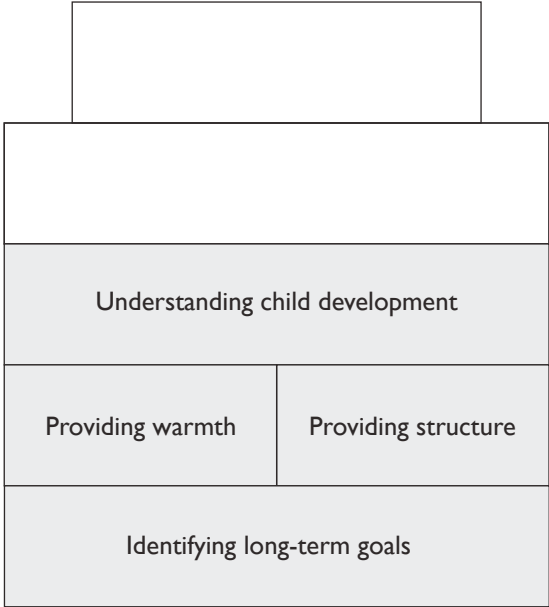
Teachers are well aware that children change as they grow. Development is an ongoing, never-ending process. It is because children change that we are able to teach them new information and new skills. All learning builds on prior learning – and forms a foundation for future learning.

But children do not learn in the same way at every age. Their ways of thinking and understanding change, so the ways that we teach them must change as well. In this chapter, you will learn how to reach your long-term goals by providing warmth and structure that are appropriate to your students' stage of development.

Members of the community shall provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the child's exercise of his or her rights.

Article 5
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

CHAPTER 5



Much of students' development is invisible to teachers. We were not part of students' lives in their infancy or early childhood – and we are unlikely to be part of their lives after they leave our classrooms. We only can see a “snapshot” of their development during the months that we spend with them.

Positive discipline requires an understanding of how children think and feel at different stages. To be effective teachers, we need to:

- have appropriate expectations of our students' abilities at different ages
- understand that some students might not have the experiences or information they need in order to succeed
- reflect on what we could do differently to help them learn
- recognize that our students' perspectives might be different from ours
- understand our own contributions to conflict with students

Early Development and Why It Matters

When a child arrives at the classroom door, her learning and behaviour have already been influenced by her previous experiences. Sometimes, the source of a child's difficulties can be found even before birth.

As early as the time of conception, important developmental influences are present. Sometimes our students' challenges, as well as their strengths, are due to their **genetic make-up**. For example, a parent's genes might hand down a predisposition toward distractibility, mathematical ability, verbal fluency or moodiness.



Learning problems also can be caused by prenatal exposure to toxins. Because the brain is formed during the prenatal period, toxic substances consumed by the mother, or present in the environment, can have a profound impact on the child's learning and behaviour.

Brain development also can be affected by parental **poverty**. Mothers who cannot afford prenatal care, a nutritious diet or prenatal education are at risk of giving birth to children with intellectual and behavioural challenges.

Many things can happen during **birth** that can affect the baby's brain. In some cases, the learning and behaviour difficulties that children show in the classroom can be traced to birth complications.

Immediately after birth, a wide range of factors begin to influence the child's development. This early development is fundamental to the behaviours and competencies that we see in the classroom. It affects children's readiness to enter school, their ability to learn in a structured environment and their relationships with teachers and peers.

One of the most important factors influencing children's development is their **attachment** to their caregivers.



Learning and behaviour problems can result from factors that affect children's brains before or during birth, including:

- *heredity*
- *toxins*
- *poverty*
- *birth complications*

When caregivers respond to their babies' cries by picking them up, rocking them, changing them, feeding them and comforting them, they build a trusting relationship with their babies. As babies' trust in their caregivers grows, they develop an attachment to them. If the caregivers continue to respond respectfully and sensitively to their children's attempts to communicate, this attachment continues to deepen and the child develops a sense of safety and security.

Some caregivers, however, do not respond sensitively or reliably to their infants' cries or early language. Perhaps they are unaware of the importance of responding, have a low tolerance for the sound of babies' cries, are under great stress, or are ill or depressed.

Whatever the reason, when caregivers do not respond sensitively to their infants, their babies learn that they cannot rely on their caregivers to meet their needs. In this situation, their attachment can be disrupted.

In some cases, children's school difficulties can be traced to a disrupted attachment. Why is this so?

1. Attachment fosters brain development

Infants who feel secure tend to grow into toddlers who explore their environments because they expect that they will be safe. Exploration is crucial for children's brain development. This is how they gain concepts of number, colour, shape, sound, size and weight. The more they can explore, the more prepared they will be for school.

Children with disrupted attachments tend to be fearful of exploring their environments, so they lose learning opportunities. When they enter school, they may not have acquired the basic concepts they need to succeed.

2. Attachment fosters emotional development

Infants who have learned that their parents are reliable feel emotionally secure. When they enter school, they are less likely to cry when their parents leave. If they do cry, they are easy to comfort. They can devote their energy and attention to school activities because they believe that their parents will return.

Children with disrupted attachments tend to feel emotionally insecure. When they enter school, they are likely to have difficulty separating from their parents. They can be difficult to comfort, often crying inconsolably. It can be hard for them to concentrate on their schoolwork because of their anxiety.

3. Attachment fosters language development

Infants whose caregivers respond to their cries, laughter, babbling and early words tend to develop large vocabularies. They come to believe that they can reach their goals through language, so they use words to express themselves.

Some caregivers ignore, criticize or make fun of their children's babbling, laughing and early language. These children are discouraged from communicating with words. They also lose opportunities to expand their vocabularies and acquire verbal concepts.



4. Attachment fosters social development

Infants who trust their caregivers tend to trust others. They expect other people to be dependable and responsive. They are more likely to be confident in social interactions and to have positive relationships with teachers and peers.

Infants who have not learned to trust their caregivers tend to mistrust others. They expect others to hurt or reject them. They are likely to lack confidence in social interactions. They might be socially anxious or shy. Or they might become aggressive to defend themselves against rejection. Insecurely attached children tend to have more conflictual relationships with teachers and peers.

It is important to remember that disrupted attachment can be disrupted for many reasons. Usually, parents do not set out to weaken their relationships with their children.

In most cases, they are simply unaware of the importance of responding sensitively to their babies. In other cases, they might be ill, absent due to employment demands, or depressed. Whatever the cause, teachers should consider the role that attachment might play in the difficulties that children display at school.



Disrupted attachment can contribute to:

- *slower acquisition of basic concepts*
- *emotional insecurity*
- *poor communication skills*
- *difficulties in social relationships*

Another important aspect of early development that affects children's behaviour in school is caregivers' response to conflict. Their responses can strengthen children's skills – or they can discourage children from learning.

When adults understand that preschoolers' behaviours reflect their stage of development, they are likely to respond with explanations, reassurance and guidance. These responses strengthen children's sense of competence, build their self-respect and teach them problem-solving skills.

Children who feel competent are more willing to try. They are confident in their abilities to succeed – or to cope, if they fail. This confidence is crucial to their attitude toward learning and their motivation in school.

Children who have watched their parents resolve conflict non-violently are learning that it is important to listen to others and to work together to find solutions.

But when adults respond to preschoolers' behaviour with anger, criticism and physical punishment, the children feel disrespected and ashamed for who they are and what they feel. These responses erode children's sense of competence and damage their confidence. These children can become anxious and withdrawn, afraid to express themselves. They also can appear to be unmotivated because they fear criticism should they try and fail. And they are missing opportunities to learn how to resolve conflict respectfully.



Children's experiences before school entry set the stage for their readiness to learn, their motivation to learn and their skills in social interaction. In many cases, the learning and behavioural difficulties that become evident in school had their origins in what children learned about themselves years earlier.

It is important for teachers to consider how a child's preschool experiences might have formed a self-concept that is expressed in his attitudes toward learning and his behaviour in the classroom or in the schoolyard.

Making the Transition to School

Making the transition to school is a momentous event in a child's life. It is one of the biggest adjustments she will ever make.



From a child's perspective, school is an entirely new world. It is in a new location, filled with new children and new adults with new expectations. There are new schedules and routines to follow. And, perhaps for the first time, the child is without her parents or caregivers.

This situation presents a tremendous challenge for the child.

The foundation for her transition to school was laid when she was an infant and a preschooler. Adults' responses during her early life affected:

- her sense of security
- whether she has learned basic concepts, such as numbers, colours and shapes
- her confidence
- her motivation to learn

Each of these factors will affect her transition to the school environment. But at the moment of school entry, teachers assume a large share of responsibility for the child's successful transition. Their responses can affect children's feelings toward school and learning for many years to come. Teachers can help children to make this adjustment when they understand how children think at this age.

"I understand what I have experienced"

At the time of school entry, children can understand things they have experienced. But they have difficulty in understanding **things they have not experienced**. For example, they have difficulty understanding that other people speak different languages from their own, that their parents were once children, or that they will get old. So, it is difficult for them to predict what might happen if they do something they have not done before.

A child of this age is not able to predict:

- what might happen if she takes a toy from another child
- what might happen if she hits another child
- what might happen if she forgets her shoes
- what might happen if she doesn't go to the bathroom when she has the opportunity



“I understand what I can see and touch”

Children of this age can grasp concrete concepts. But **they have difficulty with abstract concepts**. For example, if they see one rock placed beside two rocks, they can understand that there are three rocks. But they have difficulty answering the question, “What is one plus two?” They need to count using their fingers or other concrete objects.

A child of this age will have difficulty:

- solving arithmetic problems in his head
- solving conflicts in his head
- spelling words in his head
- planning a response in his head
- with learning activities that are abstract (that don't use touch and sight)



“I understand what is most obvious to me”

At this stage, children have difficulty understanding that there is more than one dimension to any situation. They focus on the aspect that is most obvious to them. But **they have difficulty to consider the less obvious one at the same time**. For example, a child will understand that her father is a father; but find it difficult to understand that her father is also a son.

A child of this age will have difficulty understanding that:

- people can feel love and anger at the same time
- she can be smart and unable to understand at the same time
- a word can mean two things at the same time
- she can be “bad” and “good” at the same time

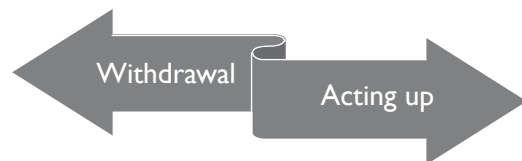


If a child of this age is punished, it will be very difficult for him to:

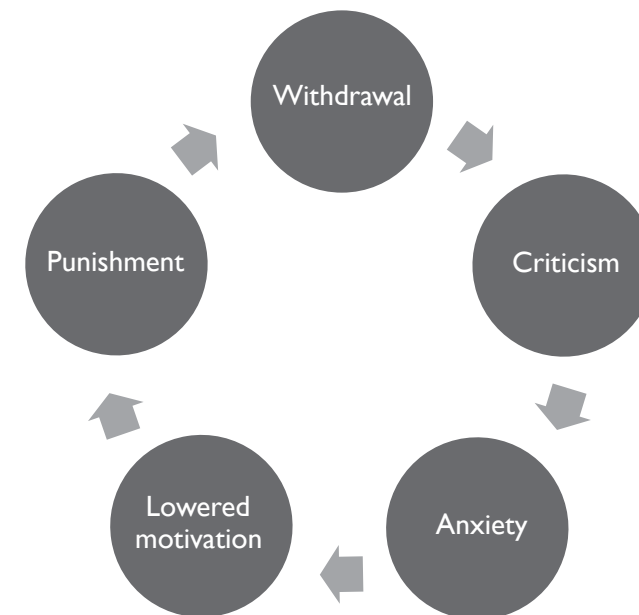
- predict what will happen next
- figure out a solution to the problem in his head
- understand that the adult punishing him still cares about him



When a child of this age is punished, he is likely to feel rejected. When children feel rejected by their teachers, they become insecure and anxious in the school environment. As a result they might withdraw - or they might act up.



Children who withdraw become quiet, shy and fearful of making mistakes. If teachers then respond with criticism, these children become more anxious. Over time, they can easily lose their motivation to try.



Before School

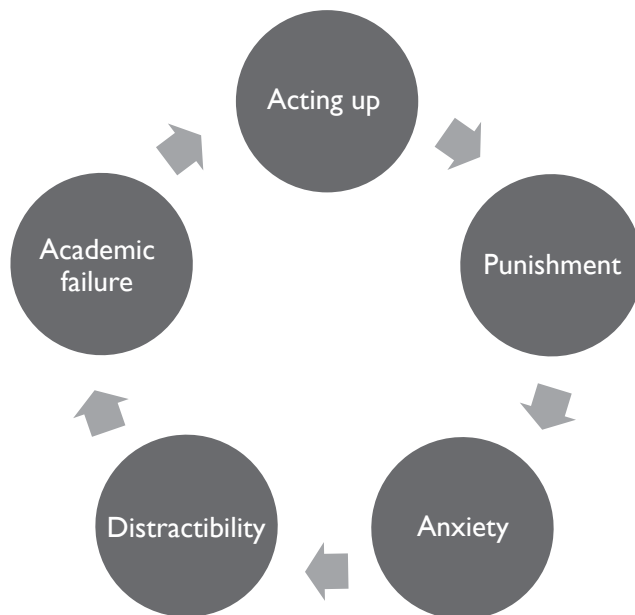
Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds

Children who act up are likely to be punished again, leading to greater anxiety. These children find it hard to concentrate on their schoolwork and begin to fail. Over time, they can easily stop caring about school.



If these patterns are established early, they can set the stage for difficulties throughout school.

Rather than punishing the child's behaviour, it is important for teachers **to look for the reason behind the behaviour**.

There are many reasons why a child might have difficulty adjusting to school, including:

1. She is not ready to understand the concepts being taught, so she is easily distracted and discouraged.
2. She has a disrupted attachment to her caregivers, so she feels insecure and frightened.
3. She has been punished at home, so she is anxious.
4. There is conflict between her parents or a crisis at home so she is worried.

If a child is having difficulty making the adjustment to school, it is important to assess the behaviour and **find the reasons** that lie behind it. Then you can choose a response that encourages self-discipline while motivating them to learn and achieve.

Responses that discourage and demotivate children are:

- *physical punishment*
- *criticising*
- *yelling*
- *ridiculing*
- *embarrassing*
- *shaming*

Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds

How Can Teachers Help Children to Make the Transition to the School?

Teachers can help to ease children's transition to school in a number of ways. Remember your tools – warmth and structure.

I. Provide warmth

- Create a physically and emotionally secure environment.
 - Speak with a gentle, reassuring voice.
 - Bend down to the child's level to talk.
 - Construct a classroom environment that is interesting, fun and engaging.
 - Ensure that children can make mistakes without fear of punishment, anger or criticism.
- Consider the child's developmental level.
 - Remember that entering school is a huge transition for children. Respond empathically to their stress and anxiety.
 - Provide reassurance that the caregiver will return.
 - Provide plenty of opportunities for exploration and discovery. For example, provide interesting objects of different shapes, sizes and textures; numbers, letters and characters that children can touch and play with; sub-stances like sand, water and clay that children can manipulate.

- Provide many opportunities for physical movement. For example, provide time for running and playing freely outside; play jumping games to teach counting; teach about music by dancing.
 - Provide opportunities for imaginary play. For example, provide costumes, toys and furniture that allow children to make-believe; objects like buckets and fabric that children can use for a variety of purposes.
- Consider the child's early experiences
 - Think about whether a child's learning difficulties might be due to problems in brain development.
 - Think about whether a child's behavioural difficulties might be due to disrupted attachment.
 - Find out whether your students have experienced trauma in their early years.
 - Think about whether a child's aggression might be due to his own experiences of violence.
 - Get to know your students' caregivers and assess whether they are supportive or punitive.
 - Find out whether your students have had opportunities to learn basic concepts.

2. Provide structure

- Give your students information that they can understand.
 - Provide clear, simple information.
 - Give only one instruction at a time.
 - Keep the classroom rules simple, and have few of them.
 - Engage your students in developing the classroom rules.
 - Prepare them for transitions, such as changes in activities and going home at the end of the day.
- Help students learn about the consequences of their decisions through:
 - Talking and explaining.
 - Helping them recognize when their decisions have positive outcomes.
 - Helping them make restitution when their decisions have negative outcomes.
- Be a positive role model.
 - Treat your students with respect and kindness.
 - Show them how to cope with frustration.
 - Treat them fairly.
 - Show them how to approach difficult problems in an optimist and constructive manner.



6- to 8-Year-Olds

If the transition to school has been made successfully, children in the early years of elementary/primary school are typically eager to learn and highly motivated to master new challenges. They have an innate drive to understand their world.

Children's experiences in elementary/primary school set the stage for their success in later years. At this time, teachers need to create a learning climate that is **supportive and encouraging**, and that nurtures children's motivation to learn.

Some characteristics of children in this stage can present challenges for teachers. These children are active, curious, distractible and independent. Each of these characteristics can lead to conflict in the classroom. Teachers' approaches to these conflicts can have a powerful impact on children's feelings about school.

Physical Activity

Children of this age have a great deal of **energy**. They seem to never tire. They are always in motion – running, jumping, sliding and skipping. Why?

- Their large muscles are growing and strengthening.
- They are gaining important skills in balance and coordination.
- Their brains cells are forming new connections.

Because physical movement is critical to all of these developments, children have an inborn motivation to *move*. It is extremely difficult for children of this age to sit still for any length of time.

Not only is movement important for their physical and brain development, it also is important for their social development. By playing active games, they learn social skills, such as cooperation, turn-taking, and conflict resolution.

Physical activity also is important for children's emotional health. It helps them release tension – and to experience joy in their newfound physical competence.



Curiosity

In the early years of elementary/primary school, children are **interested in everything**. They love to explore and experiment. They are delighted by the feeling of discovery. As they explore and discover, they are:

- gaining deeper understanding of how things work
- constructing their own knowledge of objects, relationships, numbers, letters and shapes
- learning new vocabulary
- increasing the connections among their brain cells



The process of discovery is crucial to children's learning in this stage. The feeling of figuring out how objects are put together and how things work is very rewarding. Each time they make a discovery, their confidence grows. When they build their own knowledge, their brains physically change, making future learning easier.

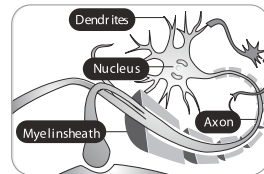
As children solve problems together, their social skills grow. They hear others' opinions and try out others' ideas, building a foundation for perspective-taking and negotiation. As adults respond respectfully to their questions, their curiosity and desire to learn are nurtured.

Opportunities to discover also foster creativity. As they figure out how things work, children develop ideas about how to adapt and apply that knowledge in other situations – the basis of innovation.

Distractibility

In this stage, children's attention is easily drawn to all of the things going on around them. Like their bodies, their minds are in constant motion. They seem to have **difficulty focusing** on lessons and seat work. Why?

- The rapid growth of connections among their brain cells makes their brains highly excitable.
- Myelination (coating of brain cells) is advancing rapidly, speeding up the transmission of nerve impulses.
- They are interested in everything and primed to learn from every new experience.



Teachers can become frustrated by the distractibility of children in this stage. Sometimes they think it is a sign of disrespect or defiance. Actually, it is a signal that the child's brain needs stimulation.

Young children's brains are like sponges, ready to soak up every experience, process it and learn from it. New and unexpected experiences provide wonderful opportunities for learning.

Independence

Children of this age **love to do things for themselves** and to make their own decisions. They might refuse to do what we want them to do, or make a fuss when we want them to go somewhere. Why?

- They are learning and practicing how to think for themselves.
- They place importance on things that we might consider unimportant, such as the colour of a shirt or how their fruit is cut.
- They have difficulty making sudden transitions from one activity to another.

Sometimes teachers interpret children's desire for independence as non-compliance. Actually, children of this age are more likely to comply if they are given some decision-making power.

The ability to make decisions is crucial in later years. During this stage, if children can practice decision-making in a safe environment, they will be more skilled at it when they are older.



Children in early elementary school tend to be:

- *physically active*
- *curious*
- *distractible*
- *independent*

These characteristics make young children always ready to learn.

How Can Teachers Minimize Conflict and Maximize Learning in this Stage?

There are several approaches that teachers can take to preventing conflict and optimizing opportunities for learning. Remember your tools - warmth and structure.

I. Provide warmth

- Create a physically and emotionally secure environment where students are able to:
 - Make mistakes without fear of punishment.
 - Exercise their decision-making skills.
 - Channel their physical and mental energy into constructive activities.



- Make school interesting
 - Create a classroom climate of pleasure and enjoyment.
 - Connect concepts to students' individual interests.
 - Find out what children of this age find engaging and use that information to guide your presentation of material.
 - Use humour to make your teaching memorable.
 - Nurture your students' love of learning.
- Consider the child's developmental level
 - Provide frequent opportunities for physical movement. For example, integrate dance and games into teaching language.
 - Create a classroom environment that promotes learning through discovery. For example, send students on a hunt through the school for all of the places where they can find objects that begin with certain sounds, or 90-degree angles, or parallelograms.
 - Use distractions as opportunities to teach. For example, use a sudden rainstorm to discuss clouds, weather changes, condensation, evaporation or climate change.
 - Give students opportunities to make decisions. For example, they could choose to present a project: orally as a set of drawings.

- Build relationships with caregivers
 - Communicate often with caregivers about your approach to teaching, your goals and their children's goals.
 - Involve students in your communications with their caregivers.
 - Recognize caregivers' concerns during this period, such as worry about peer influences, bullying, academic difficulties and their children's growing independence. Give them an opportunity to talk with you about their concerns.
 - Provide opportunities for caregivers to spend time in the classroom, to participate in school activities and to feel part of the school community.
 - Get to know each student as an individual and as a member of a family.
 - Provide opportunities for children to share their unique knowledge and experiences at school.
 - Consider the impact of homework on family life and on children's responsibilities and opportunities outside of school.



2. Provide structure

- Encourage students' participation in:
 - Setting their own learning goals.
 - Setting class rules for behaviour.
 - Solving their conflicts.
- Help students appreciate the consequences of their decisions through:
 - Talking and explaining.
 - Helping them recognize when their decisions have positive outcomes.
 - Helping them make restitution when their decisions have negative outcomes.
- Be a positive role model:
 - Respect the rights of others.
 - Treat other people with kindness.
 - Respond to others' difficulties with empathy.
 - Treat other people fairly.

Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds



Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

Children's attitudes toward school and learning have been largely formed by the time they enter the middle school years. If their teachers and caregivers have interacted with them in a way that respects their developmental levels, engaged them in learning and provided adequate opportunities for discovery, they are likely to have maintained their interest in learning.

With this stage come new opportunities and new challenges. Children are now able to solve problems mentally, so their mathematical abilities progress quickly. They also become able to think about their own thinking ("metacognition"). This means that they can reflect on how they learn, assess their strategies and try out new ones.

Socially, children in this stage become increasingly focused on peer relationships. They form close friendships – and can experience intense conflict. In this stage, teachers need to create a learning climate that fosters both **academic and social confidence**.

Threats to Children's Confidence in Senior Elementary/Primary School

During this stage, teachers have the challenge of building confidence in students who are facing daily threats to their self-esteem. These threats arise from their development in the physical, emotional and social domains.

1. The Physical Domain

Children's bodies change dramatically during this stage. Some will develop strength and athletic skills, participate in sports and feel confident in their physical abilities. Others will grow more slowly, or be physically awkward or weaker than their peers. Others will grow taller or gain more weight than their classmates.

Toward the end of this stage, children will experience a major physical transformation: they will enter puberty. Their bodies will begin to take on their adult forms as secondary sex characteristics appear, and the differences between boys and girls will become more obvious.

Throughout this stage, children become increasingly aware of their bodies and those of their peers. If they feel "different" from the others, they can become self-conscious. If their peers or teachers tease or ridicule them, their confidence can be shattered.



2. The Emotional Domain

The onset of puberty is under the control of hormones released in the brain. As puberty approaches, these hormones produce not only physical changes, but emotional ones as well.

At this time in their development, children can become moody, irritable and prone to tears. They can be highly sensitive and easily embarrassed. They might react intensely to an incident that seems minor to the teacher. They might be inseparable from a best friend one day, and reject that same friend the next day. They also might feel confident in their abilities one day, and feel completely inadequate the next day.

It is important that teachers provide the emotional stability that their students need during this stage. If teachers are highly reactive, prone to moodiness and anger or unpredictable in their responses, their students will lose confidence in their ability to regulate their own emotions. Adults need to provide an emotionally stable environment that will give students the emotional security they need at this age.



Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds

3.The Social Domain

The dramatic physical and emotional changes of this stage bring about equally dramatic changes in children's social relationships. This can be a time of confusion and uncertainty about friendships. Power relationships emerge among students. And **bullying** is very common.

Bullies aim to intimidate and humiliate students who lack confidence. Their effects on their victims are profound. Children who are bullied become fearful of going to school. They often don't tell anyone for fear of retaliation by the bully. In the classroom, their attention is continuously diverted to worrying about what the bully will do next, and how they will keep themselves safe.

Much bullying takes place on the way to and from school, and in the schoolyard. Schools need to develop strong anti-bullying policies and to guarantee confidentiality to children who report bullying. Teachers need special training in how to respond to bullying so that they don't worsen the situation for the victim. Teachers also need to ensure that they don't engage in bullying of students.

In 2006, Sombat Tapanya conducted a survey of 3,000 students in grades 4 to 9 from all regions of Thailand. Overall, 39% reported being bullied on a regular basis. Among students in grades 4-6, the rate was even higher - close to 50%. The three locations where most bullying took place were: 1) the classroom while the teacher was absent; 2) hallways and stairways; and 3) the schoolyard.

Another important development of this stage is children's emerging interest in romantic relationships. With the onset of puberty comes a new awareness of emotional and physical attraction to peers, as well as the possibility of being re-jected by them. These issues can occupy much of students' thinking, distracting them from their studies.

Both teachers and students need to know that this is a normal development, but a very sensitive one. Children should never be teased or shamed about their romantic interests. Instead, adults need to respect their feelings, listen to their concerns, answer their questions and teach them how to navigate these relationships respectfully. Children need to gain confidence in their abilities to handle their complex emotions without hurting others physically or emotionally. These experiences build a foundation for establishing intimate relationships built on respect and non-violence.

Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds

How Can Teachers Promote Students' Confidence?

There are many ways in which teachers can build students' confidence in this stage. Remember your tools – warmth and structure.

I. Provide warmth

- Create a physically and emotionally secure environment.
 - o Provide support when they have difficulties.
 - o Resist criticizing or punishing mistakes.
 - o Never embarrass or humiliate them.
- Consider your students' developmental level
 - o Understand the importance of their social relationships.
 - o Be aware of children who are bullied or socially rejected. Give them support and guidance in a way that protects their privacy.
 - o Be sensitive to “social hierarchies”. Model and encourage empathy for vulnerable students, and give them abundant support and encouragement.

- Maintain communication with your students' caregivers.
 - o Get to know your students' families; understand their home stresses and supports.
 - o Encourage parents and other caregivers to visit your classroom, volunteer in the school and participate in special events.
 - o Send information home frequently. Explain what your students are learning, the purpose of their assignments and how to help with homework.
 - o Work in partnership with caregivers on resolving difficulties.
 - o Be aware that homework and pressure to excel can cause family conflict. Be sensitive to whether your expectations are contributing to family difficulties.



Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds

2. Provide structure

- Let your students know what they are doing well.
 - Recognize their efforts, even if the outcome is not perfect.
 - Focus on their successes when providing feedback on their work.
- Help your students figure out the reasons for their difficulties.
 - Help them to reflect on their learning strategies and to find more effective ones.
 - Find different ways of explaining concepts, using visual aids, concrete objects or real-life examples.



- Address their social challenges.
 - Be aware of who the bullies are and make it clear that their behaviour is not permitted.
 - Be aware of conflicts among students. Model ways of resolving conflict in a way that teaches self-respect and respect for others.
- Engage their interest.
 - Discover and recognize each student's abilities and competencies.
 - Find ways to integrate their interests into projects and assignments.
 - Make your classes interesting so that they forget about their social concerns for a while.
 - Show them the relevance of academic learning to their lives.
 - Nurture their expanding interests.
 - Encourage them to set goals for the future.
- Ensure that after-school activities are provided in the school and community.
 - Keep students busy before and after school to prevent bullying and foster skill-building.
 - Organize clubs and teams. Encourage your students to start clubs based on common interests.
 - Make sure that students don't have so much homework that they can't take part in other activities.



13- to 18-Year-Olds

Adolescence is a time of remarkable transformation. Youth are crossing the bridge from childhood to adulthood, an amazing change seen in all areas of their development.

Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Youth are able to think hypothetically – they can approach problems scientifically, proposing hypotheses and testing them systematically. This ability makes it possible for them to understand scientific laws, and to invent new solutions to problems.

This ability also makes it possible for youth to think about social issues in a new way. They gain new insights that lead them to question the status quo. They think about “big issues”, such as politics and tradition. They might question adults’ ways of thinking. This is not a sign of disrespect, but a sign that they are able to think for themselves and to figure out what they value and believe.

Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

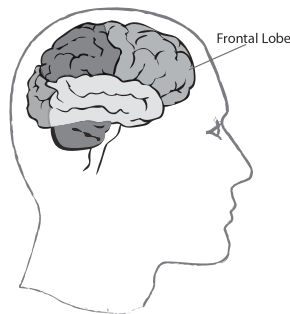
13- to 18-Year-Olds

Physical Development in Adolescence

Puberty is completed in this stage. By the end of adolescence, youth will reach **sexual maturity**; girls are capable of childbearing and boys are capable of fathering children. They have new and intense sexual feelings. If they are shamed for having these feelings, they can develop life-long sexual difficulties. It is important to provide honest information about the physical and emotional aspects of sexuality, while emphasizing the rights of all youth to privacy, dignity, respect and freedom from exploitation.

Adolescents are also undergoing an important period of brain development. Their brain cells are being “pruned”, which means that unused brain cell connections will be destroyed to increase the brain’s efficiency. This process takes years, beginning at the back of the brain and ending at the front of the brain. So the frontal lobe is the last to become fully mature – and this does not happen until we reach our mid-20s.

Why does this matter? The frontal lobe is critical for planning and decision-making. Until the frontal lobe is mature – or if it is damaged – youth have difficulty foreseeing the consequences of their actions. They tend to act impulsively without thinking things through. They might do things that are risky, not considering the long-term outcomes of their actions.



Social Development in Adolescence

The primary task of this stage is for youth to achieve a strong sense of **identity**. Much of their energy is devoted to figuring out who they are and how they are different from their parents and teachers. They “try on” various identities to see which ones fit. For example, they might dye their hair bright colours, get tattoos or piercings, or wear clothes that adults dislike.

They are trying to find a new way of belonging – one that brings acceptance from their peers but also gives them a sense of individuality. **They have strong needs to belong and to be independent at the same time.**

Adolescents try on adult roles and experiment with things that have been forbidden. They want to do the things that they see adults do, including things that can harm them. They might experiment with drugs and alcohol, sex and relationships.



At the same time, adolescents have difficulty understanding that bad things can happen to them. They don't yet fully understand that they can be hurt, that they can get pregnant, or that they can die. Sometimes they do very risky things because they believe that nothing will go wrong for them.

This combination of a strong drive for independence, a need for peer acceptance, and difficulty understanding the risks they are taking can result in frequent conflict with parents and teachers. Attempts to control them or to force them to adopt particular views will create resentment and close down communication. Physical punishment will humiliate them and lead to very negative attitudes toward school.



What Can Teachers Do to Help Students Navigate This Stage Successfully?

I. Provide warmth

- Show respect for their abilities
 - o Provide respectful support and guidance, rather than punishment and criticism.
 - o Recognize their competencies and give them frequent opportunities to demonstrate them. Help them develop identities based on their strengths and abilities.
 - o Nurture their individual interests. Seize opportunities to guide their identity development in a constructive direction.
- Consider your students' developmental level
 - o Remember that their brains are still developing; they might not understand the full implications of their decisions.
 - o Recognize the importance of their peer group.
 - o Understand their powerful need to belong.
 - o Create a learning environment based on authentic student participation in decision-making.

Before School

Transition to School

6- to 8-Year-Olds

9- to 12-Year-Olds

13- to 18-Year-Olds

2. Provide structure

- Guide your students through their challenges
 - Build on their hypothesis-testing abilities to help them foresee the consequences of their actions
 - Be aware of negative peer influences and guide students away from them
 - Provide opportunities for positive peer interaction based on common interests. For example, help students form rock bands, and to write and record their own songs. Create a theatre troupe and help them write and perform a play. Engage students in creating their own clubs and activities based on their interests.



- Make school interesting
 - Relate academic material to real life; show them why learning matters to their lives and to the lives of others.
 - Build on their independent thinking and questioning. Encourage them to think beyond what is, to what could be. Engage them in creating their own plans for making a better world.
 - Provide opportunities for them to relate their skills and interests to “big issues”. For example, students interested in science could devise their own experiments on environmental sustainability. Students interested in history could conduct their own research on the impact of war in various regions of the world. Students interested in art could create an exhibition on human rights.
 - Provide opportunities for them to develop and engage in social action in their communities, and to learn about. Provide opportunities to learn about local social justice issues. Engage them in creating and implementing action plans to combat poverty, discrimination or homelessness, or to give marginalized people a voice.
 - Make school more attractive to them than activities that can put them at risk.



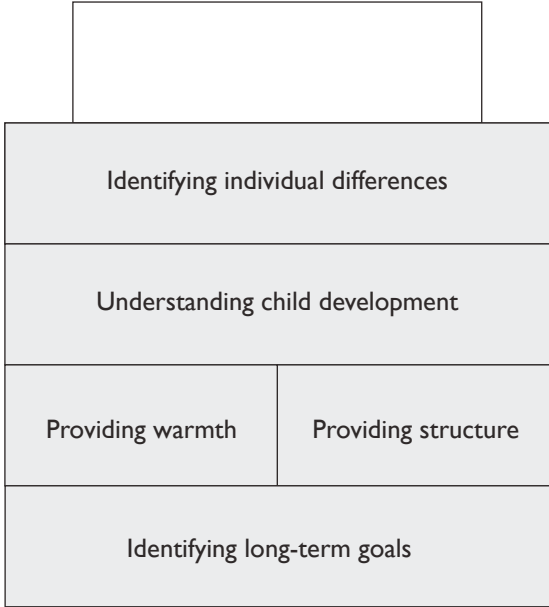
IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

While all children go through the same stages of development, children are not all alike. They go through the stages within different environments and with different personalities, talents and abilities. In this chapter, you will learn about some of the unique characteristics of individual children that can affect their learning and behaviour.

The education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

Article 29
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

CHAPTER 6



Every class is made up of a group of individual students, each with his or her own story. Each child arrives in the classroom with a unique set of experiences that affects her:

- readiness to learn
- motivation to achieve
- confidence in her abilities
- comfort in the presence of adults
- social skills



Differences in Home Environments

Each child who arrives at the classroom door has come from a different home environment. In some homes, the atmosphere is positive, supportive and encouraging. In others, the climate is negative, critical and violent.

Each morning, some children come to school having witnessed **violence** between their parents, or having experienced physical or sexual violence themselves. Some children will have been called “stupid” or “useless” just before arriving in the classroom.

A child in this situation will have great difficulty concentrating on her school work and listening to her teachers. She might be worried that her mother is being harmed, or that she will be beaten when she gets home. She might be feeling hopeless and incompetent. If she is then punished at school for her distractibility, this will confirm her sense of powerlessness and heighten her fear.

In some homes, children have many **learning opportunities** and time to study. They have parents who can help them with their homework, take them to museums and buy them books. In other homes, education is a luxury and children must work to meet the family's basic needs. These children will have little time for homework, and their parents will have little time to support them. Despite their intelligence, these children face challenges that threaten their academic success.

Cultural Differences

Some schools are located in communities with wide cultural diversity. Students might come from different countries, religions or traditions. They might have different skin colours or facial characteristics, or wear different clothing.

Children who are not members of the dominant culture often feel that they do not belong. Their peers might tease, bully, or exclude them. If they do not speak the language spoken in school, they will have difficulty understanding what is being taught.

Sometimes, because of their language difficulties and lack of confidence, teachers may assume that they are unintelligent or unable to learn, simply overlook them.

It is extremely important that teachers understand the tremendous challenges these children face and provide the support they need. For children who feel “different”, an adult who believes in them can make the difference between their success and failure in school.

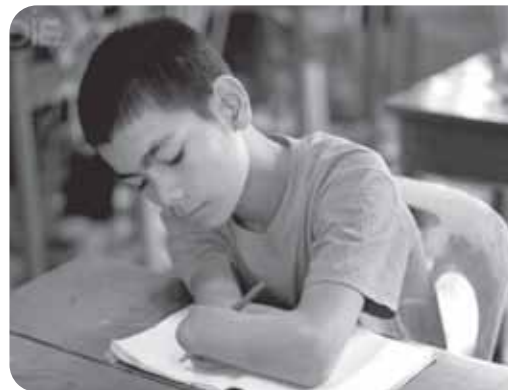
It is also important that teachers educate the other students about other cultures, to enrich their learning and to reduce bullying and victimization. A culturally diverse classroom provides a powerful opportunity to teach about human rights and peace-building skills.



Physical Differences

All people, and all children, are different and have different physical abilities. Some of us can run fast while others never win a race. Some can balance on a log, while others fall off quickly. Some can see objects that are far away, while others can only see things that are right in front of them.

Some children's physical differences are more obvious. For example, they might move around in a wheelchair; rather than walking. They might not have hands or feet. Or they might have very limited hearing.



No matter what their physical characteristics might be, all children have the same right to a quality education. They also have the right to an accessible learning environment.

Disabled children have a right to conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

Article 23
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

In some cases, children have suffered severe injuries in accidents, wars or minefields. These children are extremely vulnerable. They must adapt to life with limited mobility while coping with psychological trauma. They also are likely to be stigmatized – that is, seen as “different” and excluded by teachers and peers. And they are facing the challenge of adapting to a school environment that was built for students with full mobility.

It is the role of the teacher to:

- recognize and understand the particular challenges these children face
- ensure that they are protected from stigmatization and bullying by other students
- provide a learning environment that facilitates their full participation
- provide the supports necessary for them to succeed academically



Differences in Talents and Interests

In order to create a learning environment that motivates children to succeed, it is important to get to know each child as an individual. What are they particularly good at? What do they enjoy doing? What interests them?

When we know each child's unique talents and interests, we see them more as people. We also can build on their strengths.

For example, consider a student who finds it difficult to understand chemistry. This student is likely to do poorly on chemistry tests, to avoid doing chemistry assignments and to not participate in chemistry classes. A teacher who responds with frustration, criticism and punishment is only seeing one small part of that student's range of abilities. This student might be a talented musician, or have a passion for history. But the punishment he experiences in chemistry class will discourage him and lead him to believe that he is stupid or incompetent.

Another teacher, recognizing this student's interests, might ask him to write a song about the periodic table, or carry out research on the history of atomic science. By building on the students' strengths, this teacher will enhance his interest in chemistry and help him understand it. The student will feel encouraged, motivated and competent – necessary conditions for learning and academic success.

Temperamental Differences

Each child has unique personality characteristics that affect the way she reacts to his experiences. These characteristics make up the child's temperament or **behavioural style**. A child's temperament is inborn. It cannot be changed. It is a big part of what makes a child who she is.

Children can have very different temperaments that can greatly affect how they respond to school. There is no "good" or "bad" temperament - just different ones. Every temperament has its own strengths.

Each child's temperament has a number of dimensions.

1. Activity Level

Some children are highly *active*, wanting to run, jump, or climb most of the time. They hardly ever sit still, even at mealtimes. They seem to be always in motion.

Other children are *inactive*, preferring quiet activities, such as looking at books or playing with puzzles for long periods of time.

Other children's activity levels fall somewhere in-between.

2. Regularity

Some children have *predictable* rhythms. They get hungry at regular intervals, and wake up, fall asleep and go to the bathroom around the same time each day.

Other children have *changing* rhythms. They might be very hungry at noon one day and not at all hungry at noon the next day. They might wake up very early on Monday, but sleep late on Tuesday.

Other children have rhythms that fall somewhere in-between.

3. Response to new situations

Some children *approach* new situations. They smile at strangers, walk up to new groups of children and join in their play, easily make new friends, like to try new foods, and enjoy going to new places.

Other children *withdraw* from new situations. They move away from strangers, take a long time to join new groups, spit out new foods, and hesitate or avoid going to new places.

Other children's responses to new situations fall somewhere in-between.

4. Adaptability

Some children *adjust quickly* to new routines, places, people and foods. It might only take a day or two for them to adjust to a new schedule, living in a new house or going to a new school.

Other children *adjust slowly*. It might take months for them to make friends in a new neighbourhood, feel comfortable in a new school, or follow a new schedule.

Other children's adaptability falls somewhere in-between.

5. Distractibility

Some children are *easily distracted*. They move from one thing to the next, depending on what they happen to see or hear that moment. It takes a long time for them to finish tasks because their attention is constantly being drawn in different directions. But when they are sad or disappointed, it is easy to shift their attention to something else and change their mood.

Other children are *not easily distracted*. They will sit and read for long periods. And when they are hungry or sad, it's not easy to shift their attention.

Other children's distractibility falls somewhere in-between.

6. Persistence

Some children are *very persistent*, sticking with a challenging task until it is done. They have a goal in mind and they will keep going until they achieve it. They don't give up in the face of failure. But it's not easy to convince them to stop doing things that they want to do.

Other children are *less persistent*. If they fall, they will stop climbing. If they don't succeed in solving a puzzle quickly, they lose interest. And it's easy to convince them to stop doing things that we don't want them to do.

Other children's persistence falls somewhere in-between.

7. Intensity

Some children have *very intense* responses to events and situations. If they have difficulty with a puzzle, they yell and throw the pieces. They show intense anger and sadness, but they also show intense happiness. They cry loudly when they are sad and laugh joyfully when they are happy. You always know how these children are feeling.

Other children have *subdued* reactions. When they are sad inside, they cry quietly. When they are happy, they smile quietly. It's difficult to know how these children are feeling.

Other children's intensity falls somewhere in-between.

Exercise - Your Student's Temperament I

Think about a student with whom you have frequent conflict. Rate that student on each of the 7 dimensions of temperament.

1. Activity level

Low			High
1	2	3	4
<i>Sits still for long periods</i>			<i>Always on the go</i>

2. Regularity

Low			High
1	2	3	4
<i>Gets hungry and tired at different times on different days</i>			<i>Gets hungry and tired at the same time every day</i>

3. Response to new situations

Avoidance			Approach
1	2	3	4
<i>Shies away from new people, unhappy in new places, rejects new things</i>			<i>Likes to meet new people, go to new places, try new things</i>

4. Adaptability

Low

1

2

3

High

4

*Takes a long time to
adjust to changes in
routines or environments*

*Quickly adjusts to changes
in routines or environments*

5. Distractibility

Low

1

2

3

High

4

*Focuses on one activity
for a long period*

*Notices everything, shifts
attention often*

6. Persistence

Low

1

2

3

High

4

*Loses interest in activities
quickly*

*Sticks with activities until
they are finished*

7. Intensity

Low

1

2

3

High

4

*Doesn't show much
change in emotions*

*Shows intense sadness,
anger and happiness*

Exercise - Your Student's Temperament 2

Write the ways in which your student's temperament is a strength.

Now write the ways in which your student's temperament is not a strength.

Temperament has a powerful influence on each student's behaviour in the classroom. Among young children, it affects:

- their stress levels when they enter school
- the time it takes them to adjust to school routines
- their enjoyment of playing with other children
- their comfort in asking teachers for assistance
- their ability to sit still and pay attention
- the time it takes them to settle down if they are sad or upset
- the amount of physical activity they need throughout the day
- how easily distracted they are by things going on around them
- their ability to use the bathroom on a schedule
- their need for snacks at various times throughout the day
- their ability to separate from their parents each morning

Among older children and youth, temperament affects:

- their ability to complete tasks quickly
- the amount of homework they can finish
- their ability to get along with other students
- the anxiety and fear they feel when they make class presentations
- the time it takes them to adjust to a new school, new schedules or new classroom organization
- the amount of physical activity and food they need throughout the day
- how many breaks they need
- their ability to organize their desks, materials and homework schedules
- how often they forget things at school or at home
- how much they fidget and move around when they are supposed to be listening
- their ability to complete large projects

Not only does each student's temperament affect her behaviour and achievement. **Your temperament** also affects her behaviour - and it affects your behaviour, as well.

Teacher-student relationships are strongly affected by the match between the student's temperament and the teacher's temperament.

Think about a teacher who is not very active. This teacher likes to see her students reading silently, focusing their attention on projects or playing quietly.

Now think about what might happen if this teacher has a student with a high activity level. What will happen if this student is expected to spend much of his day reading silently, focusing on projects or playing quietly?

If this teacher recognizes that her student has a higher activity level than she has, she will be able to adjust her expectations and find ways to meet her student's need for activity. If she doesn't realize that her student's behaviour is due to his temperament, she might think that the student is being "bad", "disrespectful" or "hard to manage."

It's very important for teachers to think about their own temperaments and consider how well they match their students' temperaments. When we do this, we can understand the reasons for many conflicts in the classroom.

Exercise – Your Temperament I

Rate yourself on each of the 7 dimensions of temperament.

1. Activity level

Low				High
1	2	3		4
<i>I like quiet activities best</i>			<i>I like to be physically active and on the go</i>	

2. Regularity

Low				High
1	2	3		4
<i>I get hungry and tired at different times on different days</i>			<i>I get hungry and tired at the same times every day</i>	

3. Response to new situations

Avoidance				Approach
1	2	3		4
<i>I am uncomfortable in new situations, meeting new people and trying new things</i>			<i>I enjoy going to new places, meeting new people, and trying new things</i>	

4. Adaptability

Low				High
1	2	3		4
<i>It takes me a long time to adjust to new routines or environments</i>			<i>I adjust quickly to changes in routines or environments</i>	

5. Distractibility

Low				High
1	2	3		4
<i>I can focus my attention on one thing for a long time</i>			<i>My thoughts are easily distracted; my attention shifts often</i>	

6. Persistence

Low				High
1	2	3		4
<i>I lose interest in activities quickly and move on to other things</i>			<i>I stick with an activity until it is finished</i>	

7. Intensity

Low				High
1	2	3		4
<i>I don't really show my emotions; other people often can't tell how I'm feeling</i>			<i>When I'm happy, sad or mad, other people know it</i>	

Exercise - Your Temperament 2

Write the ways in which your temperament is a strength.

Now write the ways in which your temperament is not a strength.

Exercise – The Match

Circle the numbers that correspond to the ratings that you gave your student. Then connect those numbers with a line.

Activity level	1	2	3	4
Regularity	1	2	3	4
Response to new situations	1	2	3	4
Adaptability	1	2	3	4
Distractibility	1	2	3	4
Persistence	1	2	3	4
Intensity	1	2	3	4

Exercise – The Match

Circle the numbers that correspond to the ratings that you gave yourself. Then connect those numbers with a line.

Activity level	1	2	3	4
Regularity	1	2	3	4
Response to new situations	1	2	3	4
Adaptability	1	2	3	4
Distractibility	1	2	3	4
Persistence	1	2	3	4
Intensity	1	2	3	4

Differences Between Our Temperaments

My student and I differ on

This difference could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

My student and I differ on

This difference could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

My student and I differ on

This difference could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

My student and I differ on

This difference could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

Similarities Between Our Temperaments

My student and I match on

This similarity could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

My student and I match on

This similarity could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

My student and I match on

This similarity could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

My student and I match on

This similarity could contribute to, or reduce, conflict when

The match between your students' temperaments and your own can have a powerful effect on the level of conflict in your classroom. By recognizing the role of temperament in your students' behaviour – and your own behaviour – you can begin to understand the reasons behind many of these conflicts. You also can understand why criticism, shouting and physical punishment don't help.

Each of your students is an individual, just as you are. Their temperaments cannot be changed and neither can yours. Where your temperaments don't match, you can find ways of resolving the difference without anger or punishments. You can find ways of respecting your differences and finding ways to work with them.



Information Processing Differences

In any classroom, there is diversity in the ways that children learn. Some children will understand quickly, while others will need more time. Some will listen to every word you say and understand it, while others will have trouble listening and will need to do activities in order to understand.



Every child has a unique set of learning strengths. Sometimes, though, we teach our classes as though all children have the same set of strengths. This approach results in teacher frustration, student discouragement and teacher - student conflict.

If we can identify each student's strengths, teaching will be easier; students' comprehension will be deeper and conflict will be less frequent.

To learn, a student must **process** the information. That is, he must take in the information, make sense of it, remember it and recall it.

The mind is an organized system. If the student's system is working efficiently, he will understand, learn and remember easily. If any parts of the system are not working efficiently, he will have difficulty in understanding, learning or remembering.

Information processing requires several steps:

1. Attention

The student must be paying attention to the information in order for it to enter the system.

2. Perception

The student must be able to see and hear well enough to make sense of the information. This includes seeing and hearing the information itself, as well as seeing the teacher's gestures and facial expressions and hearing the teacher's tone of voice.

3. Cognition

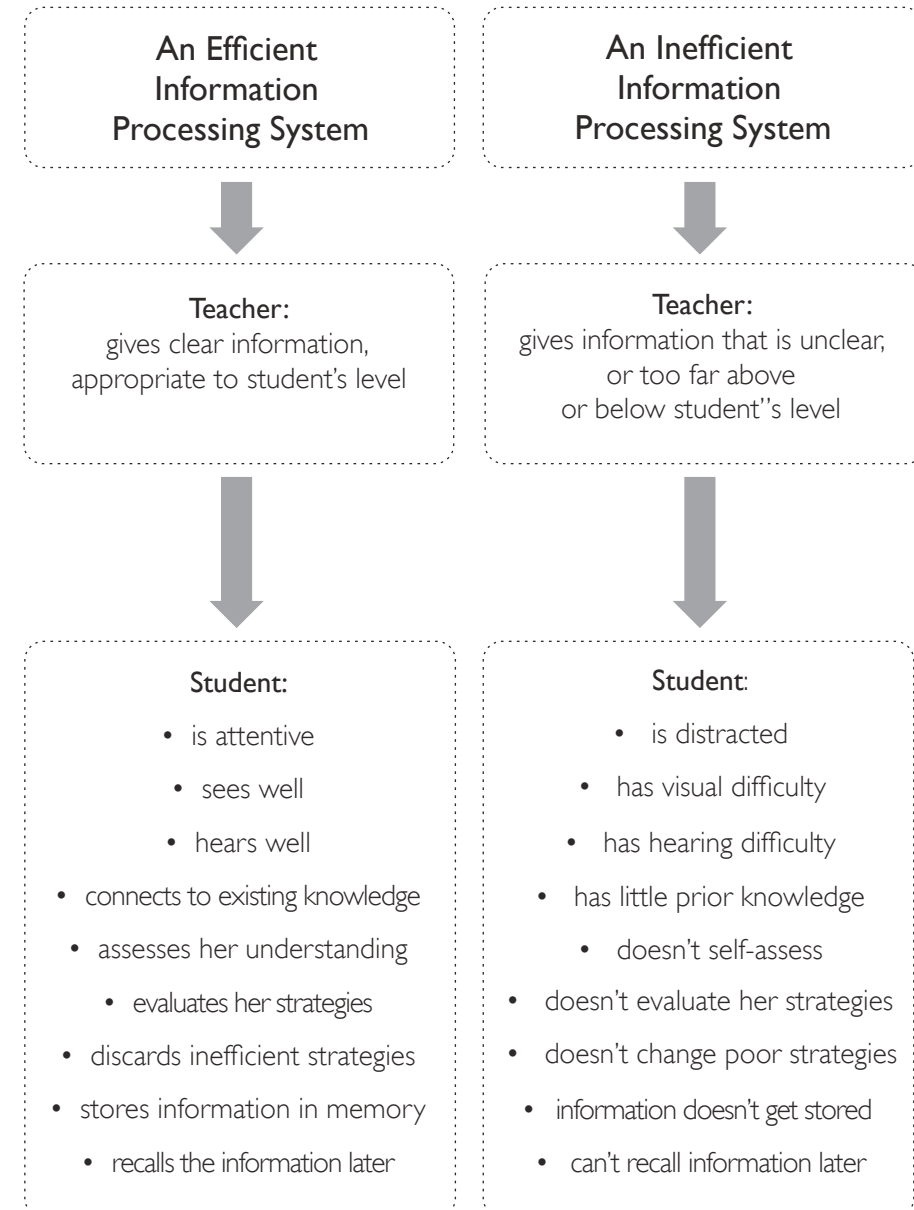
The student must have some knowledge of the topic and connect it to the new information. This connection will help him understand it.

4. Memory

The student must be able to apply strategies to help him remember the information and recall it at a later time.

5. Meta-cognition

The student must be able to recognize when he is having difficulty understanding or when his memory strategies aren't working. Then he must be able to search for a new strategy that will help.



In the time it takes for a teacher to say one sentence, a student can have experienced difficulty at any step in the processing system. If the teacher expects that all students' systems work in the same way, he will be frustrated by those students who have difficulty. He might think they are lazy, resistant or even unintelligent.

But if the teacher recognizes that every student's system is different, and that problems can occur at any point in the system, he will try to diagnose the student's difficulty and help her to find new strategies so that she can attend, perceive, understand, self-assess, remember and recall.

He also will assess the way he provides information and he will ensure that it is clear and appropriate to his students' level of understanding.

The efficiency of a student's information processing system depends on:

- *the organization of her brain*
- *the speed with which her brain goes through the processing steps*
- *her eyesight*
- *her hearing*
- *her ability to make sense of what she sees and hears*
- *her level of prior knowledge*
- *her ability to assess her own strengths and difficulties*
- *her comfort in asking the teacher questions*
- *her confidence and optimism that she can improve her performance*



Learning Challenges

In some cases, students' information processing difficulties are severe enough to be diagnosed. Some of these conditions are sensory impairments, receptive or expressive language difficulties, and reading, mathematical or attentional difficulties.

1. Sensory impairments

Some children have visual or hearing difficulties that seriously interfere with their ability to take in information. In some cases, these difficulties might not be obvious to teachers. For example, children who cannot see the blackboard or who can't hear the teacher might appear to be ignoring instructions or not paying attention. It is important to have children's eyesight and hearing assessed to determine whether they are causing learning problems.



2. Receptive language difficulties

In some cases, children's hearing is fine, but they have difficulty making sense of what they hear. There is a poor connection between the structures of the ear and the parts of the brain that recognize and analyze sound. It appears that the child is not listening or not trying. Actually, the ear is hearing but the brain is not. This problem can be diagnosed by speech-language specialists.

3. Expressive language difficulties

Some children cannot turn their thoughts into words and sentences that communicate what they want to say. These children might be able to hear and process sound without difficulty. The problem lies in their ability to convert or “encode” thoughts into language. They might understand everything they hear and know the answers to questions. But they appear to not understand because they are unable to express themselves adequately when they speak or write. This problem can be very frustrating to the child and can increase the risk of social and behavioural difficulties, as well as teacher-child conflict.

4. Reading difficulties

In some cases, children’s eyesight is fine, but they have great difficulty reading. This can be due to several factors.

- They can see the characters on the page, but they mix them up, skip lines, lose their place or read words backwards. This is a problem of **visual processing**.
- They can see the characters on the page, but they cannot connect the characters to their sounds. In this case, the brain has difficulty **decoding** the shapes on the page into language.
- They can decode the characters, but they cannot put them together to read words or sentences. This can result from a problem with **memory and sequencing**.
- They can decode and sequence words and sentences, but they have difficulty understanding their meaning. This is a problem of **reading comprehension**.
- They can decode and understand the words, but it takes great effort and they often make errors and stumble over words. This is a problem of **reading fluency**.

Children with reading difficulties can become extremely anxious about reading aloud in front of others or doing assignments that require reading. Sometimes they will go to great lengths to avoid reading because their problems are so embarrassing to them.

It is extremely important that teachers are aware of the neurological basis of reading difficulties and provide students with the support and resources they need. In many cases, reading difficulties can be overcome with appropriate intervention. Unfortunately, in cases where the problem is not detected, children can develop very low self-esteem and eventually drop out of school.



5. Mathematical difficulties

In some cases, children's eyesight is fine but they have great difficulty doing mathematics. There can be several reasons for this.

- They can see the numbers, but they jumble them up, reflecting a problem in **visual processing**.
- They can see the numbers, but they cannot connect these **abstract symbols** to concrete quantities.
- They can see, process and understand numbers, but they have difficulty remembering number facts. This can be a problem of **long-term memory or inadequate strategies**.
- They struggle with word problems due to a **reading** difficulty. Or they might be unable to follow a series of problem-solving steps due to a **sequencing or memory difficulty**.
- They are unable to visualize mathematical concepts. For example, they might have difficulty turning shapes upside-down in their minds or constructing objects mentally. This is a **visual-spatial problem**.

Each of these problems requires a different teaching approach. In all cases, students with mathematical difficulties should be supported and encouraged. Criticism, punishment, and embarrassment can lead to lifelong math anxiety that can stand in the way of students' achievement in many areas of their lives.



6. Attentional difficulties

All students' minds wander sometimes, but some have difficulty paying attention virtually all the time. Children with attentional difficulties often have problems with:

- **Impulsivity**
They often act before thinking about the consequences. They might move from one activity to another, without completing any of them. They often interrupt other people's conversations.
- **Disorganization**
They have difficulty remembering what to take to their classes, or what to take home. Their desks are often messy and they often lose their belongings.
- **Restlessness**
They find it hard to sit still, often fidgeting, squirming, talking or playing with things when they should be focusing on their work. They can have sleep difficulties, so they are often tired at school.
- **Distractibility**
Their attention is easily diverted. They often day-dream, and have difficulty listening and finishing their work.

Everyone has these characteristics to some degree, but for some children they cause serious problems in learning and in their relationships with parents, teachers and peers. Parents can become punitive and violent toward these children because of their impulsive behaviour. Teachers can become very frustrated by their restlessness and distractibility.

It is important to recognize that attentional difficulties are usually neurologically based. They are extremely difficult for children to control.



Attentional difficulties:

- *are usually neurologically based*
- *are extremely difficult for children to control*
- *increase the risk of anxiety, depression and aggression*
- *increase the risk of school drop-out*
- *require planned, supportive intervention*
- *are not helped by punishment*
- *can be helped when children learn good self-control strategies*

It is important to be aware that children with these difficulties are at greater risk of developing emotional difficulties, such as depression and anxiety. They are also at greater risk of developing problems with aggression. And they are at high risk of dropping out of school.

Therefore, it is extremely important that these children receive supportive intervention from specialists, rather than being hit, shouted at or humiliated for their behaviour. They need to learn strategies for controlling their impulses and for focusing their attention. In some cases, they may need medication. This can only be determined through a full medical and psychological assessment.



What Can Teachers Do?

Teachers can do many things to recognize and respect their students' individuality. Remember your tools – warmth and structure.

I. Provide warmth

- Establish a classroom atmosphere that encourages students to ask for clarification and assistance.
 - Recognize that your teaching approach might not work for some students. Let them know that they are safe in asking for extra explanations and assistance.
 - Remember that anxiety interferes with learning. All children will find it hard to focus on their learning when they are distracted by anxiety and fear, especially those who have attentional difficulties. Ensure that all children – even those with the greatest challenges – feel relaxed and ready to try.
 - Remember that students can only learn if they feel safe to make mistakes. Ensure that they can trust you to be supportive when they need help.

- Respect each child as an individual
 - Remember that each child has a story; each comes from a unique home environment; each has her own worries and fears; and each has her own dreams for the future. Get to know each student as a person.
 - Show your respect for your students. This is the best way to encourage their self-respect, respect for each other and respect for their teachers.
- Focus on each student's strengths.
 - Discover each child's unique interests and talents and incorporate them into your teaching to engage their interest.
 - Consider how their temperamental characteristics can benefit their learning and channel them in that direction.
- Maintain communication with caregivers.
 - Often children have similar difficulties at home and at school. Find out how caregivers handle challenges. Share positive, constructive ideas. Discourage punishment, shouting and criticism at home.
 - Help caregivers to understand the reasons behind their children's behaviour. Provide a model of problem-solving and responding constructively

2. Provide structure

- Take an information processing perspective.
 - o Think about the steps required to complete the tasks you assign and figure out where students' difficulties lie.
 - o Focus on helping students to find new strategies and to take a problem-solving approach when they face challenges.
- Involve students in their learning and problem solving.
 - o Help them learn how to assess their learning strategies.
 - o Involve them in setting their own learning goals and in classroom decision-making.
 - o Help them identify their own strengths and challenges. Encourage them to develop a plan for optimizing their strengths and overcoming their challenges.
- Do all that you can to build a strong foundation for your students' future lives.
 - o Be aware that the most powerful factor in protecting children against risk is having an adult in their lives that they trust and who helps them to conquer adversity.
 - o Remember that you leave an imprint on each child you teach. Ensure that your imprint strengthens their confidence and competence.
 - o Let your students know that you will always be there to support them, even when you no longer are their teacher.

End each year by celebrating your student's achievements and send them off with a sense of optimism and a belief in their ability to succeed in school and in life.

CHAPTER 7

Problem solving and responding
with positive discipline

Identifying individual differences

Understanding child development

Providing warmth

Providing structure

Identifying long-term goals

PROBLEM SOLVING AND RESPONDING WITH POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Sometimes students' behaviours can be mystifying to teachers. "Why won't she stop talking?" "Why can't he just do his homework?" When you understand child development and recognize the importance of individual differences, you have the information you need to solve these mysteries.

In this chapter, you will apply your knowledge of development and individual differences to think about possible reasons for challenging classroom situations. Then you will apply the tools of positive discipline to choose a constructive response.

School discipline shall be administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity.

Article 29
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The first step in problem-solving involves generating as many possible reasons for a child's behaviour as you can think of. As you do this, be sure to consider all aspects of children's development that were covered in the previous chapters:

- the child's experiences before entering school
- the child's home environment
- how children think in this stage
- how children understand emotions in this stage
- children's social relationships in this stage
- children's physical development (brain and body) in this stage
- the child's temperament
- the information processing system
- specific learning challenges

Refer back to previous chapters whenever you need to.

When you have **problem-solved** to find the possible reasons for the child's behaviour, you will think about how to apply **warmth and structure** in a way that leads you toward your **long-term goals**.

The Transition to School

It is the first week of school. Every day this week, one of your students has been very upset when her mother drops her off. She clings to her mother and cries. When her mother leaves, she screams. She has cried all morning, every day this week.

What should you do?

Step 1 – List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 –Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways to provide warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response?

It is the end of the first month of school. Every afternoon for the past month, you have gathered the children into a circle to read them a story. And every day, one little boy has been disruptive. He gets restless, fidgets, moves around and talks to the children beside him. Each day, you have told him to sit still and listen. For the past few days, you have become angry and sent him to stand in the hallway. Still, his behaviour does not change.

What should you do?

Step 1 – List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 –Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

It's almost time for the children to go home. You tell them to put on their outdoor shoes, but some of the children don't want to put on their shoes. One of them says, "No!" When you try to put his shoes on, he struggles against you and starts to kick and yell.

What should you do?

Step 1 – List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

What should you do?

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Responding with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You have been teaching your students to read the numbers from 1 to 10. You write the numbers on the blackboard and say their names. Then you tell the students to copy them from the blackboard into their notebooks. You do this three times a day for three days. On the fourth day, you ask each student to tell you the names of the numbers as you write them on the blackboard. One of your students names many of the numbers incorrectly.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way.

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Every morning at 10:00, your students have a snack to keep their energy levels up. Without their snack, the children will get tired and irritable. At least twice a week, one of the children refuses to eat her snack. You tell her that if she doesn't eat her snack she won't be allowed to play her favourite game. But the next day, she refuses to eat her snack again.

What should you do?

Step 1 –List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way.

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

When you teach lessons to your class, you often ask them questions to see if they understand what you are telling them. Most of the children are eager to answer your questions, but you have noticed that one boy never puts up his hand or offers an answer to your questions.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Responding with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Every day at 10:30 and 14:30, your students lie down on mats and take a nap. They are expected to lie down, stay quiet and fall asleep. Most of the children do this, but one boy won't settle down. Every day at nap time, he bothers the other children and he won't lie down or be quiet.

What should you do?

Step 1 – List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You are teaching your students to write the characters of their language. Each day, you ask one of them to write a word on the blackboard to see if they can remember the characters. Today, you asked one of the girls to write her name on the blackboard. Later when you are outside with the children, you see that girl drawing on the pavement with a piece of chalk from your classroom. You realize that after she wrote on the blackboard, she took the chalk without asking or telling you.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Every day, your students are expected to bring particular materials with them from home to school. Each of them is supposed to have books, pencils and other supplies that they will need at school each day. One boy in your class often comes to school without his learning materials. You are becoming frustrated with this situation.

What should you do?

Step 1 – List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure - that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

6- to 8-Year-Olds

You are teaching a class of 7-year-olds. Your classroom is arranged so that each child sits at a desk. One of your students is continually playing with the objects in his desk drawer while you are teaching. You find this behaviour irritating because it is noisy, and it appears that the student is not listening to your lesson.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show this child warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure – that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

The teacher in the room next to yours had to leave her classroom to go to the director's office. Left on their own, her students have become very noisy, running around the classroom, laughing loudly and shouting. The noise is disrupting your class, so you go to their classroom and tell them to be quiet. When you return to your classroom, the noise next door continues.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why children would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could show these children warmth – that is, affection, security, respect and empathy?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure—that is, information, guidelines and support?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

One of your classroom rules is that students must be quiet and listen whenever you are teaching. This morning, you are teaching an arithmetic lesson, and you have reminded all of the students to pay attention. As you are explaining a new concept, you see two students whispering to each other:

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why children would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

What should you do?

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Yesterday, you taught your students the names of the major cities in your country. Today, you are reviewing that information. You ask the children to tell you the name of one of the major cities. One girl puts up her hand, and you call on her. She tells you the name of the small town where she lives.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

School begins at the same time each morning. Students are expected to arrive ten minutes before the school bell rings so that they have time to organize their supplies and get settled before class begins. Most of your students arrive on time, but one boy has been late three times this week. He walks into class after you have started teaching. You are irritated and annoyed by this situation.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Your school has several rules that all students are expected to follow. One rule is that they are not allowed to run in the school. But two of your students are not following this rule. They often run from place to place, which is disruptive to other classes and frustrating to you.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why children would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You are cleaning your classroom on Friday afternoon. As you walk among the desks, you notice that one desktop has writing on it. You realize that one of your students has been writing on her desk with a marker. You are angry that this student has damaged school property.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Close to your school, there is a construction area where workers are repairing the road. They have put up signs telling children to stay away because it is a dangerous place to play. You have told your students about the construction site, and you have forbidden them to go near it. This morning as you arrive at school, you see several of your students playing at the construction site.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a children would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

What should you do?

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You have a classroom rule that children are not allowed to eat during class. Today, you notice a boy chewing something while you are teaching. When you go to his desk, you see that he has a piece of fruit under his desk that he is eating during the lesson.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

What should you do?

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

9- to 12-Year-Olds

You want your students to develop a sense of responsibility, so you have them take turns doing tasks such as cleaning the blackboard, wiping the desks and organizing the cupboards. Most of the children perform their tasks on schedule, but one boy often doesn't complete the tasks assigned to him.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You are teaching a lesson about plants and how they grow. You notice that boy in your class is looking down at his lap, rather than looking up at you. When you approach his desk, you see that he has a game in his lap that he is playing, rather than paying attention to the lesson.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Your students are expected to attend all of their classes and to stay at school throughout the day. You have noticed that one of the girls has started to leave school early, missing the last class of the day.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You give your students an assignment that is due the following week. You want them to complete it on their own to learn independent work skills. They must choose an historical event, learn as much as they can about it, and make a poster describing it. When the due date arrives, one of your students has not made a poster. You are frustrated that he did not complete the assignment when he had so much time to do so.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You teach a class of 12-year-olds. You have noticed that one of your students gets very high marks on his math tests, has a large vocabulary, and has a creative imagination. He seems to have great potential for academic success. But when you check his homework, you often find that it is not done.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You teach a class of 40 students. You notice that one of the girls is very quiet. She rarely raises her hand to answer a question, and she does not interact much with the other students.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a child would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Each day, you give your class homework that should take them about one hour to complete. The students hand in their homework each morning so that you can check it. You have noticed that two of the students consistently make the same mistakes, and you suspect that one is copying her homework from the other.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why children would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

13- to 18-Year-Olds

Your school has a dress code that forbids girls to wear short skirts or make-up. Today, one of the girls has arrived at school wearing a skirt that is too short and make-up.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

As you are tidying up your classroom one afternoon, you notice that one of your students has carved his name into his desk. You are outraged that he would damage school property.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You have instructed your students to design and carry out a science project. They are required to develop a research question and conduct a controlled experiment to answer it. You have told them to work on their projects individually so that you know they are doing their own work. A few of the students are not making progress. They are talking and laughing, not accomplishing anything.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why students would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

There is a girl in your class who has always been an excellent student. She has achieved high grades, completed her homework on time and gotten along well with others. Over the past few weeks, you have noticed that she has begun to miss classes, failed to complete her homework and done poorly on tests.

What should you do ?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You teach a high school math class. One of your students is often disruptive. He talks to the students around him when he should be working quietly, makes jokes while you are teaching, and generally distracts the other students. You are becoming very annoyed and angered by his behaviour.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You are teaching your students how to solve a complex calculus problem. You are working it out on the blackboard in front of the class. When you have finished, a student raises his hand and you call on him. He says that you have made an error and the answer you arrived at is wrong. You feel embarrassed in front of the class, realising the student is correct.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

School day has begun and students are entering the classroom. As they come through the door, they seem quite excited and some are upset. When you ask for an explanation, one of the students tells you that two boys are having a fist-fight outside.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

You are giving your students a social studies test. They are not allowed to have any books or notes with them. As you look around the room, you see that one of your students is frequently looking down into his lap. When you walk up to him, you realize that he has notes under his desk.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Your school has a very firm rule that forbids smoking on school grounds. One day, you are walking in front of the school. Just at that moment, a student comes around the corner of the school smelling of cigarette smoke. He walks quickly away from you. You call his name, expecting him to return and speak with you, but he continues to walk away.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Most of the students in your class carry cell phones. They love to call and text each other. This morning, as you are teaching a science lesson, a student's phone rings - and she answers it.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

As you are standing at the door of your classroom, you overhear a group of girls talking inside the classroom. You realize that three of the girls are teasing a fourth girl, making fun of her body and her clothing. The girl who is being teased looks very upset.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why students would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

Your classroom is on the second floor of the school building. The windows overlook the roof of a supply shed that is connected to your building. One afternoon, you are writing on the blackboard as you deliver a geography lecture. As you turn around to face the class, you see one of your students disappearing out the window. You rush to the window and see that he has landed on the shed roof and is jumping down to the ground.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

When you return to your classroom after a break, you reach into your bag to get a book. Your hand closes over something that feels strange. You pull it out and see that it is a large insect. From the laughter among the students, you realize that one of them purposely placed the insect into your bag.

What should you do?

Step 1 - List as many reasons as you can for why a student would behave this way

Step 2 - Remember your long-term goals

What kind of long-term impacts do you hope to have on your students?

Step 3 - Focus on warmth

What are some ways that you could provide warmth?

Step 4 - Focus on structure

What are some ways that you could provide structure?

Step 5 - Respond with positive discipline

Now that you've thought about the reasons for the child's behaviour, your long-term goals, and ways of providing warmth and structure, what do you think would be a constructive response in this situation?

CONCLUSION

This manual has set out the principles of positive discipline in the classroom – identifying long-term learning goals, providing warmth and structure, considering the child's developmental level, identifying the child's unique characteristics, and problem solving.

You have practiced applying these principles to common challenges that arise with students of various ages. This practice will help you to find solutions to a wide range of challenging situations.

Of course it is more difficult to think clearly when you are frustrated or angry. When you feel your anger rising, take a deep breath, close your eyes and think about:

1. your long-term goal
2. the importance of warmth and structure
3. your students' developmental level
4. your students' unique characteristics

Then take a moment to plan a response that will lead you toward your goal and respect your students' needs.

This way, you will teach your students how to deal with frustration, conflict and anger. You will give your students the skills needed to live without violence. You will build your students' self-respect. And you will earn your students' respect.

No teacher is perfect. We all make mistakes. But we need to learn from those mistakes and do better next time.

Enjoy your journey toward positive discipline.



Appendix Perspectives from Religious Viewpoints

A Bahá'í Perspective on Violence, Children and Human Rights

From the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá

It is not permissible to strike a child, or vilify him, for the child's character will be totally perverted if he be subjected to blows or verbal abuse.

In the estimation of God all people are equal; there is no distinction or preferment for any soul in the dominion of his justice and equity.

Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not.

Bahá'u'lláh

A Buddhist Perspective on Punishment (Excerpt)

The Reverend Kobutsu Malone
Buddhist Priest and Prison Chaplain
Engaged Zen Foundation

I have learned that any form of punishment, be it corporal or psychological, is injurious, causes pain and is counterproductive.

The deliberate infliction of pain on an individual in response to an action after it has occurred can in no way change the effect of the original action nor can it serve to educate or awaken the individual. The physical or emotional pain or injury of punishment done to a child or an adult creates only fear and trauma, it not only damages the person being punished but it damages and enslaves those who inflict the punishment.

Punishment, corporal or otherwise, no matter how it may be justified, is unacceptable and inexcusable, because it erodes the ability of people to see things with clarity and poisons the possibility for genuine healing.

The only truly effective and successful methods of dealing with correction of behavior come through compassionate communication, comprehension of social responsibility, education, restraint and discipline. Punishment simply does not, and has never, worked to bring about genuine changes in how people think and act.

A Buddhist Perspective on the Role of the Educator (Excerpt)

From *A Constitution for Living*
by Phraphomkhunaphon (P.A. Payutto); Translated by Bruce Evans
Religious Affairs Printing Press, Office of National Buddhism
Bangkok, Thailand, December 2004

A teacher is:

- *endowed with kindness and compassion*, takes an interest in the students and their well-being; has rapport; creates a familiar and casual atmosphere, encouraging students to approach with queries and doubts.
- *worthy of respect*; firm, adhering to principle; has conduct that befits the position, inspiring feelings of reassurance, refuge and safety.
- *inspiring*; truly learned and wise, and one who constantly trains and improves himself; praiseworthy and exemplary.
- *capable of speaking effectively*; knows how to explain things clearly, and knows when to speak what and how; gives counsel and caution and is an able advisor.
- *patient with words*; willingly listening to questions and queries, no matter how petty, and bearing even improprieties, admonishments and criticisms without becoming dejected or offended.
- *able to explain difficult* and profound subjects clearly and can teach even profounder subjects.
- *a role model* who does not lead students in ways that are detrimental or in matters that are worthless or improper.

A capable teacher:

- no matter what is being taught, *explains the reasons* behind it and analyzes it so that listeners understand it clearly, as if leading them by the hand to see it for themselves.
- *invites practice* by teaching in such a way that listeners see the importance of doing what needs to be done, appreciate its value, become convinced, accept it and are motivated to implement it or put it into practice.
- *arouses courage*; rouses listeners to zeal, interest, fortitude and firm resolve to consummate the practice, to fear no difficulty or hardship.
- *inspires joy*; creates an atmosphere of fun, cheerfulness, joyousness and delight; inspires listeners with hope and vision of a good result and the way to success.

Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

The Buddha, Udana-Varga 5:18

A Christian Perspective on Discipline

From: *Parenting with Grace* by Gregory K. Popcak. Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.
Huntington, Indiana, USA, 2004.

Discipline is less concerned with teaching compliance with the law than it is with teaching how to have deeper, more respectful, and loving relationships.

Discipline recognizes that "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." (Romans. 13:10).

Discipline has a deep regard for consistency. It assumes that the tools which helped me control my behavior when I am three should also help me control my behavior when I am thirty. As such, discipline seeks to only use those interventions that would be appropriate means by which to create change in adult relationships.

Discipline believes that good behavior is a teachable skill, not unlike math or reading. Because of this, it makes use of the tools that a good teacher would use. Tools like: good relationship/rapport building, teaching stories ("emotional word pictures"), following through with logical consequences, real life examples, personal sharing (discipling), redirecting, practice, and giving information in respectful, repeated and varied ways. People who use discipline correctly do not necessarily differ in the number of limits they establish, so much as in the dramatically different ways by which those limits are taught and enforced.

Discipline recognizes that violence is not a good teaching tool.

In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

Jesus, Matthew 7:12 (NSRV)

An Islamic Perspective on Education

A Message by Grand Ayatollah Abdolkarim Mousavi Ardebili
World Children's Day, Qom, Iran
October 2007

All prophets and senior religious figures have urged us to protect the minds and bodies of our children. According to divine instructions, those who deal with children one way or another have a duty to provide them with the best of education and healthcare, behave in a way that is free from violence and create a sense of self-confidence in them.

We need to admit to the bitter reality that violence against children does exist in houses, families, institutions and societies around the world. All means including the lofty instructions of God and the spiritual influence religious leaders wield should be tapped in order to change the situation and eliminate violent behaviour against children. Proper educational methods should be taught to all. We need to know and teach others that nice behaviour rather than violence is effective and efficient in the education of children.

Not one of you believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.

Number 13 of Imam Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths

Fatwa on Physical Punishment Professor Imam Hadd Amin Ould Al-Salek, Imam of the Old Mosque, Nouakchott, and President of the Imams and Ulema Coalition for the Rights of Women and Children in Mauritania, June 2009

It is necessary to desist immediately and finally from beating children, regardless of the pretext given. This is not only required by law and piety, or in accordance with the principles and purposes of the glorious shariah, but it is also essential for the good of the child, the educator, the family and society. It is also necessary to adopt scientific educational methods in the upbringing of children, following the example provided by the first educator and teacher, Mohammad may God be merciful to him, whose teachings are all kindness, love and goodness.

A Hindu Perspective on Physical Punishment

From *Living with Siva*
by Saprema Vyavaharah
Himalayan Academy

I've had Hindus tell me, "Slapping or caning children to make them obey is just part of our culture." I don't think so. Hindu culture is a culture of kindness. Hindu culture teaches ahimsa, non-injury, physically, mentally and emotionally. It preaches against himsa, hurtfulness.

There is an old saying in Tamil that is often recited before or after slapping or beating a child: Adium uthaium uthavu vathu pol annan thambi uthava maddar. It means, "Even the help of one's younger and older brothers cannot compare to the benefit of being kicked and beaten." It seems this proverb, printed in certain school books, is taught to students.

This makes me ask the Hindu community worldwide: What fearful expectations are we nurturing in young minds? Study until midnight to avoid a plastic rod across the back? Obey the teacher or get hit with a strap or cane, then slapped in the face at home for getting beaten in school? Are there more shlokas promoting himsa, violence, in the home, more guidelines for corporal punishment? Is it our intention to pass this despicable attitude from generation to generation?

This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain to you.

Mahabharata 5:1517

A Jainist Perspective on Violence

From *Non-violence and Its Many Facets*
by YM Acharya Mahapragya; Translated by RP Bhatnagar
Jain Vishva Publisher Bharati, Ladnun, India, January, 1994

The violence prevalent in society cannot be put an end to without developing spiritual non-violence and basing our lifestyle on it. Let us then discuss what is meant by spiritual non-violence. It is based on the unity and equality of all souls – souls of all sentient. Once we know that every living being is subject to pain and pleasure in the same manner as we and that therefore we must never inflict any pain on them, never oppress and exploit them, never rob them of their rights, we are on our way to realizing the meaning of spiritual non-violence.

One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated.

Mahavira, Suktrakritanga 1.11.33

A Jewish Perspective on Education

From *To Raise a Jewish Child*
by Rabbi Hayim Donin
Basic Books, New York, 1977

Jewish education at its best teaches the child to think, to question, to inquire, and to analyze. It encourages strong physical habits and contributes to sound mental health. It provides a sense of significance and self-worth, a feeling that there is purpose and meaning to one's life, and the satisfaction of belonging to a people, which constitutes an historic religious-national community. Jewish education addresses itself to the intellect, it touches the emotions, and it affects behavior.

What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary.

Talmud, Shabbat 31a

A Sikh Perspective on Discipline

From *Parenting Tips*
Sikh Awareness Society
www.sasorg.co.uk

Of all the forms of punishment that parents use, the one with the worst side effects is physical punishment. Children who are hit, spanked or slapped are more prone to fighting with other children. They are more likely to be bullies and more likely to use aggression to solve disputes with others.

The best way to get respectful treatment from your child is to treat him respectfully. You should give your child the same courtesies you would give to anyone else. Speak to him politely. Respect his opinion. Pay attention when he is speaking to you. Treat him kindly. Try to please him when you can. Children treat others the way their parents treat them. Your relationship with your child is the foundation for her relationships with others.

Don't create enmity with anyone as God is within everyone.

Guru Arjan Devji 259

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joan E. Durrant, Ph.D. is a Child-Clinical Psychologist and Professor of Family Social Sciences at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. She conducts research on the factors that contribute to the physical punishment of children, as well as on the impact of laws that prohibit it. Her research has been published in journals including Child Abuse and Neglect, Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law, International Review of Victimology, International Journal of Children's Rights, Youth and Society and the Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma.

Dr. Durrant was the principal researcher and co-author of the Canadian Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth; a member of the Research Advisory Committee of the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children; and a coeditor of Eliminating Corporal Punishment: The Way Forward to Constructive Child Discipline (UNESCO).

Active in public education, Dr. Durrant has written parenting materials for the Canadian government, and has given speeches and workshops to parents and professionals in many countries on the topics of physical punishment and positive discipline.

Dr. Durrant is the author of a book for parents, "Positive Discipline: What It Is and How To Do It", which is available from: <http://seap.savethechildren.se>