

Book Study

Prepared by the
Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) Project

More What Do I Do When . . .? Powerful Strategies to Promote Positive Behavior

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(Solution Tree, 2007)

Book Description:

This book provides positive behavior support strategies for preventing and responding to misbehavior. Included are strategies for welcoming students, establishing rules and consequences, promoting responsibility and problem-solving, motivating students, handling difficult situations, and helping students handle tough moments.

Target Audience: (Please check ALL the appropriate categories that apply to this book)

- Behavior
- Structuring teams
- Building Leadership Teams
- General Staff
- Tier 1 teachers
- Tier 2 teachers
- Professional Development
- Elementary Team
- Secondary Team
- Instruction

Introduction

Brief Overview:

The goal of this book is to provide strategies for handling challenging situations that educators are likely to face. These strategies focus on both prevention of and intervention for challenging behaviors and in order to create an effective learning environment that promotes positive behavior.

Discussion Questions:

1. The authors describe previously written books (e.g., *Discipline With Dignity*) about school and classroom discipline. Ask the group if anyone has read any of the books described in the introduction and their reaction to the books.
2. What are the eight underlying principles at the core of good methods of discipline? Do you agree with all eight principles? Why or why not?
3. In Principle 3, the authors state that working with tough kids requires persistence and optimism, because everyone reverts to old behaviors as they acquire new ones. Do you think this applies to teachers as well as students? Can you give some examples of this for both adults and students?

Part 1—Prevention, Intervention, and Choosing a Discipline Method

Chapter 1: Introduction to Strategies

Brief Overview:

This chapter focuses on prevention and intervention. Prevention involves understanding why students behave inappropriately and using that understanding to prevent problems. Intervention involves stopping misbehavior quickly so little instructional time is lost.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the basic needs described in this chapter? Are there any others you would add to this list?
2. Can you remember or do you know teachers who seemed to be able to connect with all types of students? What are some of the things they did or do that seem to be effective?
3. Discuss the four goals of an intervention? Which do you think is most difficult to achieve?
4. Discuss the six questions to ask when determining the effectiveness of a discipline method. Do you think these are the key criteria? Are there any you disagree with? Are there others you would add?

Part 2—Tips for Prevention

Chapter 2: Tips for Welcoming Students

Brief Overview:

Working conditions matter for students as well as adults so it is important to set up the classroom environment to be welcoming. TLC for educators means time, limits, and caring, and these should be our guide when interacting with students. This chapter has many strategies for creating a community sense of TLC.

Discussion Questions:

Review and discuss the TLC strategies described in this chapter. Select one strategy that all members of the book study group agree to try between now and your next meeting. Bring back information to share at the next meeting about the effect of that strategy. Between meeting times, each person should check in with another group member about how things are going.

Chapter 3: Tips for Developing Effective Rules and Consequences

Brief Overview:

Every building should develop a set of principles, or values, that apply to everyone in the school. Then, based on these principles, each teacher should develop a discipline plan with students. All teachers need to enforce rules in the common areas (e.g., cafeteria, hallway), even if we disagree with them. Effective leadership and active adult visibility are the critical factors for effective school-wide discipline.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think it's so important for adults to model and teach proper ways for changing rules?
2. Discuss the examples of ways to involve students in making and modifying classroom rules. Which ones do you think you would be willing to use in your classroom? Are there any with which you are uncomfortable? Are there others you could add to the list?
3. What are some ways you can review rules regularly that might influence student behavior?
4. Discuss the characteristics of effective consequences.
5. Why is being fair different from treating everyone the same?

Chapter 4: Tips for Promoting Greater Responsibility and Problem-Solving Abilities

Brief Overview:

The building blocks in teaching responsibility are awareness, choice, and planning. It helps to focus on “what” questions and not “why” questions when talking with students. One helpful question is “What are you supposed to be doing?”

Discussion Questions:

1. Review and discuss the responsibility props described in this chapter. Have each person select one prop to try between now and your next meeting. Bring back information to share at the next meeting about the effect of that prop. Between meeting times, each person should check in with another group member about how things are going.
2. Discuss the Think aloud, Problem-solving, and Millionaire strategies described in this chapter. How could you teach students to apply these strategies in your classroom? In your school?
3. Discuss the suggestions for empowering aggressive students. Do you think these ideas are helpful? Do you have other ideas to suggest?
4. Discuss the suggestions for helping poorly organized students. Do you think these ideas are helpful? Do you have other ideas to suggest?

Chapter 5: Tips for Motivating Students

Brief Overview:

Tips provided in this chapter include using preferred learning activities, building success beliefs, words of encouragement, and ideas for homework.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the examples of using preferred learning activities to motivate students. Have you tried some of these in your classroom? Were they helpful in motivating students? Do you have other activities you could add to the list?
2. Discuss the ideas presented for inspiring success beliefs. Have you tried some of these in your classroom? Were they helpful in motivating students? Do you have other ideas you could add to the list?
3. Do you think providing a student with words of encouragement is important? Do you think it needs to be unexpected? Do you think it is more powerful when the words come at an unexpected time?
4. Discuss the homework suggestions. Have you tried some of these in your classroom? Were they helpful in motivating students? Do you have other ideas you could add to the list?

Part 3—Tips for Intervention

Chapter 6: Tips for Handling Tough Moments

Brief Overview:

When correcting a student it is important to use P.E.P. (proximity, eye contact, and privacy). This chapter includes tips for handling power struggles, quick one-liners to defuse difficult situations, positive student confrontations, and how to problem-solve with active or aggressive students, sleepy students, and students losing control.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss learning how to not take offensive behavior personally. Share with each other how difficult this is for you personally. Share ideas that have helped you learn this skill.
2. Review the steps for handling power struggles. Which of these steps have you successfully used before? Are there other steps you would add to this sequence? Do you think the steps must be used in this sequence?
3. Have you ever used a third-party mediator when resolving conflict between two students or between yourself and a student? How effective was it? Who in your building could effectively serve that role as third-party mediator?
4. Why do you think “Walk, Talk, and Move” is helpful with active or aggressive student?
5. Why do you think asking a “mind-shift” question is helpful when a student is losing control?

Chapter 7: Tips for Handling Difficult Situations

Brief Overview:

You need to prepare to handle extreme behaviors by preparing three areas: identify what you expect students to do, identify what you expect of yourself, and identify specific helpers for support. Tips are included for handling theft, excessive tattling, bullying, and group misbehavior, and for handling students who have shut down.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the three keys for confronting bullying. Are these consistent with other bullying prevention programs your school has used?
2. Discuss the ideas for handling group misbehavior. Have you tried some of these in your classroom? Were they helpful? Do you have other ideas you could add to the list?
3. Have you ever tried audio- or videotaping the class? Do you think this could be a helpful intervention for problem behaviors? Why or why not?
4. Discuss the ideas for handling students who have shut down. Have you ever tried some of these with students in your class? Were they helpful? Do you have other ideas you could add to the list?

Chapter 8: Tips for Helping Students Handle Tough Moments and Difficult Situations

Brief Overview:

This chapter offers strategies for teaching appropriately assertive behavior and ways of maintaining self-control.

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the six steps in teaching alternatives to hurting others. Have you ever tried some of these with students in your class? Were they helpful? Do you have other ideas you could add to the list?
2. Discuss the ideas for how to stand up for yourself. Do you think these ideas would be helpful for students who let others push their buttons? What are I-messages and how can they help a student to stand up for himself?
3. Discuss the self-monitoring methods for teaching self-control. How can the acronyms help with self-monitoring?
4. Discuss using coupons that allow for limited rule breaking. Do you think they are a good idea? For what type of student might these be especially helpful?

Part 4—Tips for Specific Problems and Circumstances—Questions and Answers**Chapter 9: Questions and Answers****Brief Overview:**

The author provides a series of situations, along with an analysis and solution for each.

Suggested activity for discussion group:

Conduct a jigsaw activity: each member of the discussion group reads one or two situations along with the author’s analysis/solution, then provides a brief summary to the whole group.

Knowing the information presented in previous chapters, are there other solutions your group can develop?

Chapter 10: Concluding Thoughts

Brief Overview:

When teachers establish a classroom that integrates prevention and intervention strategies dealing with the causes of misbehavior, they gain more time to teach and create a healthier learning climate.

Discussion Question:

Do you think this book succeeded in showing not just what to say and do, but also *why* to say and do it?