



Creating a Culture for Success

Educator Series: 3.6 Behavior Management

Hello! Welcome to the final session in our “Classroom Management” module. My name is Kim Biskner, and I am an Implementation Specialist here at QuaverEd. We spoke in the last session about using PBIS to reward preferred behaviors. So what about non-preferred behaviors? No matter how proactive we are, there will always be non-preferred behaviors. Let’s consider ways to manage these behaviors in the most effective and efficient way to foster a culture for success.

In this session, we will discuss educator mindset for effective behavior management, discuss incremental interventions for behavior, and review teacher strategies for managing non-preferred behaviors. In this session, our primary discussion will be Tier 1 level behaviors. We will not be delving into the most escalated behaviors, but focusing on those that can be managed in the classroom by you, as opposed to those that require outside intervention.

Student behavior management begins with educator mindset. We must be relationship-oriented, trauma-informed, and proactive. By relationship-oriented, we mean operating on a two-way street of mutual respect with our students. Next, Trauma impacts our young students’ brain development. To be trauma-informed means to recognize that some behaviors are not a choice or intentional defiance, but are an unconscious response due to an exposure to trauma. Finally, having a proactive mindset about behavior management helps us redirect problems while they are small, preventing them from escalating into something bigger.

Keeping that mindset as a framework, let’s turn to the actions we take in the classroom when a student exhibits a non-preferred behavior. When behaviors occur, our goal is to redirect the behavior in the least disruptive way possible. There are gradually increasing sets of actions we can take that require limited disruption to the class or attention to the specific student.

The first step is eye contact. If a student is talking to their neighbor when they should not be, sometimes all it takes is a pointed look from you for them to get back on track. If eye contact does not work, the next step is physical proximity. Without being obvious, move around the room and position yourself nearer to the student in question.

If a student still is not being responsive, you can give nonverbal cues. You can teach your class certain sign language cues, such as “No” or “Sit Down.” You can easily use one of these cues without interrupting the flow of the lesson. A further step is to narrate expectations. Instead of calling out an individual student—“Emma, stop talking and read your book”—reiterate the expectation for the whole group—“I’m looking for students reading quietly. I notice Jude and Angie are providing an example.” These are all ways in which you can redirect a student’s behavior in a subtle way, causing the least disruption to the learning happening.

Now, let’s discuss some other ways to increase preferred student behavior and decrease non-preferred behavior. One way is by motivating students with rewards. If a student is off-task, give a reward to a nearby on-task student. This may be enough to get the off-task student right back on track. If so, then also give them a reward as soon as possible. Use this positive reinforcement to get students back on task and keep them there!

Another strategy to increase preferred student behavior is by redirection through practice. We know the behaviors and routines we’ve talked about teaching in previous sessions, must also be regularly practiced. When one or more students are continually engaging in the same non-preferred behavior, practice the correct routine or behavior in order to reiterate the preferred behavior instead. For example, if you notice students talking in the hall, when the expectation is voice off, take the opportunity for the whole class to practice. Remind students of the expectations for their voice and body, and then take the line to the hall to do a practice walk. For the next few times in the hallway, remind

students of the expectations, and continue to reward students following them, particularly those students you initially noticed having trouble. Practice is a great behavior management tool because it is not framed negatively. It is simply a reminder that we can always continue to improve!

In some instances it may be necessary to address a student's non-preferred behavior one on one through a restorative conversation. For example, if one student is being deliberately mean to another, you'll want to handle the situation directly and discreetly. Ask the student to explain the situation from their view and to tell how they were feeling. Then prompt them to identify the impact of their actions and how the other student was feeling as a result. Ask the student what they might be able to do to repair the harm caused—perhaps apologize or invite the other student to play. A restorative conversation gives an opportunity for the student to right a wrong without alienating them for making a poor choice.

One more strategy to increase student preferred behavior and decrease non-preferred behavior is through consequences. It is appropriate to teach students that a consequence is the result of an action and that consequences can be both positive and negative. If a student is following the rules, a reward point is an example of a positive consequence. If a student is not following the rules, there may be a negative consequence.

If a behavior is escalated enough to require a negative consequence, make sure it is a logical consequence, meaning the consequence is directly related to the action. For example, if a student gets mad and throws materials, it is appropriate once they have calmed down to have them clean those materials up. If a student is continually talking to a friend, it is appropriate to move them to a different location to finish their work. Logical consequences teach students that the negative outcome is a direct result of the negative action. This discourages that action in the future. Remember that negative consequences should not be the first response.

Now that we've reviewed some additional strategies to redirect undesired behaviors, let's take a moment to discuss some resources available to you through QuaverReady to support this effort. Let's start with lessons! If you are interested in whole-group lessons about making good choices, you can toggle the QuaverReady Lesson Selection Menu from "Lesson" to "Competency" and see all the lessons that support the CASEL competency of "Responsible Decision-Making" grouped together. These lessons are great for engaging the whole class in discussions about their actions.

While our focus today is strategies in the Tier 1 setting, I want to briefly mention that QuaverReady includes resources that could be used at the Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels. Let's head back to the Educator Dashboard and click into Interventions to see these! In the Behavior Resources section, we offer choice boards, break cards, check-in/check-out sheets, and more. In partnership with your MTSS team, you may choose to utilize some of these interventions for students needing more support than the strategies reviewed here today.

As we wrap up this session, let's reflect on our takeaways by answering these questions.

- **How does an educator's mindset impact their response to student behavior?**
- **What behaviors have been most challenging to navigate?**
- **How does behavior management create a culture for success in your school?**

To hold students accountable for their actions, we first need to hold ourselves accountable for ours. We must model the way we want our students to behave and interact with others. By viewing behavior through a relationship-oriented and trauma-informed lens, we can meet students where they are and teach them the skills they need to improve.

This work is not easy, but it does pay off in the long term for our students and class culture. Dedicating the time and effort to do this work will lead to a culture for success which both you and your students can benefit from.

As we conclude this final session in the "Classroom Management" module, we hope these discussions have resonated with you, and you are ready to bring some of these practices back to your classroom. From organizing your classroom space and transitions to managing student behavior, a common thread is to be proactive. Determine the routines and actions that will promote a positive class culture, invest time in explicitly teaching these expectations, and work together with your students to bring it to life. These are the decisions that ultimately create a culture of success for all. Thank you for joining us.