



Professional Development Institute

Flex Course Syllabus

Proactive Strategies for Middle and High School Behavior Management (6-12)

PDI Course Number: 172T02

ACE Course Number: LE5780

UCSD Course Number: EDUC42654

If you would like information about receiving credit for completing this course, [please click here](#).

Course Timeline

Participants have one year to complete the course. Participants must spend a minimum of three weeks in this course.

Course Description

Have you ever wondered why managing student behavior in middle and high school classrooms feels more challenging now than ever before? This online course for teachers equips middle and high school educators with the knowledge and strategies to navigate today's complex classroom behaviors. Grounded in research on adolescent development, social-emotional learning, and the science of behavior, the course helps teachers understand why students act out and how to respond effectively. Participants will explore practical approaches to setting clear expectations, fostering strong relationships, and building students' emotional intelligence. Special emphasis is placed on addressing disruptive behaviors such as defiance, cell phone misuse, bullying, and lack of engagement, while also highlighting the importance of empathy, restorative practices, and open communication. Teachers will learn how to identify the functions of behavior, implement behavior intervention plans (BIPs), and use proactive strategies to support students' mental health and executive functioning. By the end of this continuing education course, teachers will walk away with a toolkit of evidence-based strategies to increase student motivation, improve classroom climate, foster positive student-teacher interactions, and ultimately create a learning environment where every student feels valued, respected, and engaged.

Educational Outcomes

1. Teachers will be introduced to the neurodevelopment of the adolescent brain to understand why students behave in certain ways.
2. Teachers will learn which students are at-risk for being bullied.
3. Teachers will understand the factors that can have a significant impact on student behavior.
4. Teachers will understand the most prominent student behaviors and the impacts they can have on the secondary classroom.
5. Teachers will be introduced to the most popular theories regarding behaviors in the classroom, as well as the four functions of behavior.
6. Teachers will learn how to assess students' behavior using the ABCs of Behavior (antecedent, behavior, consequence).
7. Teachers will be able to design explicit classroom expectations, logical consequences, and an effective discipline plan.
8. Teachers will understand the factors impacting adolescent mental health and will be able to implement strategies to help decrease students' anxiety and stress.
9. Teachers will learn how to design a solid classroom foundation that fosters trust, empathy, social-emotional development, and meaningful relationships.
10. Teachers will understand why some adolescents struggle with emotional intelligence and will be able to implement strategies to increase students' social-emotional development.
11. Teachers will learn how to implement active listening strategies to foster an environment that encourages open communication.
12. Teachers will be able to design an equitable cell phone policy that is respectful of students' varying and unique needs.
13. Teachers will learn the role of executive function in impulsive behavior and will be able to implement strategies to strengthen students' impulse control.
14. Teachers will learn the factors that impact adolescents' ability to understand their environment and will be able to implement strategies to help students improve their awareness of their environment.
15. Teachers will learn that defiant behaviors can signify underlying unmet needs and will be able to implement strategies to prevent defiance in the classroom.
16. Teachers will be able to distinguish between teasing behavior and bullying behavior.
17. Teachers will learn the types of bullying and will be able to implement strategies to prevent, as well as address, bullying.
18. Teachers will be able to empathetically resolve conflicts using restorative practices.
19. Teachers will be able to increase student engagement by empowering students to be active participants in their learning.
20. Teachers will learn the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, how they influence human behavior, and when to effectively use each type of motivation.
21. Teachers will be able to increase students' intrinsic motivation by implementing active learning strategies.
22. Teachers will be able to motivate and engage students using differentiated instruction.
23. Teachers will learn why some students are chronically absent and will be able to implement strategies to improve their attendance and support their needs.

Instructional Media

- Online Discussions
- Online Engagement
- Online Collaboration
- Instructor Feedback
- Instructor Interaction
- Online Resources and Websites
- Supplemental Instructional Materials
- Printable Classroom Resources

Evaluation

- Test #1 (5% of final grade)
- Test #2 (5% of final grade)
- Test #3 (5% of final grade)
- Test #4 (5% of final grade)
- Test #5 (5% of final grade)
- Autobiography and Goals for the Course (10% of final grade)
- Article/Video Reflection (15% of final grade)
- Course Collaboration/Share Ideas with the Class (10% of final grade)
- Cumulative Assignment/Project: Applying Behavior Management Strategies (20% of final grade)
- Culminating Practicum (20% of final grade)

Topical Outline

Unit One

- The Science Behind the Adolescent Mind
- Student Behavior: A Worsening Problem
- The Impact of Student Behavior in the Classroom
- **Assignment #1**
Write an autobiography including information about yourself, your grade level and what you specifically hope to learn about managing disruptive classroom behaviors in middle and high school. Your autobiography should be a minimum of three paragraphs.
- **Test #1**

Unit Two

- The Basics of Behavior
- Setting Classroom Rules, Expectations, and Consequences
- Strategies to Improve Students' Mental Health

- **Assignment #2**

As an educator, it is important to be aware of the research, studies, and professional work done in the field. In the course, you will find an article and video that are relevant to the specific course content. Read the article and then write an essay with your thoughts.

- **Test #2**

Unit Three

- Building a Solid Classroom Foundation
- Building Students' Emotional Intelligence
- The Importance of Open Communication

- **Assignment #3**

Online Discussion Board Participation/Engagement: Please post a tip, strategy, or idea that specifically relates to managing disruptive classroom behaviors in middle and high school. The tip, strategy, or idea that you share needs to make a difference to other teachers in their own classrooms. Your assignment should be a minimum of three paragraphs and detailed enough for another teacher to follow easily. This is a great opportunity to share and collaborate with other teachers at your grade level around the country. Take time to review and respond to other postings that are relevant to your classroom population in order to gain effective ideas to use immediately in your classroom.

- **Test #3**

Unit Four

- Creating an Equitable Cell Phone Policy
- The Role of Executive Function in Poor Impulse Control
- Increasing Students' Awareness of Their Environment
- **Test #4**

Unit Five

- Dealing with Disrespectful Behavior
- Teasing and Bullying
- Conflict Resolution with an Empathetic Twist
- **Test #5**

Unit Six

- Creating a Learner-Centered Classroom
- Active Learning Strategies to Promote Student Engagement and Motivation
- Classroom Strategies to Combat Attendance Issues
- **Assignment #4**

Review classroom behavior scenarios and respond to each of them. Applying what you have learned from this course, design an evidence-based intervention that addresses each student's challenging behavior. Each response should consist of a minimum of two paragraphs. The first paragraph should clearly state the likely function of the behavior (e.g., attention, escape, access to tangibles, sensory needs), and it should explore at least one concrete strategy or intervention that can be used to address the fictitious learner's behavior. The second paragraph should discuss how the chosen strategy/intervention is expected to improve the student's challenging behavior. Each response must be written in at least eight detailed sentences. The strategies and interventions you choose must be different from one another, meaning that you cannot use a particular intervention strategy more than once within each of your four responses. When you are finished with this assignment, you will have written a total of eight paragraphs.

- **Assignment #5**

The culminating practicum is a three-step process. (1) In the first assignment, you were asked what goals you had and what you hoped to learn from the course. Think back to your original goals for this course. Write a minimum two-paragraph reflection specifically describing how what you learned can be used to help you reach those goal(s). (2) Next, write a minimum three-paragraph plan that specifically describes the ways in which you intend to implement a particular strategy you learned in this course into your own teaching situation. (3) Last, write a minimum two-paragraph reflection describing a student you have or have had in the past. Then, discuss how the strategies you learned in this course will specifically benefit that student as you put your plan into action.

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