

3 Encouraging Expected Behaviour

Definition

A continuum or menu of techniques to acknowledge, encourage and reinforce.

Specific positive feedback is the process of recognising when students demonstrate the expected behaviour.

Rationale

- Feedback:**
- has been supported as among one of the most empirically sound teacher competencies (MOORE ET AL., 2019).
 - promotes learning and supports engagement and motivation
 - helps students to know what they are doing well, establish next learning steps, and select techniques that will help them to solve problems and achieve goals
 - helps build quality teacher-student relationships.

Guidelines

- **Use preferred adult behaviours** to strengthen and maintain teacher-student relationships.
- **Use specific positive feedback**
 - Contingent on expected behaviour
 - Immediate
 - Frequently to build behaviour
 - Intermittently to maintain behaviour
 - Ratio of at least 4:1 positive to corrective feedback.
- Connect classroom system to the school-wide system.
 - Use free and frequent, Intermittent, and long-term occasional recognition.
 - Identify collective goals for group reinforcers.
 - Everyone is included in group celebrations.
 - Once earned, reinforcers are not taken away.
 - Start small and refine your system as you collect data.
- Develop a classroom reinforcement system to build relatedness, competence and autonomy.

Getting started

- STEP 1**
- Teach behaviour expectations and routines**
- Teach the behaviour expectations and routines and provide time for all students to understand and practise the necessary skills.
- STEP 2**
- Preventative prompts/pre-correction**
- Remind students of the expected behaviour to increase the probability they will demonstrate the skills.
- STEP 3**
- Non-contingent positive attention**
- STEP 4**
- Preferred adult behaviours**
- Strengthen quality teacher-student relationships by communicating privately, listening, using eye contact, pleasant voice tone, smiles and appropriate professional touch.
- STEP 5**
- Specific positive feedback**
- Provide contingent attention through specific positive feedback when students demonstrate the expected behaviour.
- STEP 6**
- Consider implementing a classroom acknowledgment system**
- Develop a class wide system with a menu/continuum of reinforcers that includes social attention, activities and tangible items.

Examples

Examples of frequent, intermittent and occasional reinforcers		
Frequent	Intermittent	Occasional
Specific positive feedback	Positive phone calls home	Special projects
Ticket/tangible item	Post cards home	Recognition from the principal
Positive notes home	Special privileges	Student of the week.
	Extra time doing a preferred activity.	

Attention types

- There are two types of adult attention**
- **Non-contingent attention** – provided regardless of performance and includes greetings, proximity, smiles, and conversations.
 - **Contingent attention** – provided based on student performance of an identified expectation or behaviour. The most common example of this is providing specific positive feedback.

Trauma lens

- Students who have experienced trauma may need a higher ratio (9:1) of positive to corrective feedback. (CALDARELLA ET AL., 2023)
- This can help counterbalance the negative interactions and experiences students may have had.

“The purpose of providing students with positive feedback after behaviour is to make it more likely that they’ll do it again.”

SCOTT, HIRN & COOPER, 2017