

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT 101

Have an authentic presence and engaging content. Set clear expectations about classroom behavior and help the students to develop individual skills to better manage emotions. Foster a positive and supportive classroom environment.

Have the knowledge and practical expertise in crisis de-escalation skills to address conflicts when they occur. Keep calm when challenged by poor student behavior, drawing on those skills and staying solution-focused.

Stay connected to a larger behavioral intervention process to better address the underlying causes of disruptive or dangerous behaviors and develop intervention strategies that are multidisciplinary, collaborative, and on-going.

THE ROOT OF CLASSROOM VIOLENCE

Aggressive behavior and violence can stem from mental health challenges, trauma contributing to developmental delays, lack of preparation for participating in a classroom environment, and poor parenting resulting in difficulty with students responding to rules, boundaries, and authority. These impacts can lead to frustrations, lack of preparation toward a positive classroom environment, and reactive interventions that escalate rather than de-escalate behavior. These problems can be exacerbated by poor instructor preparation, lack of training, and little focus on evolving instructional methods for specific populations.

STUDENTS LEARN BEST IN A CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT THAT:

- Is supportive,
- Is free of violence, and
- Has a sense of community and shared goals.

WHAT DOES AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER LOOK LIKE?

- Has an authentic presence
- Offers engaging content
- Sets clear expectations about classroom behavior
- Helps students in developing individual skills to better manage their emotions
- Fosters a positive and supportive classroom environment
- Has the knowledge and practical expertise in technical crisis de-escalation skills to address conflicts when they occur

WHY IS ADDRESSING DISRUPTIVE AND DANGEROUS CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR ESSENTIAL?

- It impacts others' ability to learn and the teacher's ability to teach effectively.
- It increases the potential for violence in the classroom.
- It contributes to instructor stress, compassion fatigue, and burnout.
- It takes valuable time away from achieving learning objectives.
- It can carry over into students' college years, when issues such as financial concerns and balancing responsibilities can lead to major crises.

De-Escalation Technique	Description
Equanimity and Patience	A critical element to crisis de-escalation is adopting a stance of equanimity, or a sense of balance and patience in the face of chaos and crisis. Teachers should remain calm, cool, and collected in the face of crisis and draw on a host of techniques.
Counseling Skills	Teachers should use active listening, simple and summary reflection, narrative reframing, and the building of cognitive dissonance to help students move through stages of change. This may include re-direction of behavior and the use of humor (not sarcasm).
Motivational Interviewing	These techniques include expressing empathy, developing discrepancy, avoiding argumentation, rolling with resistance, and supporting self-efficacy. They are useful in working with those resistant to change or defensive in their response to confrontation.
Transtheoretical Change Theory	These stages of change can be helpful in understanding a student's resistance to change or reaction to confrontation by a teacher. They include pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance/relapse.
Mediation & Resolution Skills	These training techniques address developing listening skills, empathy for alternative perspectives, critical thinking, and decision-making.
Graduated Actions	These approaches stress the use of the least restrictive intervention skills first. Embarrassment and shaming are avoided, and corrective actions are staged (e.g., a focused look from the teacher, moving closer to the student, and stopping or dismissing the class).
Strategies for High-Intensity Situations	Plan for the highest-intensity crisis situations with a focus on safety. This involves recognizing the nature of the situation, remaining calm, using simple verbal requests, planning for safety and action, and following up after the crisis.
Disciplinary Response and Processes	Implement disciplinary processes that limit the amount of time students are away from the classroom. Use consequences appropriate to the nature of behavior and behavioral antecedents.
Physical Violence Response	When behavior escalates to violence, actions may be taken based on the contextual setting, including physical restraint, monitoring, dismissing the class, and police involvement.
Solution-Focused Harm Reduction	Solution-focused techniques seek to look toward the future, away from what was and toward what can be. They consider crisis as an opportunity. These approaches help students identify their choices in behavior and encourage critical thinking, exploration of alternative behaviors, and personal responsibility.

IMPACT OF CLASSROOM VIOLENCE ON VICTIMS

Teachers and students who have been the victims of classroom violence experience symptoms that impact their overall health, well being, and success. It can also contribute to feelings of fear for students and impact their learning and academic progress.