

Fixing Bad Behaviour

Enhancing teacher effectiveness in the classroom

This series of books offers teachers practical ways to help make the school day much more productive and a lot more enjoyable.

Specialist research findings on all sorts of topics have been coupled with decades of the author's classroom experience to give the busy classroom practitioner a multitude of workable solutions to make high-quality teaching a reality.

In a nutshell – within these books is the reassuring voice of experience ready to guide the classroom practitioner with tried and true ways to effectively manage the hazards of the typical school day – and come out shining.

The result is a very readable, helpful and practical professional resource.

The school day can then be something to look forward to – for you the teacher, and for the children in your care.



Books in this series

- Getting to the Heart of Learning Problems
- From Bully to Model Citizen
- **Fixing Bad Behaviour**

Fixing Bad Behaviour

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Fixing Bad Behaviour | 1 |
| The well-disciplined school | 1 |
| Can schools teach character development? | 2 |
| Teachers with poor literacy teaching skills can cause behavioural problems | 4 |
| The link between family conflict and behavioural problems | 5 |
| Emotional coaching at school | 6 |
| What makes an effective school? | 6 |
| The link between genes, home and behaviour | 8 |
| Evidence for a gene/environment interaction in violent behaviour | 9 |
| Conduct Disorder and its ramifications | 10 |
| The behavioural symptoms of Conduct Disorder | 10 |
| The time-out procedure – and some alternatives | 12 |
| School violence – home AND school may be to blame | 13 |
| Identifying the child who is a loner and doesn't want to be | 14 |
| Behaviour modification for both the timid and the pushy | 15 |
| Why do some children keep on being disruptive/anti-social? | 16 |
| Aggressive behaviour | 18 |
| The pecking order in schools – is it a good thing? | 19 |
| Turning 'fringe-dwellers' into 'mainstream' children | 20 |
| The anxious child | 20 |
| The child who won't stop talking | 23 |
| Do some teachers create problems? | 26 |
| Teaching compassion and empathy | 27 |
| Capable teachers and the education of boys | 30 |
| Nitty-gritty matters in the special needs of boys | 32 |
| Are there ways to fix the problem of poor academic performance of boys? | 39 |
| Do some teachers punish boys merely because they are boys? | 41 |
| Ten Essentials to make sure boys thrive at school | 42 |
| Single mums – is this a serious problem for boys? | 44 |
| Parental responsibilities | 45 |
| Parents and home discipline | 48 |
| How can schools help parents on the matter of home discipline? | 49 |
| A summary of ways for parents to connect with their children | 57 |
| Good books for parents to borrow from the school | 59 |
| Getting value out of parent/teacher interviews | 60 |
| How can teachers evaluate possible symptoms of child abuse? | 61 |
| Calming techniques that work for everyone – including the teacher | 63 |
| Coping with anger | 70 |
| Strategies to try in order to dissolve anger | 71 |
| Anger management in the classroom | 72 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Handling parental rage | 72 |
| The passive child – ideal student or deeply troubled | 73 |
| Teaching self-esteem..... | 74 |
| Teaching children friendship..... | 75 |
| How can a school teach accountability? Glasser's Choice Theory | 78 |
| Some suggestions for behavioural borders to set..... | 79 |
| What are some good rules to have?..... | 80 |
| Mentoring and caring for all children is vital..... | 82 |
| What sorts of punishments work when the rules are broken?..... | 82 |
| Meeting a new class for the first time | 83 |
| The quality of a school can overcome all learning and behavioural problems..... | 84 |
| The Pygmalion effect | 86 |
| Misdiagnosis of children's perceived ability to learn..... | 88 |
| What are the reasons why some children don't cope in the classroom?..... | 90 |
| The multi-sensory method of reading, writing and spelling | 95 |
| Listening and understanding problems | 96 |
| The quiet classroom | 97 |
| Good listening habits..... | 98 |
| Lack of special tuition for children at risk | 98 |
| New children | 99 |
| Personality clashes | 99 |
| Speech problems | 100 |
| Hand-eye co-ordination problems..... | 100 |
| The Socratic Dialogue..... | 102 |
| The teacher's demeanor and classroom discipline | 102 |
| The teacher's voice | 103 |
| Classroom social skills in groupwork | 105 |
| Team sport – the benefits | 106 |
| Is there such as thing as too much aggressive competitive sport? | 107 |
| Why is a school uniform so important? | 107 |
| The child who looks physically different..... | 110 |
| Unattractive children..... | 111 |
| Major learning problems should be assessed by a behavioural optometrist..... | 113 |
| Attention deficit disorder (ADD)..... | 114 |
| What can the teacher with the ADD/ADHD child in the class do to stay sane?..... | 117 |
| The ADHD problem and eye movement difficulties | 120 |
| ADHD and iron deficiency | 121 |
| Food additives and behavioural problems – important research findings..... | 121 |
| The problem of poverty and its effect on self-image | 122 |
| Classroom noise, learning and behaviour | 123 |
| The link between health and behaviour..... | 124 |
| The link between malnutrition and behavioural problems..... | 126 |

Fixing Bad Behaviour

The well-disciplined school

Well-disciplined schools tend to be those in which there is a school-wide emphasis on the importance of learning and an intolerance of conditions which inhibit learning. Some teachers are confused when it comes to deciding whether to be kind and friendly or to be a stentorian and unrelenting disciplinarian.

A teacher's air of authority, strength and capability and behaving like a professional is crucial to the success of each child and to the teacher's self-image as an educator. Children have animal-like instincts that can immediately sense the teacher who is ill-at-ease, even slightly nervous, is poorly prepared, makes bad judgements, lacks the vocabulary and the body language of authority, hesitates with ums, ahs, mumbles and stumbles when they speak, or hasn't a clue about the local area or the geography of the school. Such a teacher is fair game, and so begins, from the first minute of that first day, a descending spiral of deepening teacher dissatisfaction and out-of-control children who hate school.

We have all observed classes where one teacher has perfect discipline while for another teacher with the same group of children on the same day the children behave like untamed wildcats in a cage.

Why is this so? What is the difference between the teacher who has good disciplinary control and the one where even the 'good' kids misbehave?

Here is a list that may help.

- The natural disciplinarian has a slightly terrifying and authoritative demeanor that is strong for the group but approachable yet 'regal' (possibly the right word) for the compliant individual.
- This 'regal air of authority' will be immediately discernible to an observer because it comes over as posture, voice and body language. These 'big three' elements include a purposeful, confident walk, a business-like tone of voice, an articulate command of the language, a no-fuss strength that demonstrates that every problem has a solution, appropriate and effective people-handling skills, good dress sense, a sense of humour (wit rather than flippancy), the ability not to forget details (especially the names of students) but balanced with an ability to turn a blind eye when the situation warrants it - and an impressive command of all the various demands of the job.
- Along with this goes a professional armory that includes good questioning techniques and imaginative turns of phrase that keep listeners mentally alert and even entertained;

uncompromisingly effective language usage, tones of voice, pace of delivery, fluency, clarity and an actor's command of 'the stage'; facial expressions that promote and encourage quality learning; disciplinary tactics that function without effort; lesson variety; good time management skills - and a wide variety of methods of presentation up one's sleeve that will have all children learning in spite of themselves. Added to these can be such attributes as reliability, good listening skills, personal style and flair and creative teaching strategies. Being a well-respected member and contributing member of the local community is also part and parcel of the teacher's lot. A very tall list, you may correctly deduce!

However, there's more ...

The top quality super-teacher will have world knowledge, is a trusted authority on all topics taught and a few others as well, follows through on promises, is always just and fair, is dependable and honest, has a well-read understanding of learning problems, social issues and child development, and has approachability as a mentor.

Any professional educator worth their salt demonstrates the value of pride in achieving high standards, has perfect spelling, grammar and syntax (not a small matter), is valued and liked by parents and colleagues, gives creative and stimulating homework that is enjoyable and useful, is technology-savvy - and can craft each lesson to achieve maximum value for time spent.

Each of these attributes has a hugely important impact on how children respond to a teacher because they determine how well each child will learn. A good teacher is remembered for the rest of their lives by those who have been taught by them.

In case the above list has left you gasping for air, be reassured that being aware of what you want to become is already a giant step forward along the path to excellence in this profession.

Can schools teach character development?

A few quotations are pertinent here:

Our school system, and the values of the school system, is immensely important. More than any other structure outside the family itself – more than the law or government – our schools provide the social, organisational and moral glue to society.

Sporting success is not enough. Winning is not enough. It doesn't mean much at all if it all comes at too high a cost. Even academic success is not enough if it circumvents the question of character.

Paul Sheehan, Boys' lesson in defeat, if not class May 23, 2005 Sydney Morning Herald

Some educators consider that having a good character should be at the top of the list of a school's reason for existing. It is a goal more able to be reached by all children regardless of their academic or sporting prowess, and as such can result in less alienation from school.

Schools that effectively assist pupil character development are:

directed by adults who exercise their authority toward faculty and students in a firm, sensitive, and imaginative manner, and who are committed to both academics and pupil character development;

staffed by dedicated faculty who make vigorous demands on pupils and each other;

structured so that pupils are surrounded by a variety of opportunities for them to practice helping (prosocial) conduct;

managed to provide pupils--both individually and collectively--with many forms of recognition for good conduct;

oriented toward maintaining systems of symbols, slogans, ceremonies, and songs that heighten pupils' collective identities;

dedicated to maintaining pupil discipline, via clear, widely disseminated discipline codes that are vigorously enforced and backed up with vital consequences;

committed to academic instruction and assigned pupils significant homework and otherwise stressed appropriate academic rigor;

sensitive to the need to develop collective pupil loyalties to particular classes, clubs, athletic groups, and other sub entities in the school;

sympathetic to the values of the external adult society, and perceive it as largely supportive and concerned with the problems of the young;

always able to use more money to improve their programs, but rarely regard lack of money as an excuse for serious program deficiencies;

open to enlisting the help, counsel, and support of parents and other external adults, but willing to propose important constructive changes in the face of (sometimes) ill-informed parent resistance;

disposed to define 'good character' in relatively immediate and traditional terms

There are five kinds of experiences that are deemed important for the development of children's prosocial orientations: