

# **PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BEHAVIOR AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL**

**TAMARA WATERS-WHEELER, ED.S, NCSP-SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**



# RELATIONSHIPS

- **NOTHING ELSE WILL WORK IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A DEGREE OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH STUDENT.**
- **THE DEGREE OF RELATIONSHIP NEEDED WILL BE DIFFERENT FOR EACH STUDENT.**

# REMEMBER.....

THOSE STUDENTS WHO NEED YOUR  
LOVE THE MOST WILL ASK FOR IT IN THE  
MOST UNLOVING WAYS.

# UNIVERSAL SUPPORTS

- **MAKE SURE ALL PROCEDURES ARE POSTED AND TAUGHT TO THE STUDENTS. HAVE SPECIFIC PROCEDURES FOR WHAT YOU WANT THE STUDENTS TO DO—TEACH AND REVIEW OFTEN.**
- **POST ALL ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES ON WHITE BOARD.**
- **INCLUDE TIME IN YOUR SCHEDULE FOR EXTRA HELP**
- **TIME OUT AREA—AGE APPROPRIATE**

# **DOCUMENTATION**

- **VERY IMPORTANT!**
- **CAN USE A CALENDAR, SELF DEVELOPED FORM, FORM FROM INTERNET**
- **ALSO NEED TO TRACK PROGRESS IN IDENTIFIED AREA**

# STRATEGY #1-CONTROLLED BREAKS

- **ALLOW THE STUDENT A 'COOL-DOWN' BREAK (LONG, MORSE, & NEWMAN, 1980).**
  - **SELECT A CORNER OF THE ROOM (OR AREA OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM WITH ADULT SUPERVISION) WHERE THE TARGET STUDENT CAN TAKE A BRIEF 'RESPITE BREAK' WHENEVER HE OR SHE FEELS ANGRY OR UPSET. BE SURE TO MAKE COOL-DOWN BREAKS AVAILABLE TO ALL STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM, TO AVOID SINGLING OUT ONLY THOSE CHILDREN WITH ANGER-CONTROL ISSUES. WHENEVER A STUDENT BECOMES UPSET AND DEFIANT, OFFER TO TALK THE SITUATION OVER WITH THAT STUDENT ONCE HE OR SHE HAS CALMED DOWN AND THEN DIRECT THE STUDENT TO THE COOL-DOWN CORNER. (E.G., "THOMAS, I WANT TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT WHAT IS UPSETTING YOU, BUT FIRST YOU NEED TO CALM DOWN. TAKE FIVE MINUTES IN THE COOL-DOWN CORNER AND THEN COME OVER TO MY DESK SO WE CAN TALK.")**

# **STRATEGY #2-CHECK AND CONNECT**

- **2 MINUTE CHECK AND CONNECT**
- **COULD BE WITH A TEACHER WHO IS ON PREP—COULD BE DURING YOUR PREP—STUDY HALL**
- **CHECK HOW THE STUDENT IS DOING, PREPARE THEM FOR THE CLASS AND WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN**

# **STRATEGY #3-REDUCING ASSIGNMENTS**

## **WHEN SHOULD I DO IT:**

- **WHEN A STUDENT IS SLOW WORKING**
- **WHEN A STUDENT IS STRUGGLING AND HAVING DIFFICULTY GRASPING CONCEPTS OR COMPLETING WORK**
- **WHEN A STUDENT REGULARLY TURNS IN ASSIGNMENTS INCOMPLETE**
- **WHEN A STUDENT IS UNMOTIVATED**
- **WHEN A STUDENT SEEMS OVERWHELMED**
- **WHEN A STUDENT IS DISCOURAGED**
- **WHEN A STUDENT EXPERIENCES LITTLE SUCCESS ON ASSIGNMENTS**
- **WHEN A STUDENT NEEDS ENCOURAGEMENT TO KEEP TRYING**



## **HOW DO I DO IT:**

- **THERE ARE NUMEROUS WAYS TO REDUCE AN ASSIGNMENT DEPENDING ON THE SUBJECT MATTER AND ASSIGNMENT, FOR EXAMPLE:**
  - **ASSIGNING ODD OR EVEN PROBLEMS ONLY**
  - **ASSIGNING ONLY HALF**
  - **ASSIGNING ONLY WHAT THE STUDENT CAN FINISH IN A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TIME**
  - **ASSIGNING ONLY ENOUGH TO ENSURE THE STUDENT HAS PRACTICED THE MAIN OR ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS**
  - **HAVING A STUDENT WRITE SOME ANSWERS AND VERBALLY GIVE OTHERS**
  - **HAVING A STUDENT DO A CERTAIN NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ON THEIR OWN AND DOING THE REST WITH A PARTNER**
  - **ETC.**
- **WHEN REDUCING ASSIGNMENTS, TRY TO ONLY GIVE THE STUDENT THE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS THEY NEED TO COVER THE MAIN OR ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS, LETTING LESS IMPORTANT OR PERIPHERAL CONCEPTS AND IDEAS GO**
- **FOCUS ON WHAT THE STUDENT ABSOLUTELY NEEDS TO LEARN AND KNOW**

# STRATEGY#4-TALK TICKETS

- **STEP 1: FROM THE SAMPLE FORMS THAT ACCOMPANY THIS INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION, CHOOSE A VERSION OF THE TALK TICKET FORM THAT BEST SUITS YOUR NEEDS.**
- **STEP 2: MEET WITH THE STUDENT PRIVATELY TO INTRODUCE THE TALK TICKET INTERVENTION. TELL THE STUDENT THAT, WHEN AN UPSETTING INCIDENT OCCURS THAT THE TEACHER CANNOT IMMEDIATELY MEET WITH THE STUDENT TO DISCUSS, THE STUDENT WILL BE GIVEN A "TALK TICKET." THIS TICKET WILL GUARANTEE THAT THE STUDENT WILL BE ABLE TO MEET WITH A TRUSTED ADULT TO DEBRIEF ABOUT THE INCIDENT -BUT AT A TIME THAT WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH INSTRUCTION.**
- **STEP 3: WHENEVER YOU NOTE THAT THE STUDENT IS UPSET ABOUT AN EVENT OR ISSUE BUT YOU NOT HAVE TIME TO MEET IMMEDIATELY WITH THE STUDENT TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION, WRITE OUT A TALK TICKET THAT NOTES A TIME AND LOCATION FOR THE STUDENT TO MEET WITH A TRUSTED PERSON (E.G., YOU, SCHOOL COUNSELOR, ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER) TO PROBLEM-SOLVE ABOUT THE ISSUE.**
- **STEP 4: BE SURE THAT THE STUDENT IS ALLOWED TO 'REDEEM' HIS OR HER TALK TICKET AT THE TIME NOTED! IF YOU HAVE LISTED SEVERAL ADULT CONTACTS IN THE SCHOOL WHOM THE STUDENT MIGHT CHOOSE TO MEET WITH, YOU MAY DECIDE TO LET THE STUDENT WORK DOWN THE LIST, CHECKING IN WITH EACH OF THE ADULTS LISTED UNTIL THE STUDENT FINDS ONE WHO HAS TIME TO MEET WITH HIM OR HER.**
- **STEP 5 (OPTIONAL): AFTER THE STUDENT MEETS WITH AN ADULT TO TALK ABOUT THE UPSETTING SITUATION, YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO HAVE THE STUDENT COMPLETE THE "TALK TICKET REFLECTIVE PLANNER" FORM. OR THE STUDENT AND ADULT CAN COMPLETE THIS FORM TOGETHER AS PART OF THEIR CONFERENCE.**

[HTTP://WWW.INTERVENTIONCENTRAL.ORG/BEHAVIORAL-INTERVENTIONS/CHALLENGING-STUDENTS/TALK-TICKET](http://www.interventioncentral.org/behavioral-interventions/challenging-students/talk-ticket)

# **STRATEGY #5-MENTORS**

- **STUDENT MENTOR IN CLASSROOM WHO WORKS WITH STUDENT ON ASSIGNMENTS, ETC.**
- **COULD BE OUTSIDE CLASSROOM AS WELL**
- **COULD BE ANY APPROPRIATE ADULT WHO CAN LEND EVEN 15 MINUTES PER WEEK**
- **MENTOR SHOULD BE PREPARED TO WORK ON SPECIFIC TOPICS DETERMINED BY TEACHER**

# **STRATEGY #6-BEHAVIOR CONTRACTS**

- **SPECIFICALLY OUTLINE EXPECTED BEHAVIOR**
- **INCLUDE REINFORCEMENT FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR—NOT NECESSARILY TANGIBLE**
- **MAKE SURE STUDENT AND PARENTS HAVE COPY**
- **REINFORCEMENT NEEDS TO BE DETERMINED WITH STUDENT SO IT MAKES AN IMPACT**

# **STRATEGY #7-TARGETED LESSONS-SS**

- **TEACH SPECIFIC TARGETED LESSONS ON APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM**
- **USES TIME AT THE BEGINNING BUT SAVES TIME IN THE END—WOULD YOU RATHER WASTED 10 MINUTES TEACHING THE LESSON OR 20 MINUTES ARGUING WITH A STUDENT/STUDENTS?**

**SEE EXAMPLES**

# FILTER ACTIVITY—WHERE IS MY MIND AT?



# LESSON PLANS

- **ALL OVER THE INTERNET—DON'T RECREATE THE WHEEL**
- **CAN BE DONE FIRST FEW MINUTES OF CLASS OR WITH A TARGET GROUP DURING PREP/STUDY HALL, ETC.**

**SEE EXAMPLE**

# **STRATEGY #8-VISUAL WARNING SYSTEM**

- **DEVELOP A VISUAL WARNING SYSTEM WITH SPECIFIC STUDENTS—USE VERBAL, GESTURAL OR PICTORIAL CUES TO GET THE STUDENT BACK ON TRACK OR INFORM THEM WHEN BEHAVIOR IS INAPPROPRIATE OR APPROPRIATE.**



# EXAMPLES

- **THUMBS UP**
- **SMILEY FACE/FROWN FACE**
- **GESTURE CHOSEN BY YOU AND STUDENT(S)**
- **CARD**
- **CUE WORD I.E. “CHECK”**

# **STRATEGY #9-SELF MONITORING**

- **CAN BE USED WITH ONE STUDENT, A SMALL GROUP OR A WHOLE CLASS**
- **USE RANDOM TIMER AND HAVE STUDENT CHECK IF HE/SHE IS ON TASK WHEN TIMER OCCURS**
- **MUST TEACH STUDENT WHAT IS EXPECTED FOR “ON TASK” BEHAVIOR—HAVE POSTERS OR OTHER VISUAL CUES.**

**OTHER STRATEGIES THAT YOU USE?**

**DISCUSSION**

# Q & A