

# What Effective Schools Are Doing

## ***Effective teachers reinforce and support desirable behavior***

- Warmly greet students, show interest in their talents, and remember their birthdays.
- Hold class celebrations for good class work on a hard project.
- Encourage students to post their “best work of the week” in public places in school.
- Create a Praise Board so students can write peer-to-peer notes for positive acts.
- Be warm when giving instructions and during transitions.
- Recognize a student each week as *Most Improved* or *Most Helpful*.
- Design grading system to encourage high-quality work and so students feel it is fair.
- Reward attempts to learn new skills even if performance is less than perfect.
- Post homework completion charts and provide weekly group rewards.
- Provide school-wide, class-wide, and group-based rewards for positive actions.



## ***Proactive schools monitor what is going on and are involved with all students***

- It helps to provide active and systematic supervision of students in all common areas of the school.
  - Why not give periodic quizzes about the school rules?
- With student involvement, you can test and report whether the building is free of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- If you have adults at “hot spots” (where referrals or injuries happen), they can reward positive behavior.
- It is a good idea to hold weekly lunches with school staff, community members, and a variety of youth.
- Consider creating advisory periods to foster positive staff-student relationships.
  - You can provide multiple opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities before and after school.
- Offer help in creating before- and after-school “homework clubs” to help with schoolwork.
- Take the time to communicate with students’ parents about how their children are doing in class and then work with them to solve any problems.
  - Whenever possible, group diverse students together for social skills teaching or “advisory” periods.



- Do your best to identify and support socially withdrawn students and victims of bullying.
- Carefully monitor to prevent the clustering of peers who get into trouble.
- Give students short surveys monthly to monitor safety, bullying, and perceived positive reinforcement.

### ***Successful schools model and teach positive social behavior***

- Why not use your literature and social studies lessons to expose students to positive, culturally relevant role models?
- Be sure to use curricula that research shows are effective in teaching core subjects.
- Also provide evidence-based curricula in social, problem-solving, and health skills.
- It's fun and engaging to post and discuss stories of local "heroes" doing positive things in the community.
- Engage students in "service learning," where they work with a skilled professional and tie their work to academics.
- You can teach self-management and study skills.
- Promote norms for positive school behavior through youth-assisted information campaigns (e.g., posters, announcements, assemblies).
- Hold upbeat contests to increase positive school behavior and to encourage positive peer relationships.
- Use peer-to-peer tutoring and team rewards.



### ***The most effective teachers structure and guide***

- Teach responsible use of media (television, radio, and internet).
- Teach media literacy skills to inoculate against violent media and marketing messages that may promote unhealthy behavior (e.g., smoking, drinking, or over/under-eating).
- Directly teach norms regarding use of the internet for cyber-bullying, such as spreading rumors, making threats, or "cyber libel."
- Clearly teach a few key rules. Praise and reinforce students for following those rules.
- Provide multiple opportunities for meaningful "jobs" and extracurricular activities at school.
- Establish non-harsh consequences for breaking rules and enforce those consequences consistently.
- For noncompliance or minor rule breaking, ask students to perform the appropriate behavior.
  - ☆ If they correct themselves, offer praise.
  - ☆ If they still do not comply, warn them and offer a chance to comply or face a mild, negative consequence.
  - ☆ If they still do not comply after the warning, deliver the consequence matter-of-factly.

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