

COMMON PROBLEMS AND HELPFUL HINTS

Common Problems	Helpful Hints
We sometimes tend to ignore good behavior because we feel that it should occur because that is what is expected of us.	Recognize the little things that are going right. Look for opportunities to praise the small successes.
We tend to tolerate the small annoying behaviors, but they often lead into more frequent and greater behaviors.	Address the little issues when appropriate. It is easier to turn around small problems than to try to deal with big ones. Try setting clear limits early on.
We often wait for major problems to occur before we do anything about it. The longer you wait, the harder it gets!	Don't wait to respond. Set clear limits early on. Waiting until the last minute to deal with a problem usually leads to a very frustrating experience.
We often use warnings, threats, or ultimatums to gain compliance. This often sets up authority control issues.	Avoid using warning, threats, or ultimatums. Set clear limits. Remind them that it is how they act that determines the consequence.
We might sometimes take the student's behavior personally. Emotionally responding will often encourage more behavior.	Keep your delivery firm and even. Avoid responding to personal attacks. This is often used to side step an issue.
Argumentative behaviors from students are really good at getting you pulled in. Do you find yourself spending a lot of time trying to convince them to act right? If so, you got pulled in.	If you find yourself getting pulled in, then back up a step and set the limits. Do not get into any power struggles with the student.
One person may not allow a behavior to occur while another does not really see anything wrong with it. Mixed messages like this are the best bet in keeping a negative behavior alive and well.	Have a simple plan that everyone can understand and consistently carry through.
We have a tendency to focus on the problem behavior rather than focusing on the positive behaviors that are occurring.	Focus on what the student is doing right. This is especially important when you are letting Johnny know how he is doing.
We have a tendency to punish bad behaviors versus rewarding positive ones.	When possible, reinforce an alternative behavior. Example: Johnny interrupts all the time. Reinforce Johnny when he waits his turn.
Often times, we reinforce negative behavior without even knowing it. The belief is that the behavior will either go away or if nobody makes a big deal about it then it won't be so bad. Example: Johnny makes an inappropriate statement and a family member laughs and makes an excuse for Johnny.	Attention is one of the biggest reinforcers we have. Be careful how you give it out. Address issues appropriately and consistently.
Sometimes we over respond and make mountains out of mole hills. The little things get a lot of attention when it probably would be better to just ignore it and let it drop.	Neutral and non-emotional responses to problem behavior can be the hardest thing to do. Use self-coaching, coping skills, or anything that works for you to stay cool, calm, and collected.
We sometimes deliver reinforcers for no reason at all. We will just give them to the student non-contingently.	Let Johnny earn his reinforcers through good performance.