

Strategies for Effective Behavior Management

DO'S AND DON'TS OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

- **Do** remember who is in charge—you! Don't get into any power struggles with students.
- **Don't** yell or lose your temper. To achieve a calm, orderly, and controlled environment, you must remain calm and controlled.
- **Don't** make threats, especially those that students know you will not or cannot carry out. Example: "If you don't behave like third graders, I'm going to send you back to second grade."
- **Do** give students strong, direct statements rather than making your commands questions. Example: Rather than saying, "Will you please stay in your seats?" make it a directive by saying, "Stay in your seats."
- **Don't** use the word try. The word try gives permission to fail. You want your students to comply not to try. Example: "Try to be on time." versus "Be on time."
- **Do** use a "get ready to listen" signal to alert students that you are about to give important information. Then speak in a normal voice. **Don't** speak over the students even if some are not ready to listen. When they miss the direction, they will be ready to listen next time. When you give the signal, students who are ready to listen will pressure those who are not.
- **Do** give a directive only once. Tell students exactly what you expect and, whenever possible, also tell students the consequences (and make sure you carry them out). Then, do not repeat the directive. Example: "If you have a question, raise your hand. I will only call on students who quietly raise their hand and wait to be called on."
- **Don't** use sarcasm, ridicule, or labels. Students will learn respect by being respected.
- **Do** use students' names to praise positive behavior as well as to discipline. Examples: "Ned, I noticed that you picked up the trash around your desk and I appreciate your showing responsibility." and "Ann, I expect everyone to stop and listen when I give the freeze signal."