**DISCIPLINE DURING CLASS TIME**

Here are some techniques for handling behavior issues during class time which have worked for me. Remember that all children are individuals and what works for one child may not work for another, but once you find out what works, be consistent and follow through.

**TIME-OUTS**

**Sending a child to time-out.** When a child misbehaves, do not give him too many chances before sending him to time-out. Continuous warnings are ignored by children. Do not give him more than 3 warnings and depending on the child and the situation, only one warning is acceptable. If the child already knows the rule and breaks it repeatedly, zero warnings are acceptable. If a child refuses to go to a chair, the teacher must take him there herself and even hold him there if he refuses to sit.

**While in the break chair, the child should be left alone.** His classmates should not talk to him and the staff should focus their attention on the rest of the children who are working. *Do not* coddle a child when he is in time-out! (The only exception to this is a child who is extremely sensitive, has never been in trouble before and seems traumatized. For a child like that, it is permissible to reassure him that he is okay and when he calms down, the two of you will talk about it. A comforting hug may be appropriate, but then leave.) If something special happens while a child is in time out such as another child serving an apple, he misses out.

**Duration of time-outs.** The guideline of one minute for every year of his life is incorrect (except for toddlers prior to age 2). It is rarely, if ever, enough . When a four-year-old sits in the chair for 4 minutes, he gets up and immediately misbehaves again. The child needs to sit in the chair long enough to get the message that his misbehavior will not be tolerated and long enough for him to think about what he did and why it was wrong. In addition, he can learn about proper behavior by observing the rest of the children in class.

**Releasing a child from time-out.** When a child sits in time-out, he should not be released until he attains self-control by sitting still without crying or goofing around. Then you call him over and talk to him about what happened. Ask him why he is in trouble and discuss with him what he should do instead. Sometimes I ask the child why he is misbehaving. “Why do you keep pushing Brittany?” Usually children at this age don’t know why, but it is still okay to ask. It will make them think about it. And if they do know the answer, it provides good insight into their behavior which you can then discuss with them.

**GROUP OR CIRCLE TIME**

* All the children are required to attend. Everyone needs to learn how to sit quietly in a meeting and pay attention. In addition, children who do not come are a distraction.
* The children need to sit on the line with their legs folded and their hands in their laps. (New children may not know how to fold their legs and may require help at first.)
* Once the children sit down, they must stay in their spot and cannot get up without permission. Any drinks of water need to occur before they sit down.
* During circle time the children need to be quiet. They may not interrupt the teacher.

**Children are inattentive and noisy during circle time.**

* Give all the children assigned spots to sit on the line and separate the disruptive ones.
* For the child who is consistently disruptive, assign a spot outside the circle for him to sit.
* Make the disruptive child turn around so that his back is to the group.
* Count to 5 and whoever is talking by the time you get to 5 goes to a chair.
* “I like the way John has his hands in his lap and his legs folded.”
* “Who knows how to sit the right way?” “I am looking for those children who know how to sit the right way. You don’t need to tell me, just show me how nicely you can sit. John knows, Hazel is sitting properly. Look. She has her legs folded with her hands in her lap.”

**Children interrupt teacher**

* Do not listen; tell the child to stop talking.
* If he doesn’t stop, send to a chair.
* Tell the child he can talk to you during work time.

**Noisy before music**

* Announce to the children that you are going to make a list of all the children who are sitting correctly. “I am going to read the names of the children who are on my list. When you hear your name you can stand up and you will be able to dance.”
* Ring the bell
* “I see (and then count) 1,2,3,4,5 children who are sitting the right way.”
* “Show me that you are ready for music. If you’re talking, you’re not ready. Gabe, are you ready?” Or when they aren’t listening to you, “Gabe isn’t ready for music.”
* Do not start the music until everyone is sitting quietly with legs folded and hands in their laps.
* “I can’t start the music yet. It is way too noisy.”

**Children are not sitting properly and are waiting to be dismissed.**  When group time is finished, they need to be still and quiet before being dismissed. If they have anything in their hands, such as a work paper, it needs to be placed on the floor. They must be silent, no clucking noises, no giggling, no noises with the lips, etc.

* Don’t call on a child until he is sitting quietly and properly.
* Walk slowly around the circle and pause by each child who isn’t sitting correctly. Adjust his legs, if need be or send to a chair.
* Name the specific children who are sitting properly. “John and Hazel are sitting correctly so they can get in line.”
* “If you are talking, you’re not ready.” If you are lying on the floor, you’re not ready.”
* “Where do your hands belong?” “What should you be doing?” “
* When several children are being particularly noisy: “Bradley is not ready to go. Morgan is not ready. Bradley and Morgan, we are waiting for you.” If they still ignore you, send them to the chair.

**WORK TIME**

**Classroom is noisy.**

* Tell the entire class that they have to whisper. Anyone who talks goes to the chair.
* Tell the children they are on silence. When on silence, they can’t even whisper.
* Tell the specific children who are being loud that they have to whisper or are on silence.
* Have noisy children come sit next to the teacher.

**Children wandering or not choosing work or class is chaos**

* “I’m looking for children who aren’t working. Anyone who is wandering around the room will need to go to a chair.”
* Use older or responsible children to help. “Can you help Johnny find something to do?”
* Use assistants to help. Show them how to present simple lessons like sandpaper letters or word analysis and then give them a list of children who need those presentations.
* “I’m going to count to 10 and I want to see everybody working. I will come around the room to see when I am done counting and anyone who isn’t working will go to the chair.”
* Give the children who are wandering a work list. When a child gets a list, they have to finish it.
* Assign them work. Tell them what work they need to take out and where you want them to do it.
* Tell them to take out a mat and they have to work there all day. Assign the child a designated work spot. Children may bring him work to his assigned work spot. He may not leave that work spot unless he has permission.
* Give wandering child a specific thing to do.
* Ask wandering child to help a friend.
* Time out
* Separate certain kids.
* “Where do you belong?”
* “And now what are you supposed to do?”

**Children don’t stop when the bell rings**

* Once you ring the bell during class time, don’t do anything else until everyone in the room stops. If a child is moving, have an assistant walk over and stop the child. Call child by name and tell him to stop and don’t continue until he does.
* All the children must sit silently before going to work after first circle. No one can be dismissed until sitting properly. Learning this self-control prepares the child for stopping when the bell rings (and also the silence game).
* Practice at circle time. Demonstrate “stop” and have the children practice after you ring the bell.
* There is some great music that helps children learn how to stop, such as *The Freeze Dance* by Hap Palmer and *Stop and Go* by Ella Jenkins.

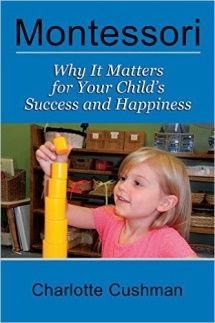
**Abuse of material**

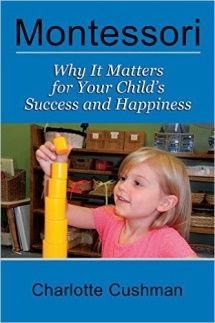
* + Re-demo.
  + Make the child put it away.
  + If it happens repeatedly, ban the child from using it until further notice.

**Child refuses to finish work/stalls**

* + Try to determine why. Ask him if he needs help and give him some if he needs it.
* If it is due to laziness, tell him he can’t get up until the work is done. If he doesn’t finish by the end of the day, ask his parent at dismissal if she can wait. If not, make sure he gets it first thing the following day, and the same thing applies, he can’t get up until it is done.
* Tell the child he is on a timer. If it isn’t done by the time the timer goes off, he will go to time-out.
* Don’t let the child get by with making excuses. “I can’t” and “I’m tired” often means, “I don’t want to.” Say, “You have to.”

**Child who is afraid to try**

* Gently encourage, but you may have to insist with hands on hands.
* Give him work that you *know* he can be successful with. When done ask him who did it? “Who did that work?”



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