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This website is an educational tool to inform teachers about the behaviour management model 'Assertive Discipline' by Canter and Canter. It has been developed with information from various sources including educational websites, journal articles, videos and texts. The main focuses of this website are outlined below. This page provides an overview and brief history of the behaviour management model, also touching on its adaption over the years and where Assertive Discipline sits on the Models of Behaviour Management Continuum. This page outlines the specific strategies and approaches used to address behaviour issues when using the 'Assertive Discipline' classroom management model. On this page readers will explore the strengths and weaknesses of the 'Assertive Discipline' classroom management model. It also provides some useful links on the Assertive Discipline model. Sarah Clarke 3871642University of Wollongong Scaffolding is a teaching strategy that involves giving a student progressively more difficult learning tasks as the student progresses. The first task is relatively easy. When the student has mastered that task, then the teacher presents another task that is slightly more difficult. The concept of scaffolding builds upon Vygotskys concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and is considered a tool within the sociocultural theory of education. However, the term scaffolding was first used by Dr. Jerome Bruner, who defined the term as: [Scaffolding is] a process that enables a child or novice to solve a task or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts (Wood et al., 1976, p. 90). Dr. Bruner was a famous psychologist that developed several respected theories in educational psychology (such as the spiral curriculum) and impacted the careers of famous scholars, including Dr. Howard Gardner. Providing hints if a student is struggling to find the answer or know what the next step is, the teacher can provide some hints to give them a nudge in the right direction. Modelling a kindergarten teacher demonstrates to her students that when she gets stuck counting, she stops and starts over again. Probing questions a teacher can use the Socratic method to ask students a series of questions that will help them find the answer for themselves. Gradual release of responsibility is a strategy where the teacher starts by modelling, then doing the tasks with the students, then allowing the students to do the task on their own. Guided practice A version of gradual release of responsibility where learning transitions from teacher-centered to student-centered as the students abilities progress. Providing supportive resources before discussing an issue, the teacher provides a handout with facts that students can use; at the end of the discussion the students engage in a reflection activity. Visual aids A type of supportive resource is a visual aid, which can be put on the wall so students can look to the aids to be kept on track or receive tips. Manipulatives In math classes, students are provided with manipulatives (such as wooden blocks) to practice. As the students math skills develop, the manipulative scaffolds are removed so students can do the tasks unaided. Graphic organizers after students have encountered a lot of complex information, a teacher can use a graphic organizer to visually display the material and let students see how the different concepts are related. Giving alternatives when children are first learning a language, they struggle with finding the right words, so the teacher can say the words aloud and the child can repeat. Repeating just because a student can demonstrate they learned a concept once, doesnt mean that learning is strong. Asking students to repeat a task helps strengthen the memory. Open-ended questioning a teacher reads aloud and asks students to identify the verbs; then moves to the next step and asks the students about how the past tense words are spelled. Pre-lesson vocabulary (aka pre-teaching) before reading a new chapter, the teacher explains what some of the key terms mean and gives examples. Range of answers when a student cant generate an answer on their own, the teacher can present different options and let the student choose. Peer learning Sometimes teachers speak over their students heads. In these cases, try to get students to teach one another. Often, theyre able to speak at the same level as one another and scaffold each others learning. Differentiation based on ability groups Teachers can split students into three groups based on ability level in order to provide additional resources for the lower group. When students in that group demonstrate competence, they move up to the next group that provides more student autonomy. Think aloud strategy When a student is struggling, the teacher intervenes with a scaffold called the think aloud strategy where the teacher and student talk through the issue to identify exactly where the student is going wrong. Once the student has gained competence, theyre challenged to do the task silently. Educational games Many games use a scaffolding model, where at lower levels, students are shown supportive videos and hints, but as they move up a level, the hints are withdrawn and students are left alone to work. Chunking In chunking, the teacher presents bite-sized chunks of knowledge one at a time. For example, the teacher covers half the sentence so the student can focus only on the first three words. Using prior knowledge The teacher asks students about what they already know so they know where to start and how much support to provide. Formative assessment Formative assessment is a central scaffolding strategy because teachers need to constantly assess students ability levels in order to tailor their teaching to the right level. Thinking out loud is a great way to model how a mathematical calculation is performed. Math can be difficult for a lot of students, but if the teacher explains the rationale behind each step in the formula, students can follow along. By following along, students maintain engagement in the lesson. Their mind is focused on what the teacher is saying as they go through each step. While thinking aloud, the teacher occasionally stops at certain points in the formula where she knows students will have trouble. This is because students have had difficulty at that point previously. This pause will help students catch-up, give them an opportunity to ask a question, or give the teacher an opportunity to provide another explanation, or a simpler explanation, regarding that step. Most educational computer games have different levels of difficulty. Lower levels are much simpler and give students an opportunity to build foundation skills and understand how the game is played. For example, when teaching young children about the concept of force in a physics lesson, computer games can be very helpful. The teacher can explain the concepts in the game, demonstrate how it is played a few times, and then let the students have a go. Starting at the lower level of difficulty will introduce the basic concepts as they are operationalized and help students build confidence. Once that level has been mastered, the students can move on to the next level of difficulty. Presenting information at a level students will understand is the hallmark of good teaching. A lot of time, textbook definitions can be too technical and may even contain jargon that also needs to be defined. Therefore, when a teacher has determined that students are not understanding a new term, they have to offer alternative explanations. There are several methods. For example, with older students, teachers can use metaphors, analogies, or real-world examples. When it comes to young learners, just put the book aside and create the simplest and shortest definition possible. Children often need concrete examples that they have experienced directly in their lives, so using the home or school as a context will help. Periodically checking-in with students to see if they have learned the material is a very useful scaffolding technique. It doesnt help students if the teacher moves on to more complex material if the students dont have a solid grasp of the foundation. At the beginning of a lesson, the teacher distributes red, yellow, and green cards to each student. Red stands for confused, yellow stands for getting there, and green stands for got it. At different times during the lesson the teacher simply asks the students to show where theyre at in understanding. This way the teacher can very quickly and efficiently determine if they need to go back and explain some concepts again, perhaps using a different explanation this time. This kind of informal assessment helps the teacher identify what level of scaffolding is needed in that moment. Diving right-in to a complex learning project can be a recipe for disaster. Once the students see all the work that is required, they can start to feel overwhelmed and lose motivation instantly. This is when creating a scaffolding of goals comes in handy. The teacher can start with having students engage the simplest tasks first. Those tasks can be built upon later in the project. For example, if the assignment is to write a research paper, the teacher might start by assigning the students to collect 2 reference articles first. After reading the articles the teacher provides a simple worksheet that will help the students summarize each research article and identify the key points. After students have done this step multiple times, they are ready to put all of that worksheet content together in the form of written paragraphs. Before you know it, the students have completed a fairly thorough literature review. Scaffolding is a key tool for teachers at all levels of education. Helping students have successful learning experiences begins with making sure they have the proper foundation of knowledge and skills. Once that foundation is established, then they can move up to more difficult challenges. There are numerous scaffolding strategies that teachers can implement. Simply asking probing questions, giving hints, or presenting response options, can help students discover the right answer for themselves. Providing students with needed resources or defining key terms are examples of pre-lesson scaffolding. While graphic organizers and reflection will help students consolidate learning and be prepared to take the next step up. Ninio, A. and Bruner, J. (1978). The achievement and antecedents of labeling. Journal of Child Language, 5, 115. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Wood, D., Bruner, J., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. Journal of Child Psychology and Child Psychiatry, 17, 89100. Zurek, A., Torquati, J., & Acar I. (2014). Scaffolding as a tool for environmental education in early childhood. International Journal of Early Childhood Environmental Education, 2(1), 27-57. Classroom discipline refers to the strategies and techniques used by teachers to manage student behavior and create a conducive learning environment. A good working definition comes from Maj Lettinks (2020) work on classroom management: [Classroom discipline refers to] the teachers effort in preventing, redirecting, and reprimanding misbehavior by setting clear rules and expectations, monitoring, and adequately reacting to undesired behavior Effective discipline involves setting clear expectations, maintaining consistent consequences, and fostering positive relationships with students. It aims to promote respect, responsibility, and cooperation among students, ensuring that the classroom operates smoothly. By implementing well-thought-out discipline strategies, teachers can minimize disruptions, enhance student engagement, and support academic success. Set clear rules and expectations from the start. Clearly communicating what is expected helps students understand the boundaries and reduces confusion. It also allows students to know what behaviors are acceptable and what consequences they will face for misbehaving. Its also important to ensure the expectations are high so students can strive to do their best, not strive for mediocrity. Apply classroom consequences consistently for rule-breaking. Consistency in consequences ensures fairness and helps students understand the link between their actions and the outcomes. This approach also reinforces the seriousness of the rules and promotes a predictable environment. Reward good behavior to encourage it. Positive reinforcement, such as praise or rewards, motivates students to continue exhibiting desirable behaviors. This strategy can help build a positive classroom atmosphere where students feel recognized for their efforts. Move closer to students who are misbehaving. Proximity control is a non-verbal way to address minor disruptions without interrupting the flow of the lesson. By moving closer to the disruptive student, the teacher can signal that they are aware of the behavior, often leading to self-correction. Use gestures to signal students to correct behavior. Non-verbal signals, such as eye contact, hand signals, or facial expressions, can effectively communicate the need for behavior change without disrupting the class. This subtle approach helps maintain the flow of the lesson while addressing issues promptly. Arrange seats to minimize distractions. Strategic seating can help manage behavior by separating students who may disrupt each other and placing easily distracted students closer to the teacher. This arrangement fosters a more focused and conducive learning environment. Read Also: List Of 12 Classroom Seating Layouts Assign jobs to give students a sense of responsibility. Classroom jobs empower students by giving them roles that contribute to the functioning of the class, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility. This strategy can also reduce misbehavior by keeping students engaged and accountable. Help students learn to manage their emotions. Teaching self-regulation skills equips students with the tools to control their impulses, stay calm under stress, and make thoughtful decisions. These skills are crucial for maintaining a positive classroom environment and promoting personal growth. Demonstrate the behavior you expect. Teachers who model respectful, responsible, and positive behavior set a powerful example for students to follow. By consistently showing the desired behaviors, teachers reinforce expectations and create a standard for students to emulate. Establish a consistent daily routine. A predictable routine helps students feel secure and understand what is expected of them at different times of the day. Consistency in the schedule reduces uncertainty and anxiety, leading to better behavior and a more organized classroom. Keep students engaged with interesting lessons. Engaging and interactive lessons capture students attention, reducing opportunities for disruptive behavior. When students are interested and invested in the material, they are more likely to participate positively and stay focused. Use a specific signal to gain students attention quietly. Implementing a quiet signal, like a hand raise or a specific sound, can quickly and efficiently get students attention without raising your voice. This helps maintain a calm classroom environment and minimizes disruptions. Encourage students to make amends for their actions. Restorative practices focus on repairing harm and restoring relationships rather than just punishing misbehavior. This approach helps students understand the impact of their actions and promotes a more empathetic and supportive classroom community. Use time-out as a way for students to cool down. A time-out provides students with a designated space to calm down and reflect on their behavior away from the rest of the class. This strategy can help prevent escalation and allows students to return to the classroom ready to learn. Communicate regularly with parents about behavior. Keeping parents informed about their childs behavior helps create a support system for the student and reinforces the importance of good behavior at home and school. Regular communication can also help identify and address issues early on. Create agreements with students about expected behavior. Behavior contracts are formal agreements between the teacher and student that outline specific behavior goals and the consequences for not meeting them. These contracts provide clear guidelines and encourage students to take responsibility for their actions. Praise good behavior publicly and correct bad behavior privately. Public praise reinforces positive behavior and motivates other students to follow suit, while private correction prevents embarrassment and maintains the students dignity. This approach fosters a positive classroom environment and respectful relationships. Give students some choice in their activities to increase engagement. Allowing students to choose from a selection of tasks or activities gives them a sense of control and investment in their learning. When students feel they have a say in their education, they are more likely to be engaged and cooperative. Start the day with a meeting to set a positive tone. Morning meetings provide an opportunity to build community, discuss the days agenda, and address any concerns. This routine helps establish a sense of belonging and prepares students mentally for the day ahead. Help students set and work towards personal goals. Goal setting encourages students to take ownership of their behavior and academic progress. By setting and striving for achievable goals, students develop a sense of purpose and motivation to improve their conduct and performance. Use consequences that are directly related to the misbehavior. Logical consequences are outcomes that are directly tied to the students actions, making the connection between behavior and result clear. This approach helps students understand the impact of their behavior and encourages them to make better choices. Use a reward system for the whole class. Implementing a system where the entire class can earn rewards for collective good behavior fosters teamwork and a sense of shared responsibility. This strategy can motivate students to support each other and maintain a positive classroom environment. Allow students time to reflect on their behavior. Providing students with designated time to think about their actions and the consequences can promote self-awareness and personal growth. Reflection helps students understand their behavior patterns and develop strategies for improvement. Explicitly teach skills like cooperation and communication. Teaching social skills equips students with the tools they need to interact positively with peers and adults. These skills are essential for creating a respectful and collaborative classroom environment. Have a designated area where students can go to calm down. A calm down corner is a space in the classroom where students can go to manage their emotions and regain composure. This area provides a safe and supportive environment for students to de-escalate and return to learning ready to participate. Burden, P. R. (2020). Classroom Management: Creating a Successful K-12 Learning Community. Wiley. Carr, D. L. (2021). An Introduction to Effective Classroom Management: Introduction to Effective Classroom Management for Elementary Teachers and Senior. Independently Published. Charles, C. & Senter, G. (2005).Building classroom discipline.Boston: Pearson. Espelage, D. L., & Sabornie, E. J. (Eds.). (2022). Handbook of Classroom Management. Taylor & Francis. Lettink, M. (2020).Development and validation of a questionnaire on classroom management of Dutch secondary education teachers[Masters thesis, University of Twente]. Nelson, J., & Gfroerer, K. (2017). Positive Discipline Tools for Teachers: Effective Classroom Management for Social, Emotional, and Academic Success. Harmony/Rodale. Reynolds, L. (2020). Classroom Management: This Book Includes: Classroom Management Success + Classroom Discipline. Sorry, Dudes I Teach Like a Champion (Student Engagement Tools). Simone Vigna. Wong, H. K., Wong, R. T., Jondahl, S. F., & Ferguson, O. F. (2018). The Classroom Management Book. Harry K. Wong Publications, Incorporated. By Dr. Matthew Lynch, Ed.D.Assertive Discipline represents one of the most influential classroom management systems developed in the late 20th century, providing educators with a structured approach to establishing order and promoting positive student behavior. As an educational researcher who has studied various behavior management frameworks, I have observed how Assertive Discipline principles continue to influence contemporary classroom practices, even as they have evolved in response to new insights about student motivation and development.Historical Development and Core PhilosophyAssertive Discipline was developed by Lee and Marlene Canter in the 1970s, emerging during a period when many teachers reported feeling increasingly challenged by classroom behavior issues and uncertain about their authority in the post-corporal punishment era. The Canters approach addressed these concerns by providing a systematic framework that emphasized teacher confidence and consistent application of clearly established rules and consequences.The philosophical foundation of Assertive Discipline rests on several key premises:1.Teachers rights: Educators have the right to teach without disruption and to establish optimal learning environments.2.Students rights: Learners have the right to a structured, predictable environment with clear expectations and consistent feedback.3.Teacher assertiveness: Effective classroom management requires neither passive acceptance of misbehavior nor hostile authoritarianism, but rather calm, confident assertion of expectations.4.Balance of firmness and warmth: The most effective teachers combine clear boundaries with genuine care for students wellbeing.5.Proactive approach: Discipline systems should focus primarily on preventing disruptions rather than merely responding to them.Core Components of the Assertive Discipline ModelIn its original formulation, Assertive Discipline consisted of several essential elements:Clear Rules and ExpectationsThe foundation of the system involves establishing 4-5 positively stated classroom rules that:Define expected behavior in concrete termsApply consistently to all studentsRemain posted visibly in the classroomFocus on behaviors essential for learningAre taught explicitly at the beginning of the year and revisited regularlyExamples of such rules might include:Follow directions the first time they are givenKeep hands, feet, and objects to yourselfRaise your hand for permission to speakStay in your assigned seat unless given permission to moveHierarchical ConsequencesThe model prescribes a graduated system of responses to rule violations:First infraction: WarningSecond infraction: Minor consequence (e.g., time out, lost privilege)Third infraction: More significant consequence (e.g., parent contact)Fourth infraction: Office referral or other administrative interventionKey aspects of this consequence system include:Predictability: Students know exactly what will happen if they choose to break rulesConsistency: Consequences apply to all students equallyIncremental severity: Responses escalate with repeated misbehaviorEmotional neutrality: Consequences are delivered calmly without anger or personal commentaryPositive RecognitionWhile often remembered primarily for its consequence system, Assertive Discipline also emphasized positive reinforcement:Verbal praise for appropriate behaviorPositive notes or calls to parentsSpecial privileges or rewards for compliancePublic recognition systems (e.g., names on board for good behavior)Class-wide rewards for collective positive behaviorTeacher BehaviorThe model specified effective teacher communication strategies:Using assertive body language (direct eye contact, upright posture)Speaking in a firm, confident toneMaking clear I-statements about expectationsFollowing through consistently on consequencesAvoiding argumentation during discipline momentsDisplaying genuine positive regard despite behavior issuesRecord KeepingSystematic documentation played an important role:Tracking rule violations and consequences appliedDocumenting parent communicationsMaintaining evidence for potential administrative interventionsAnalyzing patterns to identify needed adjustmentsEvolution of Assertive DisciplineOver several decades, the Assertive Discipline model underwent significant evolution in response to research, criticism, and changing educational paradigms:Shift from Compliance to CooperationLater versions of the model placed increased emphasis on:Developing intrinsic motivation rather than mere complianceBuilding collaborative classroom communitiesInviting student input into rule developmentCreating shared responsibility for classroom climateGreater Emphasis on PreventionThe approach evolved to focus more heavily on preventing behavior problems through:Building positive teacher-student relationshipsRemain posted visibly in the classroomFocus on behaviors essential for learningCreating engaging instructional experiencesTeaching social-emotional skills proactivelyEstablishing classroom procedures that minimize confusionIndividualizationWhile maintaining core principles of consistency, later iterations acknowledged:The need for differentiated approaches for students with special needsCultural considerations in behavior interpretation and responseDevelopmental differences in behavioral expectationsVarying functions of similar behaviors across different studentsIntegration with Schoolwide SystemsContemporary applications often integrate Assertive Discipline principles within broader frameworks such as:Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)Restorative practicesSocial-emotional learning initiativesTrauma-informed classroom approachesResearch and Evidence BaseResearch on Assertive Discipline has yielded mixed findings:Supportive EvidenceStudies indicating positive outcomes have found:Reduced disruptive behavior in classrooms implementing the model with fidelityIncreased time-on-task for academic learningImproved teacher confidence and reduced stressEnhanced perception of classroom orderGreater consistency across school environmentsCritical PerspectivesCritics have raised concerns regarding:Potential overemphasis on extrinsic motivationLimited attention to underlying causes of behaviorPossible cultural bias in behavioral expectationsInsufficient focus on relationship building as a core versionsQuestions about long-term impact on student self-regulationContemporary UnderstandingCurrent consensus suggests that:Elements of the approach can be effective when implemented thoughtfullyThe model works best when combined with strong instructional practicesAdaptation for developmental, cultural, and individual differences is essentialThe relational foundation is as important as the structural componentsImplementation should balance consistency with flexibilityPractical ImplementationEffective contemporary application of Assertive Discipline principles typically involves:Establishing the FoundationDeveloping positive relationships with students before behavior challenges ariseCreating engaging, well-paced instruction that minimizes opportunities for disruptionTeaching classroom procedures and transitions explicitlyInvolving students in developing classroom expectationsCreating physical environments conducive to appropriate behaviorImplementing the SystemTeaching rules with clarity, including rationales and specific examplesModeling expected behaviors explicitlyPracticing routines until they become habitualApplying consequences consistently but with attention to individual circumstancesDocumenting interventions systematicallyCommunicating proactively with parents and colleaguesMaintaining EffectivenessProviding substantially more positive than negative feedback (recommended ratio of at least 3:1)Reflecting regularly on implementation and data and observationSeeking support for students with persistent challengesRefreshing procedures and expectations after breaksApplications Across Educational ContextsWhile developed primarily for elementary and secondary classrooms, Assertive Discipline principles have been adapted for various settings:Early Childhood EducationModifications for younger learners include:Fewer, simpler rules with concrete languageGreater emphasis on modeling and practiceMore immediate, logical consequencesHigher rates of positive reinforcementGreater flexibility for developmental variationsSecondary EducationApplications with adolescents typically involve:Greater student input into classroom expectationsMore sophisticated rationales connecting rules to future successIncreased emphasis on natural consequencesPositive RecognitionHigher rates of positive reinforcementCoordination with related service providersAlternative Education SettingsApplications in non-traditional environments may include:Individualized behavior plans that align with IEP goalsModifications for students with exceptional needsHigher levels of positive reinforcementConnection to broader school and community resourcesMore graduated steps before significant consequencesIntegration with therapeutic approaches where appropriateEmphasis on restoration following behavioral infractionsCritiques and ControversiesAssertive Discipline has generated significant debate among educators and researchers:Philosophical ObjectionsSome critics question fundamental assumptions:Concerns about emphasizing adult control rather than student autonomyQuestions about potential suppression of critical thinking and healthy resistancePhilosophical objections to behaviorist foundationsCritiques of reward-based motivation approachesConcerns about potential cultural imperialism in behavioral standardsImplementation IssuesPractical challenges include:Difficulty maintaining consistency across different contextsTime requirements for documentation and follow-throughPotential for system to become overly bureaucraticRisk of focusing on rule enforcement at the expense of instructionChallenges adapting the system for students with complex needsContextual ConsiderationsContemporary criticisms often focus on:Need for culturally responsive adaptationsQuestions about applicability in trauma-affected communitiesConcerns about disproportionate impact on marginalized studentsTensions with more progressive educational philosophiesBalance with approaches centered on intrinsic motivationContemporary RelevanceDespite evolving perspectives on classroom management, several aspects of Assertive Discipline remain relevant to contemporary practice:Enduring PrinciplesKey concepts that continue to inform effective practice include:Importance of clear, consistent expectationsValue of predictable, fair response to behaviorNeed for balance between firmness and warmthRecognition that structure creates security for most studentsUnderstanding that effective teaching requires orderly environmentsIntegration with Current Best PracticesTodays most effective approaches often combine Assertive Discipline elements with:Restorative practices that repair harm and rebuild relationshipsTrauma-informed approaches recognizing behavior as communicationCultural responsiveness in rule establishment and enforcementSocial-emotional learning that builds self-regulation capacitiesPositive psychology frameworks emphasizing strengths and growthConclusionAssertive Discipline represents an important milestone in the evolution of classroom management theory and practice. While contemporary approaches have moved beyond some aspects of the original model, its core principlesclear expectations, consistent consequences, teacher confidence, and positive reinforcementcontinue to inform how educators establish and maintain effective learning environments.The most thoughtful contemporary applications draw on Assertive Disciplines structural clarity while integrating deeper understanding of student motivation, cultural considerations, and relationship-building. This balanced approach recognizes that students thrive in environments that provide both nurturing support and clear boundaries, both warm relationships and consistent expectations.For todays educators, the enduring legacy of Assertive Discipline lies not in rigid adherence to its original formulation but in its foundational insight: that teachers can be both kind and firm, both supportive and structured, both responsive to individual needs and consistent in fundamental expectations. This balanced approach creates classrooms where students feel both secure enough to take risks and guided enough to develop self-disciplinethe ultimate goal of any effective behavior management system. Assertive discipline refers to a structured approach to classroom management, initially formulated by Lee and Marlene Canter during the 1970s. This method enables teachers to assert their expectations and maintain a positive learning environment while ensuring the rights and dignity of all students are upheld. Notably, assertive discipline focuses on clear communication, consistency, and a proactive approach to address behavioral issues, contributing to a more inclusive and conducive learning space for all children, including those with special needs. Assertive discipline is a systematic behavior management procedure developed by Lee Canter to put elementary and secondary classroom teachers in charge of their classes. Combining tenets from assertion training and behavior modification, Canter (1979) believes that he has identified four discipline competencies that all teachers need to master to handle problem behaviors successfully. The competencies include:identifying appropriate behaviors that form the basis for classroom rules,systematically setting limits for inappropriate behavior,consistently reinforcing appropriate behavior,andworking cooperatively with parents and principals.In this cookbook approach to discipline the steps for acquiring these competencies are detailed, even to the extent of specifying the number of rules and the number of negative consequences.As in assertion training, teachers make their wants and needs known by directly responding to both appropriate and inappropriate student behaviors. They respond to inappropriate behavior with verbal limit-setting assertions and a limit-setting, follow-through plan. They use I messages, verbal hints, and assertive communication devices for verbal limit-setting. If their requests are not met, a limit-setting, follow-through plan consisting of negative consequences is consistently applied.As in behavior modification, the teacher responds to appropriate behavior with positive reinforcers. The teacher first verbally praises the student and, if necessary, continues with some type of a positive follow-through. These same assertive techniques are used to elicit assistance from the parents and principals.RationaleThe assertive discipline procedure was developed as a response to a perceived lack of discipline in the public schools. Students, teachers, and parents are all responsible for a lack of discipline. Though students today are more difficult to manage than in the past, the premise of assertive discipline is that all students except those with organic problems can behave correctly, even though they may choose not to do so.According to Canter, teachers expect and tolerate too much misbehavior, especially from students with emotional problems or from lower socioeconomic levels. He believes they do not know how to deal with behavior problems because they do not know how to be assertive . Instead, they are usually either wishy-washy and easily manipulated by the students, or verbally or physically hostile and hence disliked and feared by the students. Neither of these approaches makes for a well-managed, positive classroom environment. In turn, parents often do not support the classroom teacher and openly question the educational program.In a classroom setting, both teachers and students have needs that can be met within the assertive discipline program. Students no matter what age need firm limits, discipline, and positive reinforcement. They also need teachers who care enough to stop their misbehaviors. Conversely, teachers need to keep students from manipulating them, and to feel free to request assistance from parents and principals. These teacher needs are given precedence over students needs because teachers must satisfy their needs and wants before they feel comfortable enough to provide a positive learning environment. Only when the needs of the teachers are satisfied will the needs of the students be fulfilled.Implementation PhasesAssertive discipline is implemented in the following steps:1. On the first day of class, the teacher will state the three expectations of assertive discipline: None of you will stop me from teaching. None of you will engage in any behavior that stops someone from learning. None of you will engage in any behavior that is not in your interest or the best interest of others.2. Develop rules based on observable behaviors. These rules should tell the students exactly what you want them to do. They should be essential for learning and teaching but should not violate the students rights. Limit the rules to five or six. You may need different rules for various activities, such as free time, reading groups, and so on. 3. Clearly communicate and explain to the students the rules you have selected. It is a good idea to display the rules in written form somewhere in the classroom. The rules may change as the year progresses, and you need to inform the students of these changes.4. Practice being assertive in your responses to your students with verbal limit-setting. Use hints, I messages, questions, and demands to make your wants known. Hints, such as Remember everyone should be working, are not directed to any particular student. I messages, such as I would like to see you working, are particularly effective during learning situations. With questioning you simply say Would you begin working now?You demands (Do your work now!) sparingly, as they imply a consequence for noncompliance. For more assertive communication, many teachers also make eye contact and use gestures with touching and the students names. However, touching should be used cautiously with secondary students and those likely to react negatively to it. Some students, especially those with problem in living, have learned to manipulate nonassertive teachers in verbal interactions by crying, making angry statements, or accusing the teacher of being unfair. This manipulation can be avoided by prefacing each of your verbal limit-setting statements with I understand, and Thats not the point. For example, if a student refuses to begin an assignment, as an assertive teacher you would first direct the student to begin with a hint, an I message, or a question. If the student responds with excuse in an attempt to engage you in an argument, you should ignore the excuse and continue expressing your wants by saying I understand, and I want you ... or Thats not the point, I want you to begin the assignment. This type of verbal limit-setting shows the student that you will not be diverted from the objective (the student beginning the assignment) and that you are in control of the verbal interaction.These want messages should be delivered only three times. If the student does not comply with the three messages, limit setting follow-through should be initiated.5. Decide on the consequences. These consequences are administered when the students break the rules. Select consequences that you feel comfortable enforcing but that, at the same time, are unpleasant for the students. Do not use physical or verbal abuse. Canter (1979) suggests a maximum of five negative consequences. In addition, you must select consequences for severe behavior problems. These necessitate more severe consequences than those selected to punish rule violations.Severe behavior is defined as willfully harming others, purposely destroying property, refusing to follow the teachers demands, or stopping the class from functioning.6. Design a consequence plan. The five negative consequences are arranged in hierarchical order from less to more severe and then become part of the discipline plan. For example, if a student violates one of the rules, the first infraction may simply result in a warning while the fifth may result in a visit to the principals office. Another part of the plan involves administration of the consequences. Negative consequences will not work unless they are then immediately every time a student breaks the rules or displays severe behavior. Administer the negative consequence in a matter-of-fact tone without yelling or screaming and with a choice statement such as John, you chose to shout out in class, so you will have to lose 15 minutes of free time (consequence), or John, you have a choice to either stop shouting or lose 15 minutes of free time, Before the plan is implemented you need to discuss it with the principal, especially if a visit to the principal is selected as the final consequence. If the plan does not work after some application, either change the order of the consequences-for example, by eliminating the first two and beginning with the thirdor change the consequences. If a student reaches a consequence in the plan three times, the plan is not working and needs to be changed for that student.7. Incorporate positive consequences into your plan. Just as with negative consequences, positive consequences must be administered consistently. Praise, tangible reinforcers, and a class wide token system are useful positive consequences. Any type of praise is a powerful reinforcer for elementary students as long as it is genuine. Proceed in the following manner when praising elementary students: First, give the demand or instruction (Open your book to page 25). Second, praise at least two students who follow this demand and indicate what they have done (Jimmy and Susie, you certainly can follow directions). Third, enforce the negative consequence for those who do not follow the instruction (Sam, you chose not to follow the directions so your name will be written on the board). Every student should be praised at least once a day. Consider giving praise to secondary students in private. The praise may be nonverbal, such as a smile or a positive statement written on a students paper. The tangible reinforcer recommended for both elementary and secondary students is a progress note to be shared with the parents. A token system in which elementary students earn marbles and secondary students earn points is suggested for class wide reinforcement. The tokens are then exchanged for backup reinforcers, such as a party, free time, elimination of a homework assignment, or some other positive consequence. In using the marble system in the elementary classroom, give one marble per day to the regular students and threw to five to students exhibiting problems in living. In the secondary classroom, give one mark per student with problems in living per marbles away.A class-wide reinforcement system is not necessary in all classrooms, but positive praise and notes are. If Step 5 is not working, it may be because positive reinforcement is being presented too infrequently.8. Actively involve parents and principals in the consequence plan. Send your discipline plan home and have the parents sign it. Communicate both positive and negative information about the student to the parents. Send notes home praising the students appropriate behavior. Plan to send notes home for each student during the first two weeks of school. Immediately call the parents whenever the student does not follow the rules. Before a conference with the parents, complete a sheet that contains the goal of the meeting (to discuss Jimmys biting behavior), the objective (administer a negative consequence at home), the rationale (it is in the best interest of the student), and the consequence that might occur from lack of cooperation (student suspended, parents called every day). Remember to be assertive in communications with parents. The parents should also be involved in the administration of positive consequences. Bedtime is a powerful consequence, whether it involves staying up later as a reward or going to bed earlier as a punishment. Use these same assertive procedures when communicating the discipline plan to the principal. Be sure to discuss what you want the principal to do (help limit Mikes kicking behavior), how the principal might help (ideas for consequences), rationales for asking for help without apology (student is not following the teachers limit-setting), and what consequences may result if you are not helped (Mike might hurt others).In a school in which assertive discipline was in effect in all classrooms, the faculty and principal had met together to decide on the general rules and the discipline plan. The following five rules were selected:1. Keep hands, feet, objects to yourself.2. Whisper quietly when you are doing seat work so your voice cannot be heard by the teacher.3. Raise your hand.4. Follow directions the first time.5. Do not use cussing or teasing.These rules were discussed by the teacher with the students and were posted in all special classes and in Grades 1 through 5. Rules varied for recess time and they were posted on the playground wall.The following five negative consequences were specified:a warningloss of free timeisolation in another teachers classroom at least two grades above or below the students grade levelcall to parentsvisit to principals officeThese consequences were written into the discipline plan: the first time a rule was disobeyed the students name would be written on the board; the second time, a mark would be next to the name and the student would lose 15 minutes of recess time; the third time, a mark would be placed and the student would be isolated in another teachers room; the fourth time, a call would be made to the parents; the fifth time, the student would visit the principals office. Each day the marks would be erased and the students would begin the next day with a clean slate. The severe clause in the plan provided for an isolation room monitored by the teachers on a rotating basis during their free time. All of the teachers decided to use praise and to send notes home as positive reinforcement, except for the special class teacher who would use points along with the other reinforcers. The discipline plan was sent home for the parents to sign, and the first PTA meeting was spent explaining the plan.All of the teachers followed the same format in implementation of the plan. If a student disobeyed a rule, two other students who were following the rule were praised. If the student continued with the inappropriate behavior, a negative consequence was administered. Each day the teachers tried to praise each student in their classes at least once; the mainstreamed special education students were praised more often.The discipline plan did not work with a boy in the fourth grade. This student was a manipulator and often argued when the teacher administered a consequence for his inappropriate behavior. He was also frequently in fights. One day the teacher was taking the student to isolation (the severe clause) for fighting. The boy denied his part in the fight by placing the blame on others. Using assertive discipline the teacher responded to his comment with a verbal limit- setting statement: Thats not the point, you are fighting. You chose to break one of the rules. The student spent 60 minutes completing his academic work in the isolation room. However, the fighting episodes continued, and the boy spent the next two days in the isolation room.Since the isolation consequence was apparently ineffective, the classroom teacher, the special class teacher, and the principal conferred and decided on an alternative plan of suspension from school. The regular teacher also adopted the special class points system to use with the boy in the classroom. They conferred with the parents and agreed to pick up the student when the boy was explained to the boy, who responded: Theyll never pick me up, and he presented no problem the rest of the week. However, on Monday of the next week he exploded and kicked and is a student. The next day the parents were escorted to the principals office and the principal placed the phone call. The boy glared at the principal and said: Mom is playing bridge today. Evidently the boy had waited until the mother was not at home to explode. Sure enough, no one answered the phone. The principal then called the father at work, but the father refused to drive to school. The principal then drove the boy to his fathers office and left him there. The boy returned to school the next day, and two weeks passed before another fight. This time the mother was home and picked him up. After this, the boy rarely fought.AdvantagesThe advantages of assertive discipline are:The procedure provides for a structured discipline program that is often found lacking in a regular classroom but is essential for successful mainstreaming of many special class students.Everyone in the classroom knows the rules and the consequences; this makes it less likely that the students will believe punishment is being administered at the whim of the teacher.The program is clearly outlined, even to the point of specifying the number of days for evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan. This facilitates its implementation by the teacher, a factor that may be especially helpful in the case of the beginning teacher.The emphasis on parent involvement recognizes that deviant behavior is due to the interaction between the students and the environment a premise that is often not prevalent theory in the special education field.DisadvantagesThe disadvantages of assertive discipline are:There is no guarantee that the rules written by the teacher are healthy, rational, and humanizing for the student. Nor are there any provisions to ensure that the students needs and wants are being met. Furthermore, there is no research that proves that students needs can be met only when their teachers wants are satisfied.The cookbook approach may promote a lack of individuality in dealing with students. Some students may have a legitimate reason for refusing to follow a teachers demand, or at least a need to explain. Teachers may be so concerned about following the procedures that they ignore these legitimate exceptions.The procedure is in direct opposition to the current trend of teaching students how to manage their own behaviors. The teacher is definitely in control and makes all the decisions. [Editors note: this is not true. The teacher is merely being clear about the rules and expectations. The child remains in control and can choose to behavior in a manner which causes the consequences to happen. It is the most popular classroom management method because of its simplicity and effectiveness. This method requires that the teacher use an attitude of cooperation and a take-charge assertive attitude to elicit that cooperation from the students. The rules have to be clear, and expectations must be defined at the outset. Consistency, fairness, and follow-through are key. You Decide: Jake has been using assertive discipline in his classroom for about two months. He has set clear guidelines, posted the rules on a board in the class for all to see, and has consistently, but casually, pointed out students who are behaving to his standards. Jakes fifth rule is if you are late for class, please do not disrupt everyones learning, quietly take your seat and give me your note/explanation after class. Jake has three students who play on the school football team together, they are close friends. For the most part, they are good students who do not disrupt the class. Jake loves football; he and most of the other students like to hear how the team is doing after class and they usually get a quick update from the three boys. Ever since football season has started, these three boys have been walking into class late as a group after practice, and have been being loud and boisterous upon entering. Using the assertive discipline method, what should Jake do? You Decide Answer: Jake should point out that he understands they are pumped up after practice and that it is hard to take it down a notch, however, they are disrupting the learning of their fellow students. He needs to let the boys know, in no uncertain terms, that this behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. He should clearly remind them of rule number five. If they walk in after the next practice quietly and with respect for their fellow students, he should acknowledge that with positive feedback at the end of class. If, however, if they are disruptive again, negative consequences should be administered; such as contacting the football coach, parents or principal. There is room for favoritism with assertive discipline. There needs to be mutual, equal respect for all students in the class. Cooperative Discipline Introduction Cooperative discipline was developed by Linda Albert and Rudolf Dreikurs, and uses the theories of Alfred Adler, who created classic Alderian psychology. Like assertive discipline, it proposes to use the cooperation of students to achieve good behavior in the classroom. The basic premise of this model is that students misbehave to achieve one or all of four goals: attention, power, revenge, or avoidance of failure. It is up to the teacher to determine which goal is driving the behavior of the student and help thwart it by using cooperative discipline techniques. Overview While many classroom management and discipline methods provide input to teachers on how to address bad behavior while it is occurring, most do not help teachers stop the behaviors from recurring again in the future. Cooperative discipline

seeks to address this issue by having teachers put strategies in place that will build a student's self-esteem, thus encouraging them to change old behaviors and develop an interest in cooperating and learning. Encouragement techniques are not time-consuming for the teacher, and they are easy to learn and practice. The purpose is to make the misbehaving student feel they are valuable members of the classroom. Cooperative Discipline Techniques The Three C's In cooperative discipline, there are three main categories that can be used to create an environment of encouragement. They are: Capability: The students need to feel capable of completing their work to satisfaction. There are three ways to accomplish this: Create an environment where it is safe to make mistakes. Build students' confidence by focusing on improvement for all students. Make learning objectives obtainable for all students. Connection: Students need to know they can develop positive relationships with teachers and fellow students. There are four ways to accomplish this: Be accepting of all students, no matter what his is or her past behavior was; show that you like the person, not the behavior. Listen to students and show an interest in their lives outside of class. Give praise. Build relationships with kindness and respect. Contribution: When students contribute to the well being of the entire class, they feel like they are a member of a team. Just like the boss. I am smarter than the teacher. I want things my way. Who is she/he to tell me what to do? Acknowledge the student by telling them they are right, but that there will be consequences to their refusal to follow classroom procedure. Change the activity unexpectedly. Give a "choice" time-out; sit quietly or go to the principal's office to sit quietly. Revenge I feel hurt by real or imagined slights from other students and/or the teacher. I want to break things, cause damage, and manipulate others into feeling guilty and sorry for me. Revoke a privilege. Create a bond, make sure the student knows you like them and care about them, but do not like their behavior. Make them, clean, replace, or repair any damage they have caused. Avoidance of failure I feel that I can't live up to the expectations everyone has for me. I don't think I have the potential they say I do. If I procrastinate, pretend I have a disability, or don't do my work correctly, everyone will just fool and leave me alone. Acknowledge the difficulty of the task, and remind them of past success. Regal them with "I can" statements so they will learn to internalize that positive idea and replace "I can't," thoughts. Have peer tutors work with the student. Modify the lesson. Conclusion Cooperative discipline seeks to reach collaboration with students. However, if collaboration cannot be achieved because of a student's misbehavior, then steps should be taken to correct the problem. The three C's -- capability, connection, and contribution -- help teachers build strong bonds with their students. Teachers should keep in mind that with this method, forming trusting, cooperative relationships is key. Additionally, this method holds to the theory that students misbehave to achieve one of four goals: attention, power, revenge, or avoidance of failure. It is up to the teacher to decide which is motivating the student and to respond appropriately and immediately. You Decide: Mrs. Jones has been using the three C's to build bonds with her students. She has a great group of students in her fifth grade class who usually get along very well. However, one has been misbehaving frequently over the last few weeks. Sam has been pretending to have vision problems. He has not been finishing his work, complaining that he can't see the paper or the board. Which of the four goals is driving Sam's behavior? What should Mrs. Jones do to curtail this? You Decide Answer: Sam's goal of misbehavior is avoidance of failure. Mrs. Jones should first acknowledge he may have a vision problem and alert his parents of this complaint so they can ensure this is not, indeed an issue. In the meantime, Mrs. Jones should reinforce his past successes, offer praise for good work done. Remind him that he is capable of the work, and assign a peer tutor to help him accomplish his work successfully. Once he is back on task, encouragement should be given continually, and successes should be recognized. What is Assertive Discipline? The Assertive Discipline classroom management model was originally developed in the 1970s by Lee Canter and his wife Marlene Canter. It was developed as a training tool for teachers and was based on the idea that teachers have the right to teach in a well managed classroom and students the right to learn in a controlled environment. Lee and Marlene Canter believe that students should establish a systematic discipline plan prior to the commencement of the school year and clearly communicate expectations and consequences to their students. Assertive Discipline focusses on teachers being consistent and fair with their behavioural expectations, applying praise and having fair and reliable consequences (Malmgren, Trezek & Paul 2005, p.36). The principles behind the Assertive Discipline model will be discussed in further detail under Strategies and Approaches, however, the main principles behind the model are as follows:1. Establish a clear andobservableset ofclassroom rules2. Have a pre-determined set of consequences3. Focus on positive behaviours with constant reinforcement The original book on Assertive Discipline written byformer social worker Lee Canter and his wifeMarlene Canter was calledAssertive Discipline: A Take-Charge Approach for Todays Educator andwas published in 1979, over thirty years ago. Since then Lee Canter has continued to visit schools and classrooms meeting with educators and discussing his program. With the feedback he receives from teachers he continues to adapt the program to meet the changing needs of educators and students. Today Canter places particular emphasis on addressing the needs of beginning and struggling teachers in low socioeconomic areas to give them the confidence they need to take charge of their classrooms in a firm, fair and positive manner (Canter 2010, p.1). The below diagram shows where the Assertive Discipline model sits on the 'Models of Behaviour Management Continuum'. As shown below the Assertive Discipline model is very teacher centred compared to other behaviour management models shown on the continuum. It also uses external motivators for students to manage their behaviour and compared with other models, teachers set specific and strict guidelines for student behaviour.As outlined by (Handley 2016) many teachers will aim towards a more student centred, constructivist approach. He then goes on to suggest that depending on the class, the attitude of individual students, the subject matter and the timing teachers will not just use one strategy, but strategies from across the continuum. The following clip is an exert from a DVD series encouraging Send to principal SECONDARY First time a student breaks a rule: Warning Second time: Stay in class 1 minute after bell Third time: Call parents Educational Insights/Instructional Implications Perceived Strengths Perceived Weaknesses Roleplay Overview of Assignment Ideas See more Classroom Management Models THEORISTS Lee and Marlene Canter developed the Assertive Discipline management model in 1976. Both of the Canters were products of the social consciousness movement of the 1960s, inspiring each to plan a future in which they could make a difference in the lives of children. Initially, Lee sought to make such a difference in the field of social work, while Marlene completed her education at a teachers college in special education. Eventually, Lee also began to focus his attention on teacher training and school consultation. The two of them worked together to try to find new techniques of discipline to apply to a student whose disruptive behavior was challenging Marlene. She knew that this particular student had much more potential than he was exhibiting and the conventional methods of discipline of the time were not helping this student to succeed. It was through this research and the experiences with this student that the Assertive Discipline method of behavior management was born. THEORETICAL BASIS The Canters found that when expectations were made clear and follow-through was consistent, that even typically disruptive students were able to choose appropriate behaviors and therefore increase opportunities for greater success in school. They based their theory on three basic assumptions of rights and responsibilities in the classroom: 1. Teachers have the right and responsibility to establish rules and directions that clearly define the limits of acceptable and unacceptable student behavior. 2. Teachers have the right and responsibility to teach students to consistently follow these rules and directions throughout the school day and school year. 3. Teachers have the right and responsibility to ask for assistance from parents and administrators when support is needed in handling the behavior of students. These assumptions are based upon the understanding that in order for learning to take place, which is a basic right of the student, there must be effective ways to deal with and to prevent disruptive behavior. One way that the Assertive Discipline model addresses behavior issues is in the acknowledgement of the importance of motivation in learning and classroom management. The use of both positive and negative recognition serves to extrinsically motivate the student and to develop habits of good discipline, which will hopefully evolve into intrinsically motivated behaviors. The Canters developed this model understanding that students are not innately motivated to behave in school. They also wished with the realization that a classroom full of students with higher self-esteem will have fewer discipline problems. The goal of Assertive Discipline is to teach students to choose responsible behavior, thereby increasing their self-esteem and increasing their academic success. This process is cyclical, enabling students to become successful in school, thereby empowering them with the skills that will become the foundation for their self-esteem and future success. A great deal of this discipline model is characterized with praise and positive recognition. Additionally, Assertive Discipline is based upon choices. Todays students must be taught how to choose responsible behavior. This enables the student to develop ownership of what he or she does, as well as owning the consequences based upon their actions. Such choices help to develop intrinsic motivation, and move to internalizing the locus of control. All of these factors have very significant effects on a students motivation. OVERT TEACHER BEHAVIORS Teachers who employ the use of the Canters Assertive Discipline model have positive expectations of their students. These expectations are made clear to the students by posted classroom rules and unambiguous directions for each activity. Classroom rules are limited to four or five overarching and observable guidelines, and are conspicuously posted, and apply at all times. Along with the posted rules is a hierarchy of consequences that result from not following the rules. Directions, which apply only to a specific activity, are also clearly given. Teachers who effectively use Assertive Discipline in their classroom teach the classroom management model on the first days of the school year, giving as much time and monitoring for understanding from the students as they do when teaching any content area lesson. This allows clarity, understanding, and consistency and minimizes the possibility of students having varied interpretations of what is expected of them. Teachers who utilize this behavior management model are able to be consistent in their responses to students actions. In the use of Assertive Discipline, responses have already been planned and, as opposed to those who use nonassertive or hostile responses. Without predetermined consequences, teachers employing either a nonassertive or a hostile response have the dilemma of taking valuable teaching time to decide upon an appropriate consequence, and the response is at risk of being emotionally motivated. Neither of these is fair to the imposing student or the rest of the class. Classrooms where Assertive Discipline is used are also characterized by positive expectations of the students by the teacher, and the use of positive recognition to encourage the students. Students are often praised and the teacher is typically trusted and respected by the students. There is a much greater degree of efficacy in the classroom, both of the teacher and of the students, since all are given the opportunity to make choices that lead to success. These classrooms reflect a positive, caring, and productive climate. KEY VOCABULARY TERMS Classroom Rules Four or five overarching, clear, and observable guidelines that are conspicuously posted and apply at all times in the classroom. Some examples may include Follow directions, No swearing or teasing, or Be in your seat when the bell rings. Specific Directions Expectations of how students should behave in each individual activity or procedure, and apply only during its duration. Some examples may include what is expected of students when they first come into the class, when they are doing independent seat work, when the teacher is giving a directed lesson, when the class is having a group discussion, and how they line up to leave. Positive Recognition Praise given to students for behaving as expected based upon the classroom rules and the directions given for a particular activity. Positive recognition should be the most active part of the classroom discipline plan. It is also used to motivate students to choose appropriate behavior and to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom Consequence The result of a students choice to not follow the classroom rules or directions given based upon a discipline hierarchy. Consequences must be something that the student does not like, but must never be physically or psychologically harmful. They are not meant to embarrass or humiliate the student. EDUCATIONAL INSIGHTS/INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS The use of Assertive Discipline makes it possible for a teacher to teach and the students to learn. It removes any question by the teacher and students of how behaviors are dealt with when students choose not to follow the classroom rules or the specific directions of an activity. It also enables students to be recognized when they are following the rules or directions. This form of classroom management is very different from what previous generations have experienced, and there is a good reason for that. The students in todays classroom are very culturally different from those of the past. The Canters point out in their explanation of the model that the teachers who were once empowered by a value placed on them by parents and society do not necessarily retain that same status in contemporary society. Students often come from homes where the adults in their lives are unwilling or unable to motivate them to succeed in school, which may be compounded by poverty, broken homes, and emotional or physical abuse. In spite of all of the problems in life that a student may be dealing with, teachers must find ways to enable them to succeed in school. Academic success may be the only opportunity a student has to develop a positive self-esteem. The Assertive Discipline model of behavior management allows this to take place by giving each student the same choices and consequences within the classroom. A student may choose to follow the rules and therefore receive praise and positive recognition, also enabling greater opportunities to learn and succeed. He may also choose not to follow the rules, however in doing so, he knows what his consequences will be. Although, as mentioned above, not all parents are supportive of their childs learning, the Assertive Discipline model make the assumption that teachers have the right to call on parents for support and involvement, as well as the school administration. Because the plan incorporates the teacher, student, parents, and administration, greater consistency and follow-through is allowed. A key component of this plan, however, is positive recognition, and parents and administration should be just as involved with consequences to positive behavior. An example of this would be the teacher calling a students parents or sending a note home to let them know how well a student is performing or following directions in class. Developing a higher self-esteem and motivating the students are two of the major driving forces in Assertive Discipline, and should not be overshadowed by the consequences to negative behavior. Positive recognition should be used often to encourage students to behave appropriately, and to continue appropriate behavior. Additionally, a positive classroom environment can also be reinforced with classwide positive recognition. This strategy allows each person to have a responsibility to the class as a whole in attaining a desired reward. In order for an Assertive Discipline plan to be effective, several guidelines should be followed in developing classroom rules. They should be kept to a minimum (no more than four or five), should be clearly posted, and should only include expectations that apply at all times. This would exclude rules such as, Raise your hand and wait to be called upon before speaking, since that is not always enforceable. There will be times during the day, such as group activities or cooperative learning situations where this simply does not apply. The rules should also only include clear observable behaviors. Vague rules such as Show respect to others, or No unnecessary talking are difficult to enforce and can prevent consistency in responses. Another facet to Assertive Discipline is the way teachers deal with students who are off-task or not attending, however are also not disrupting the class. Because teachers have a responsibility to teach each student, these behaviors must also be dealt with, but in a different way than those who are disruptive. These students must be redirected, and the Canters offer several techniques that are often effective. One of these is the look, which communicates to the student nonverbally that you are aware of and disapprove of the behavior. Another is based upon physical proximity. Simply walking over to the student and standing by him while continuing to teach even more clearly and firmly communicates the teachers displeasure with the behavior. Teachers can also redirect off-task students by mentioning the students name while, again, continuing to teach the lesson. At times, however, these redirecting techniques may not be effective or the student may need redirecting continuously. In these situations, teachers may need to resort to the consequences hierarchy. Although the techniques outlined in the Canters Assertive Discipline model of behavior management prove to be effective for most students, there will be situations when a Severe Clause must be implemented. In cases of severe misbehavior such as fighting, vandalism, defying a teacher, or some other behavior that causes instruction to stop, the disruptive student should immediately be removed from the classroom. This not only enables the teacher to continue with the education process for the rest of the class, but it also gives the disruptive student time to calm down before other consequences are implemented. The use of Assertive Discipline is a proactive approach to classroom management that enables a cooperative team to work together to allow more effective teaching and learning to take place. In the ideal model, each party takes a responsible role in ensuring the most productive learning environment is established. Because society and culture change over time, the methods used change as well. This is apparent in the genesis of the Canters discipline model, but has also been manifested since its inception. In 1976, the Canters published their first book on Assertive Discipline. In 1992, a new and revised edition was published, changing some of the philosophies and methods of the original model. One case in point is the practice of writing students names on the blackboard when they misbehave. Because of the fact that this can cause shame and embarrassment for students, the Assertive Discipline model now recommends a more private method of noting disruptive students in a record book. It is encouraging to know that the Canters method of classroom management is evolving with the rapid changes of our society. PERCEIVED STRENGTHS OF THE MODEL It allows students choices, thereby placing responsibility on each student for the choices he makes. It accentuates positive behavior instead of only focusing on negative ones. Its goal is to promote self-esteem and academic success. Students begin each day with a clean slate. It incorporates a cooperative approach to discipline, including the teacher, student, parents, and administration. It focuses on creating a positive learning environment. PERCEIVED WEAKNESS OF THE MODEL It does not seek to find the causes behind negative behaviors. A resource for teachers. (pp.46-50). New York: State University. Wolfgang, Charles. (1995). 3rd Edition. Assertive discipline: Solving discipline problems. Methods and models for today's teachers. (pp. 249-267). Neeham Heights, Mass: Allyn & Bacon. Role Play Teacher: OK, 5th graders, you've been in school long enough to know that in order for me to teach and for you to learn, there have to be some rules in place. So, if you look up on the wall behind me, you will see my classroom expectations. Let's look at them together: *Follow directions the first time they are given. *Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourselves. *Have pencils, paper, books at your desk and ready to work when the bell rings. Teacher: Of course, if you cannot meet these expectations, you know there are consequences to follow: *1st time- a warning *2nd time- 10 minutes time-out *3rd time- 15 minutes time-out *4th time- Afterschool detentionall home to parents *5th time- Sent to principal Teacher: Now from time to time, if I observe you individually modeling appropriate behavior, you can receive a sticker or extra computer/recess time. If, as a whole class, I see you engaging in an activity and I think you did it well, for example, if I give you a classroom assignment, and you get on task quickly, you can earn a marble to be put in this jar. Once this jar is filled up to the red line here, then the class as a whole will have a Friday fun day with popcorn and movies. But if one person blows it, he/she blows it for the entire class--no marble. O.K, are there any questions on my expectations and the consequences? Student 1: How many marbles do we get in a day? Do you ever remove marble for misbehavior? Teacher: All depends on the choices you make. I never will remove marbles for inappropriate behavior. Student 2: If I get in trouble, will you write my name on the board like my last year teacher? Teacher: I will never humiliate or embarrass you by putting your name on the board. I will come to you personally and document it on my clipboard. Student 3: Do we get time-out if we don't do our homework? Teacher: No. Homework is not a behavior. That is separate and will be discussed later. Student 4: What if we don't have a way home, do we still have to stay afterschool for detention? Teacher: Yes, getting home will be your responsibility. Student 5: If one of us gets in real trouble, will you keep us from going to P.E, music, art, or on field trips? Teacher: I would never keep you from special classes or from going on field trips. Teacher: Any more questions? O.K, we need to line up to go to the computer lab. My rules in the hall--you face the person directly in front of you, keep your hands to your side, walk on the right side of the halls, and absolutely no yelling or screaming. Any questions? O.K lets line up. The last person please cut off the lights. (The class walks up the hall to another classroom. During this time, Jane and Damon are in non-compliance. There is a class already in the computer lab so we have to turn back around and go back to class) Teacher: O.K, I apologize for that. We just had some miscommunication but we're not going to let that disrupt our day. There's plenty we still can do during this time. You did a great job in the hallway but because of two people, no marble; but I will give the rest of you stickers (teachers gives out stickers). O.K, class, please continue to work on your autobiography. Damon and Jane, may I see both of you in the hall, please (teacher takes clipboard with him in hall) The End OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENT In this assignment, the three of us sought to work together in order to explore the Canters Assertive Discipline model of classroom management. To do so, we began by reviewing the literature available about the subject individually and then came back together with the information we had found. We then broke the information down into manageable parts and each group member took responsibility for specific components. As a group, each member made significant contributions. Because we are fortunate enough to have such a diverse and well-rounded group, we were able to capitalize on individual strengths and knowledge in order to complete our project. One of the members is especially gifted in drama and was therefore the perfect person to put together our role play. Another is more proficient in working with graphics and computer technology, and therefore is instrumental in developing our PowerPoint presentation. The other group member for behavior that is expected is not authentic to real life experience. Examples of compiling our information into a workable document. This made each member played an active and significant role which has enabled each of us to have a much clearer understanding and working knowledge of the use of Assertive Discipline. We each feel that there are many features of this style of classroom management that we intend to implement as teachers in order to provide optimal learning opportunities with minimal interruptions due to discipline problems. ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE Developed by Lee and Marlene Canter CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE PLAN: RULES that students must follow at all times. POSITIVE RECOGNITION which students will receive for following the rules. CONSEQUENCES that result when students choose not to follow the rules. RULES: No more than four or five. Must be observable. Must apply at all times throughout the day or period. Must apply to behavior only. GOOD RULES: Follow Directions. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself. No swearing or teasing. No yelling or screaming. Be in your seat when the bell rings. BAD RULES: Raise your hand and wait to be called upon before speaking. (Always? What about group work?) Stay in your seat unless you have permission to get up. (How much time do you want to spend each day giving students permission to sharpen pencils?) Use a 12-inch voice in the classroom. (What if theyre twelve feet away?) Complete all homework assignments. (Doesnt relate to behavior) POSITIVE RECOGNITION: Motivates students to choose appropriate behavior and creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom. Sincere and meaningful attention given to a student for behaving according to teachers expectations. Must become the most active part of the classroom discipline plan. EXAMPLES: Praise Positive notes and phone calls home Tangible rewards Behavior Awards Special privileges CONSEQUENCES: Must be something that students do not like, but they must never be physically or psychologically harmful. Are a choice. Do not have to be severe to be effective. IDEAS FOR POSITIVE RECOGNITION IN THE CLASSROOM ELEMENTARY First in line Tutor younger children Class monitor job Read special book Work on favorite activity Correct papers SECONDARY Extra computer time Excused from one pop quiz Take one problem off a test First out of class Sit by a friend for one period Certificate IDEAS FOR CONSEQUENCES IN THE CLASSROOM ELEMENTARY First time a student breaks a rule: Warning Second time: 5 minutes working away from group Third time: 10 minutes working away from group Fourth time: Call principle Fifth time: Send to principal Severe Clause: Send to principal Assertive discipline theory is a teacher-centered classroom management approach founded by Lee and Marlene Canter. The approach believes in the rights of students and teachers to work in a safe, calm and professional environment. These rights must be enforced by an assertive teacher who enforces order and structure within the classroom. The 11 key features of assertive discipline theory are: the Right To Learn. Canter introduced the concept of students rights to classroom discipline. According to Canter, well-behaved students have the right to learn in a classroom without distraction. This means that the teacher must discipline poorly behaved students in the best interests of the rest of the class. Canter also notes that students have the right to learn from a caring teacher who has their best interests at heart. The Right to Teach. Teachers should be given the same right to a peaceful working environment as other professionals. Students who misbehave or are rude undermine a teachers rights at work. Teachers also deserve the support of their administration and managers as well as their students parents. Teachers must be in Control. Canter is critical of behavior management approaches that dilute the control of the teacher. The teacher, as the adult in the room, has the responsibility and duty to control the classroom environment. This is the only way the students safety and educational development can be guaranteed. Clear Boundaries must be Set. A teacher needs to develop a clear discipline plan. This plan should unambiguously state the boundaries of appropriate vs. inappropriate behaviors in the classroom. It should also state for students the exact corrective actions that will occur if students do not respect those boundaries. Students and parents need to understand and consent to the rules. Positive Reinforcement. Teachers should catch students who are behaving well within the classroom and provide rewards and praise for that positive behavior. Teachers should publicly acknowledge positive behaviors of one student in front of the whole class. Recognition and acknowledgement of everyday positive behaviors will show students who respect class rules that their compliance and respectful manners are appreciated. Positive Repetition. Like positive reinforcement, positive repetition involves publicly acknowledging positive behaviors. Furthermore, it involves repeating instructions and explicitly stating the positive behavior in the statement of recognition. Examples of repeating rules in acknowledgement include: James waited at the door before getting speaking; Great job, James! The rule in this case would have been to Wait at the door to get permission before entering. Firm Consequences. While the Canters highlight that proactive and positive discipline are ideal, when students overstep boundaries, consequences must follow. These consequences must be written down in advance (on the discipline plan), followed-through in all instances, and applied equally to all students. By following-through with your consequences plan, students learn that the rules are serious and must be respected. Behaviors should be taught through Modelled and Direct Instruction. It is not enough to simply enforce rules with rewards and punishments. To earn the respect and trust of students, teachers should always behave within the guidelines of the rules they have set out for students. This includes modelling positive and respectful behavior at all times so students see how its done. Furthermore, teachers need to directly instruct students on how to behave by explicitly repeating the rules and insting upon them being followed-through. Proactive is better than Reactive Discipline. Proactive discipline involves anticipating poor behavior and making a plan on how to in classroom management took place with students with special needs. Based on his work, Canter argued that most students will react well to an assertive discipline approach, including more difficult students. Proactive Discipline is better than Reactive Discipline. Proactive discipline involves anticipating poor behavior and making a plan on how to prevent it. Reactive discipline involves waiting until a student has misbehaved before coming up with a disciplinary response. Assertive discipline prioritizes proactive strategies such as setting up classroom rules and praising positive behavior. Teachers should build Relationships with their Students. Canter and Canter (1996) place strong emphasis on trust. They believe that discipline in the classroom is easiest to achieve when students trust and respect their teacher. When students have this trust, they will follow the teachers lead and acknowledge their moral authority to set rules. Canter and Canter state that trust can be built through getting to know students, greeting them by name, learning about their interests, having personal one-to-one conversations with them, acknowledging birthdays and special events, and getting to know their parents well.Creates a calm and positive learning environment which benefits student learning. Canter (1978) argues it will lead to an 80% drop in classroom disruptions. Canter also argues that there will be less elevated behavior issues (such as sending a student to the principals office). The focus on structure could be beneficial to students with autism who often crave order and certainty. Students have very clear behavioral guidelines which minimizes individuals and individualized plans for students with special needs are often ignored. The underlying cause of misbehavior is often overlooked by the teacher who has a strong behaviorist discipline policy. Alternatives, such as humanism and the peer mediation model, focus on identifying and addressing root causes of misbehavior rather than forcing students to just get over it. Students are expected to be passive learners when it comes to behavior rather than actively involved in discussing and negotiating rules. Canter and Canter (2001) argue there are only 3 types of teacher. They are the assertive, non-assertive and hostile teacher. In outlining these three types of teacher, they show that the assertive educator is their preferred type. This teacher is firm but not hostile to their students. Here are the three types explained: Non-Assertive Teachers: A non-assertive teacher finds that their students regularly break rules because the teacher inconsistently applies rules, does not employ proactive disciplinary strategies and fails to show their students their best interests at heart. The Right to Teach. Teachers should be given the same right to a peaceful working environment as other professionals. Students have very clear boundaries they have set. Their behavior expectations are often vague, such as act like an adult or do not have escalating consequences, such as this is the seventh time ive asked you to stop talking. Hostile Teachers: A hostile teacher embraces the negative aspects of assertive discipline without taking into account the positive aspects. This teacher sets clear rules and disciplines students who overstep the rules. However, they are also too quick to punish and do not use praise and warmth regularly in the classroom. This sort of teacher may see students as their adversaries rather than people they are there to help. Assertive Teachers: An assertive teacher regularly talks with their students about why their rules exist. This teacher talks about how rules help achieve fairness, balance and a positive atmosphere in the classroom. They understand that students need praise and warmth so they actively work to catch positive behavior and reward it. They understand that rules are fundamentally designed to support students learning and development and secure their safety. This teacher hopes to use disciplinary action rarely, but applies it consistently so that boundaries are not broken. Canter and Canter have provided many practical examples to help guide teachers on how to use their approach. Below are a few. A discipline hierarchy is also known as an escalating severity procedure. It involves starting with small disciplinary actions such as warnings for first-time offences. If students continue to break rules, the severity of the discipline will escalate. The teacher should have the discipline hierarchy written down in their discipline plan and students should be aware of the procedure in advance. For example, a teacher may present it to the students in the first week of school during a class ground rules discussion. Example First Infraction (Warning): The first time the student breaks the rules, the teacher issues a warning. The teacher explicitly says that it is a warning and reminds the student of the correct behavior. This is your warning. You have been asked not to enter the cloak room during class time. Second and Third Infractions (Moderate consequence): The second and third infractions require small but definite consequences. This may be a 5-minute then 15-minute time out or withdrawal of a privilege later in the day. The teacher should let the student know that the punishment is a direct consequence of their behavior. Furthermore, the teacher can note that the student chose to misbehave, which highlights the students agency. For example: You have chosen to continue to misbehave, so you have chosen this 5-minute time out. Third Infraction (Escalated assertive action): The third infraction involves escalation of the issue, such as sending the student to the head teacher or calling the students parents. If the parents are called, Canter and Canter (1992) suggest that the student should place the call and explain themselves on the call. Severe Clause: Teachers should include within their discipline plans a severe clause. This clause means that misbehavior is so severe that no warnings will be put in place and the issue will be escalated immediately. Examples may include fighting, bullying or intentionally putting other students in physical danger. Canter and Canter argue that a discipline plan is an absolute necessity in the classroom. Teachers should create the discipline plans and present them to students and parents at the start of the year. The discipline plan should have the following aspects: Classroom Rules List: A short list of achievable classroom rules should be set out for the students. The rules should cover all eventualities. This list should be visible to students in the classroom throughout the year. Positive Recognition: The teacher should note down examples of positive recognition that they will provide to students as a part of their regular daily teaching strategy. Corrective Actions on a Discipline Hierarchy: The teacher should create a list of corrective actions that will be used as part of their discipline hierarchy. This should be shown to students so they are aware of consequences of actions. Severity Clause: Students should know that severe behaviors that violate the rights and safety of others may be escalated to parents or the principal without the use of the discipline hierarchy. Regular classroom procedures involve teaching strategies that educators can use to help them keep control of the class. Examples include: Modelling and Direct Instruction. Modelling and direct instruction of behaviors are central to Canter and Canters approach. They suggest providing clear and unambiguous behavior procedures (such as how to enter a classroom appropriately) prior to getting students to practice that behavior. They also suggest explaining the rationale for this direction, giving students the opportunity to ask questions, and checking for understanding via questioning techniques. Gestures are powerful ways to communicate with students. A gesture may be obvious like a wave or point, or simple sideways glances to students are aware that theyre under surveillance. Scanning and Circulating the Classroom. Scanning the classroom involves regularly looking around the classroom to ensure you have a birds-eye overview of everything thats happening in the room. Circulating the room involves physically moving around the room. This is more effective because the students feel your presence as you walk past them, which reminds them that you are keeping an eye on their behavior. Table Layouts. A teacher can seat misbehaving students apart from one another, move misbehaving students closer to the teachers desk, and seat them apart from other students in the class to ensure other students are not distracted. When students are misbehaving in ways that do not distract the rest of the class (such as doodling instead of doing their work), the teacher can use positive reinforcement to support them. Canter and Canter argue that teachers should talk to the students about why their behavior is inappropriate and guide the student back onto track. This redirection prevents the need for negative disciplinary action. Redirection is useful in circumstances where the student is not being directly rude or disrespectful to others. Diffusing Confrontation. When students break rules, confrontation may occur. Canter and Canter state that confrontation should be diffused by the teacher in order to maintain a calm and professional environment. They suggest remaining calm, repeating requests, acknowledging a students emotions, and re-addressing issues at a later time when the temperature has come out of the situation a little. While a teacher can re-engage with an issue and provide negative consequences at a later time to prevent hostile confrontation, they should never let a student get away with breaking the rules without facing the consequences laid out in the discipline plan. Assertive discipline is closely linked to behaviorist theory in education. The behaviorist theory holds that students behaviors can be effectively managed through a series of rewards and punishments. However, this approach has also been challenged by other learning theories. Paolo Friere argues that assertive teaching reinforces unfair power hierarchies and creates a banking approach to education where students are taught not to think but to simply comply. If a teacher is cruel or unfair, there is no avenues for students to achieve justice. Friere advocates instead for a problem posing approach to education. This behavior management strategy is a very effective strategy for educators. Many career teachers quickly learn that it has great benefits for managing a classroom and achieving a positive learning environment. However, critics believe it disempowers students and leaves them passive and frustrated in the classroom. In the end, all teachers need to come to a strategy that works well for them and their own students. The strategy should be compassionate and caring while also achieving the goal of creating a positive learning environment. Canter, L. & Canter, M. (1976). A take-charge approach for todays educator. Seal Beach: Lee Canter & Associates. Canter, L. & Canter, M. (1993). Succeeding with difficult students: New strategies for reaching your most challenging students. Santa Monica: Lee Canter & Associates. Canter, L. (1996). First, the rapport then, the rules. Learning 24(5), 12-14. Canter, L. & Canter, M. 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What is assertive discipline theory. Assertive discipline examples. What is the primary goal of assertive discipline. Assertive discipline techniques. What is power assertive discipline. What is assertive discipline in education. What is the assertive discipline model. What is the meaning of assertive discipline. What is assertive discipline in the classroom. What is canter's assertive discipline model. Define assertive discipline.

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