

Kindergarten Strategies



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Implementation

The following is a model developed by Gail Gregory who taught kindergarten for many years and with MYD for 12 years. It took a lot longer the first few years, but this is the refined version.

She used the following format, varying the length of implementation depending on the make-up of the class. She always had all the components implemented within the first two weeks of school and, sometimes, within the first week. (Concerns: student-generated concerns aren't usually started until later in the year. Lots of teaching/modeling to be done first.)

First, she talked about/taught expected classroom behaviors, interfering (bothering) behaviors in general. She didn't really say "Make Your Day," but used the language: expectations (sitting, entering, groups, tables, recess), interfering (with learning, sitting, activities), etc. Often the students had heard about MYD from older siblings, so she would allude to what the "big kids" did.

After a few days, she would lead guided discussions about time away. She found that most of her kids understood the concept of taking a time-out, so would use that as a springboard. Older brothers and sisters choosing to take time away for interfering behaviors. What would interfere? How can we behave to make our class the best place to learn? etc. This discussion she usually spread over two consecutive days.

Once she established all the concepts/language of MYD, then she introduced MYD by starting with points. We have an exciting program that we're going to use, just like your big brothers and sisters, called Make Your Day. You get to earn points by... Steps are introduced, referring back to previous discussion related to interfering behaviors. Steps are OK. We all make mistakes. They role-play interfering behaviors/choosing steps, so all the students who are comfortable can practice choosing steps. The students discover they can "live through it." Practice points remembering that you start out by assigning points, then students take over that process for themselves. Usually pretty quickly. Lots of visuals - numberlines, etc.

For each point period, she opened with expectations and closed with expectations for the point period. As students said their points, she would

describe how successful students had earned points as a reminder to students who struggled. So, rather than pointing out to students how they didn't earn points, she restated it in the positive as a reminder. She did not worry if students didn't make their day. It was used as a learning opportunity, focusing on how to meet expectations, OK to make mistake, that's how we learn, etc. Always kept a positive tone to protect students' self esteem. She involved parents very early in the process, so they could help their children accept that mistakes are OK. Students who made their day got their hand stamped as they left for the day. (Often sixth graders would stop by her room on the way home to get their hand stamped, too.)

In the beginning of the year, Gail used lots of reminders. She gave students time to understand and practice expectations. She moved from reminders to points not earned and steps when the behaviors continued, teaching students that frequency has an impact and just needs a different type of reminder to help them get back on track.

For students who are struggling with this, work with the parents and contract individually with each student.