

A list of proactive measures that can be taken to keep order in your classroom.

Proactive Measures for Behavior Management

Most of what happens in a classroom must be closely controlled by a caring, trustworthy adult. Order, limit setting, and structure are essential in a classroom setting. Teachers should take every possible **proactive measure** using the following steps:

1. Arrange furniture to meet social/emotional needs as well as instructional and organizational needs.
2. Adjust schedules to provide a balance between highly structured periods and more stimulating activities.
3. Establish a group behavior management plan that incorporates individual needs.
4. Provide direct instruction, programmed learning, and precision teaching lessons. These will build students' self-confidence while establishing a knowledge base from which to expand problem-solving and higher-level thinking skills, as students demonstrate readiness for learning experiences that require less external structure.
5. Keep student-to-student interactions to a minimum initially. This is especially important during times when adult monitoring would be difficult. Trust and safety cannot be established if individuals within the group continually undermine each other or the adults, with problems created in secret.
6. Provide group-building opportunities that move students from an "I" to a "We" orientation without overstimulating or threatening them. These activities and opportunities are most effective when integrated into the affective, academic, and recreational arenas.
7. Select a group peer leader. The group will select a leader whether the teacher assists with this process or not. Qualities of leadership include being perceived as similar to other group members and being reinforced for modeled behavior.
8. Be aware of how individual needs affect group dynamics. Group members typically assume roles early in the establishment of the group dynamics.
9. Show empathy and unconditional regard at all times, but especially when students are in the midst of a crisis.
10. Attend with extreme care to students' physiological as well as psychological needs. Have extra clothing, food, and drink available. Make washable pillows to use when students sit on the floor. Keep bandages, hand lotion, and soap available. Much of the acting out behavior reflects a need for power or attention. Attempt to give as little emotional

response as possible to inappropriate behavior. Make responses to appropriate behavior obviously animated and positive.

Excerpted from *Back Off, Cool Down, Try Again: Teaching Students How to Control Aggressive Behavior*.