



**Great Teachers:  
Creating an Environment that  
Promotes Learning**


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**Make a Difference...**


"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do the something I can do."

Helen Keller (1880- 1968)




**The Learning Environment**

- Create a learning environment in which you are comfortable.
- Students differ in ability. But, all students are of equal worth. No student is special, they are all special
- When you allow students to be behavioral outliers it slowly pushes them farther from the group norm



**Structure & Class Management**


Teachers who managed students effectively and relied on traditional teaching methods were most effective as measured by student test scores. (Poplin, 2005).



**Kids are Different**


- By the age of three<sup>1</sup>...
  - Professional Families - 500,000 encourages and 80,000 discourages
  - Welfare families – 80,000 encourages and 200,000 discourages

<sup>1</sup>Hart, B. & Riley, T.R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.



**Teachers are Agents of Hope**

- Parents give you their children with the hope that you will give them a future
- Cynicism destroys hope – It fosters pessimism and destroys the belief that education can help students build a better life



### Some Kids Need You More than Others

- Those without good families need structure, direction, and support most
- Empathy and understanding is learned from teachers who model this behavior
- You learn to be “somebody” by being around “somebody” who is “somebody”



### Have Kids Changed? Or, Are You Growing Older?

- They don't care
- They are inactive
- They are disrespectful
- They don't work hard



### Who Makes a Difference?

- Parents don't care
- Schools don't value PE
- Principals don't like PE
- Why should I care

Accept responsibility rather than place blame



### Teachers are Change Agents

- Productive behavior and unacceptable behavior are learned, therefore both can change for better or worse
- What you don't correct, you condone
- No Consequence – No Change



### Actions speak Louder than Words

- Model personal behavior that you expect students to emulate
  - How you look
  - Politeness
  - Respect and concern for others' feelings
  - The love of physical activity
  - Passion for the profession



### Expectations Influence You More than Students

- Great teachers set high expectations and feel successful when students achieve above their comfort levels
- Lesser teachers often set low or no expectations & complain that students don't “try hard”



## Praise Effort, Not Genetics

(Process over Product)

10-year-olds praised for being smart or gifted became less confident; but kids who were told they were hard workers became more confident & better performers.

Dweck, C.S. (2007). The Perils and Promises of Praise. *Educational Leadership*.



## How to Praise Effort

- “That is a tough skill to master. I like the way you kept trying to perform it better.”
- “You picked out a skill you didn’t know how to perform. That takes courage.”
- “Amazing how much you have improved. Your effort pays off.”
- “I know you really tried hard. Let’s you and I work on it later.”



## Competency & Corrective Feedback

True expertise requires about 10,000 hours of practice WITH caring teachers who offer “constructive, even painful” feedback.

Ericsson, K.A., Prietula, M.J. & Cokely, E.T. (2007). The Making of an Expert. *Harvard Business Review*.



## Corrective Feedback

Having a history of dealing with adversity (stretch goals & corrective feedback) leads people to have a propensity for general resilience

Seery, M.D. (2011). Resilience: A Silver Lining to Experiencing Adverse Life Events? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*.



## How to Deliver Corrective Feedback

- Weave it into a 6 positive/constructive comments to 1 corrective feedback mosaic.
- Deliver corrective feedback as quickly as possible to the undesired behavior. Don’t stockpile and unload.
- Focus on the behavior, not the student. Don’t make it personal and global.
- Make it clear and concise. Don’t beat around the bush or be sarcastic. Be assertive but don’t intimidate.



## Challenge but Don’t Threaten

When goals are perceived as manageable rather than overwhelming, they are likely to contribute to toughness, control, and mastery

Mineka, S., & Zinbarg, R. (2006). A contemporary learning theory perspective on the etiology of anxiety disorders: It’s not what you thought it was. *American Psychologist*, 61, 10–26.



## Make Goals Manageable

- Set small and reasonable goals that make students believe they can achieve it.
- Set the goals in a positive frame, i.e., “to improve my throwing technique”
- Make the goals measureable so it is clear when it has been achieved.
- Set one or two goals so students can focus their energy and attention



## Grit vs Talent

- Grit (passion & perseverance for long-term goals) rather than talent is the best predictor of success.
- Grit is a long-term trait – working hard over a long period of time with strong commitment.
- Reinforce deliberate practice (grinding)

Study of spelling bee champs, Ivy League undergrads and Cadets at West Point – Duckworth, 2009



## Teaching Grit & Deliberate Practice

1. Set a clearly defined stretch goal
2. Encourage concentration and effort
3. Give immediate and informative feedback
4. 3Rs – Repetition with reflection and refinement

Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit – The Power of Passion and Perseverance*. Scribner Publishing



## Share a Smile...

- A smile tells children you like them more than any other physical or verbal cue
- A study showed physical education teachers smiled an average of 2 times in 30 minutes



## Correct Behavior without Emotion

- Correct behavior privately
- Approach the student from the rear or side
- Deliver and quickly move away
- Don't try to intimidate – Do be assertive
- Avoid confrontations



## Encourage, Don't Force

- Each individual always decides what is best for them
- It is better to teach and encourage
- When we force others to do things and use extrinsic rewards, we ultimately lower their intrinsic motivation.



## Enhance Our Profession

- Physical educators need to be activity and health champions
  - Small group instruction, individual counseling, weight management, classroom teacher training
- Personal trainer who works with unskilled, overweight, or embarrassed students
- Parent education leader who leads seminars related to healthy eating, inactivity, and sun safety



## Make Physical Activity a Major Accountability Outcome

- Regular activity for youth increases the probability of an active adult lifestyle (Raitakari, et al., 1994; Telama, et al., 1997)
- All youth have the capability to perform some type of activity
- Moderate activity offers health benefits similar to fitness



## Teach Lifestyle Activities

- Require little stress and anxiety
- Are non-competitive
- Are able to be done with another person
- Allow participants to avoid feeling self-critical
- Offer perceived value to each individual



## Reinforce all Lifestyle Activity

- All activity is beneficial – try to avoid the performance hierarchy for praise and reinforcement
  - Moving is moving – All activity counts
  - Winning is a natural reinforcement – The non-winners also need reinforcement
  - If we all move for 30 minutes, we all deserve reinforcement regardless of the intensity of the activity



## Teach Healthy School Behaviors

- Fast walking in school settings
- Change the structure and focus of recess and playground activity
- Promote nutrition and healthy eating habits
- Teach sun safety skills
- Promote activity outside of the school environment



## Promote Family Activities

- Schedule activities – 30 minutes 3 days a week
- Tell neighbors what you are doing for activity
- Let all family members choose activities
  - Tag, swim, toss a ball, jump rope, dance to music
  - Walk the dog, go for a jog, walk, or bike ride
  - Celebrate special occasions with something active
  - Have the entire family involved in household chores
  - Park farther away and walk to places



## Monitor Physical Activity

- People of all ages overestimate how active they are and underestimate how many calories they have ingested
- Recall instruments take time and energy
- Today's pedometers are highly accurate and easy for students to operate



## Teach with Passion

They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel...

Carl W. Buechner

