



Need vs. Behavior and the New 3 R's

Key things to remember when addressing student need:

- All students deserve to be viewed with strength
- All students and staff deserve to feel supported and safe—a Culture of Safety is essential
- All behavior is an expression of a need
- There is no simple solution AND students must be included in the process
- Keep in mind the ultimate goal you have for your student
- Know the systems of meaning for both your staff and your student—knowing this will help in identifying the best approach. Are you defining/describing?
- Strong and solid Tier 1 approaches that whole staff have consented to will assist you in your support of student success

4 Basic Needs:

- Physical Need
- Emotional Need
- Relational Need
- Control Need

A few Ideas for Interventions to Meet Student Need

Relationship:

- *Hugs/High Fives/Handshakes* – Appropriate physical touch is a quick and powerful way to demonstrate care and build relationships. Remember, your need to physically connect may not be their need to physically connect—always good to cue off your students
- *Check-ins with a Champion* – All students need a safe person, someone who understands them and is willing to build a connection with them: a *champion*. This person is an unconditional partner whose sole purpose is to be in their corner, to support and guide and help as needed.
- *Praise* – A well-timed compliment, praise for a job well done, noting effort and/or attitude, and saying something nice usually goes well. Be careful not to overdo it – we can praise conditional (“Wow! What a great use of vocabulary!”) as well as unconditional (“You have such a great smile.”)
- *Repair* – As adults, it is our job to model “healthy adult” at all times and to be willing to repair whenever necessary. All interactions that result in a rupture require a repair. As such, we can model how to repair – give a legit apology – we can share our intention to reset and regain trust. We gain respect and “realness” when we apologize, and it shows we care.

Fostering Resilient Learners



Responsibility:

- *Jobs* – Classroom jobs are really relationships with inanimate objects or inanimate expectations. This can be caring for class pets, tidying up marker bins, handing out papers, turning on/off lights, putting chairs up/down. For older kids, they can support or tutor younger kids, support a teaching by taking attendance or tracking participation of students. Whatever the job it helps because it is predictable. They can rely on it.
- *Attend to cause and effect* – Help students to see the natural if-then nature of the world. From attendance to behaviors and academic success, it can be as simple as “the lid was left off this marker, and now it’s dried up. What does that tell us?” to “I noticed that when you start to tap your leg you’re about to go to your downstairs brain. Have you noticed that?” Cause-and-effect is one of our most helpful tools in education. Point it out and ask students to look for it, too! Just like curriculum, it needs to be taught.
- *Use Yet/And* – Embrace the growth mindset, and for every negative statement like, “I can’t do that,” follow up with “yet.” When students say, “I suck at spelling,” respond with “AND...you can keep working on it to uncover the mysteries!” You believe that all kids can learn and improve, so show you believe it until the student starts to believe it too.

Regulation:

- *Brain tools* – This can be any tool used to help with sensory processing or body movement so that that a student can focus, like exercise balls as seating, weighted pencils, stress balls, stuffed animals, zipper/button gadgets, or soft materials to rub and calm. The key is how we use them and define their purpose. Their key role is to help students get into and stay in their upstairs brain, if the tools do this, then they are doing their jobs. If they don’t, then they are toys and to be used at different times for play.
- *Regulation Station* – These are places either in the room or in other rooms where a student can go to calm and regulate. They might be able to listen to music, watch fish swim, practice breathing, or use some sensory processing tools. These stations are designed to be used both proactively and reactivity but are not meant to be used as a consequence for bad behavior.
- *Transitions to learning* – All students experience dozens of transitions every day (in elementary, from the carpet to the desk to a new project... and in secondary, from class to class and from teacher to teacher...), and we can help students transition with music, a welcoming greeting, a notification to prepare for the transition, a moment of mindfulness, or any of the other strategies you might find in this list!
- *Brain Language* – Teach the language of the brain: upstairs/downstairs brain, zones of regulation, baseline, and/or flipping the lid gives students language to describe how they feel, helping them to be more attuned to themselves and better able to communicate their needs.