

# Classroom Culture And Control

## Foundations of Behavioral Management

Building Respectful, Engaging,  
and Well-Managed Classrooms



Jayton Howell

Behavioral Interventionist

Jacksonville North Pulaski  
School District

# Today's Purpose

- **Participants will leave with :**
  - A better understanding of how culture shapes behavior
  - Practical, effective, and strategies for managing classroom behavior
  - Clear next steps for building a respectful, structured environment
  - Develop a positive plan for building healthy classroom culture for students.

# Defining Classroom Culture vs. Control

- **Classroom Culture:**

- Shared values, norms, relationships, and practices that shape behavior
- Emphasis on collaboration and intrinsic motivation

- **Control:**

- Consistent engagement and expectations
- Often reactive and can undermine trust

# Examples of Good Classroom Culture

- Strong teacher-student relationships
- Clear routines/expectations
- Collaborative activities
- Open communication (students & parents)
- Safe Space



# Examples of Bad Classroom Culture

- Lack of engagement
- Horseplaying/bullying
- Negative social interactions
- Unsafe classroom environment
- No Control = No learning

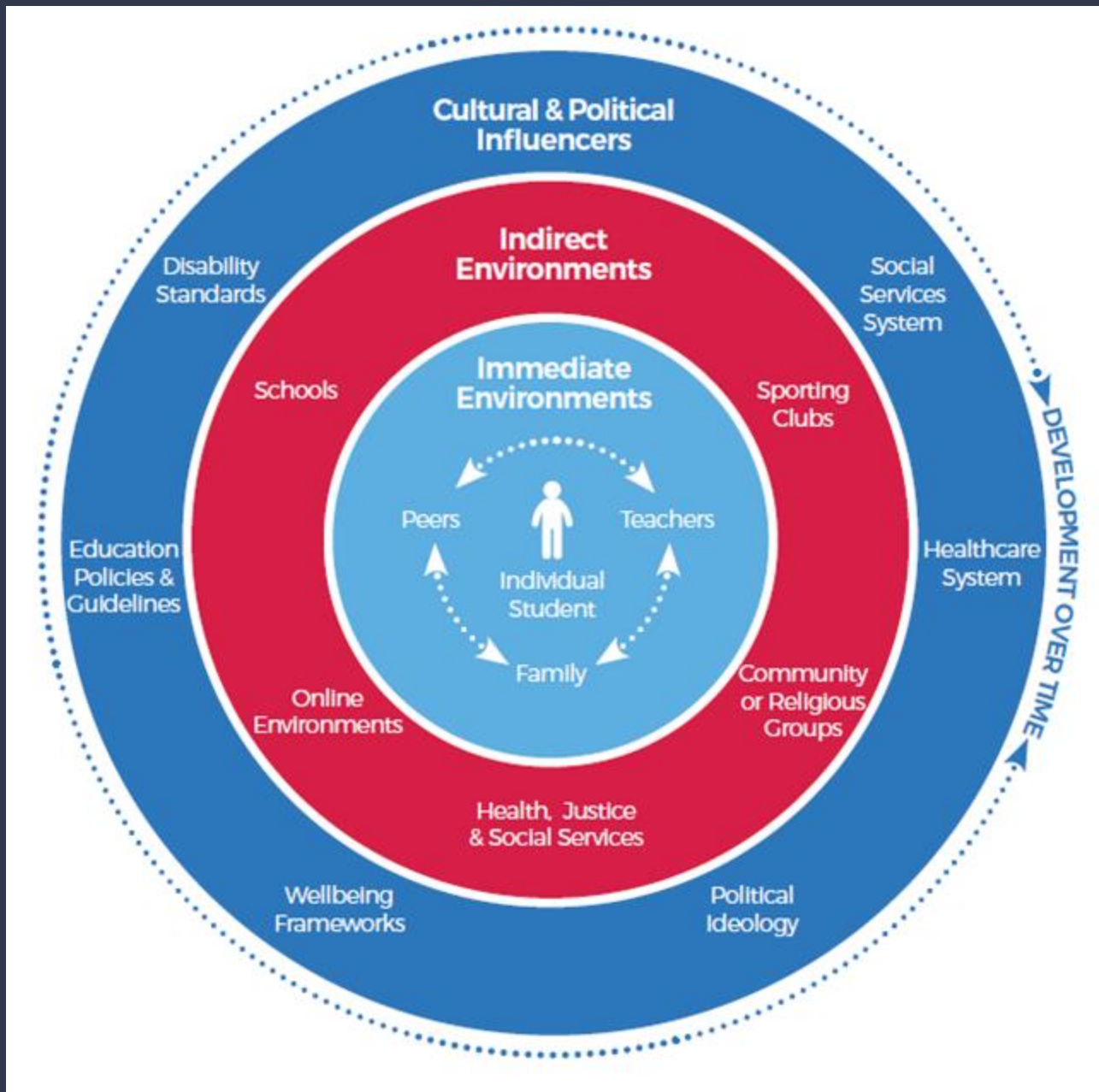




# Why Classroom Culture Matters

- Sets tone for learning
- Increases student engagement
- Reduces outbursts and noncompliance
- Creates safe, inclusive spaces (CASEL, 2020)
  - When students learn and educators work in an environment that is safe, supportive, and connected, they are more likely to develop the social and emotional competencies they need to be successful.







# Preschool



- ❖ Rapid development of language, memory, and imagination. Thrives on play, language, and social interaction
- ❖ Responds well to play included with instruction. Be noisy!
- ❖ Students in this age group definitely require some structure but it is easy to “over structure” their school experience.
- ❖ Keep a “loose/tight” philosophy by keeping instruction “loose” and be “tight” on fostering independence.

# Elementary



- ❖ Emphasis on logical and methodical thinking. “Big Picture”
- ❖ Basic logic and reasoning. Let students come to their own conclusions about their actions.
- ❖ All about discovering the “point” of the activity or task. Needs explicit discussions about their “why.” It is easy to get lost in the pace of curriculum and not slow down to provide our kids with the “why” behind what is being taught.





# Secondary



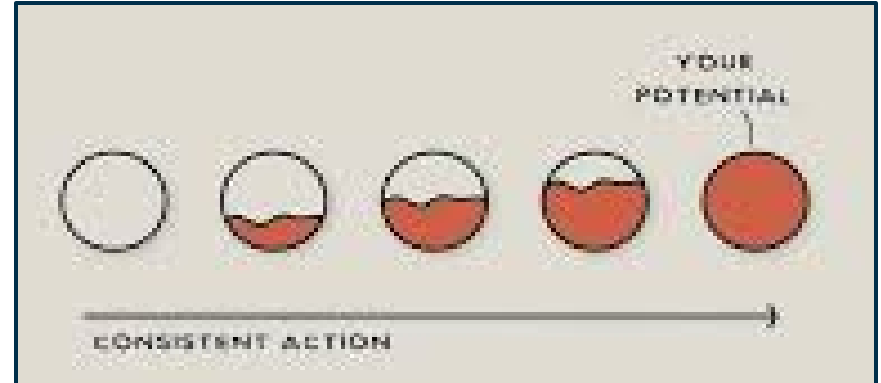
- ❖ Abstract thinking, concepts, and relationships in the world define this stage.
- ❖ Logic and reason are obtained in this stage, however they can be unvalued.
- ❖ Students like processing life and “getting deep” with questions.
- ❖ Naturally drawn to environments that help them.
- ❖ Be real, invest in relationships, help them learn about themselves

# Foundations of Behavioral Management



## Relationships

Use relationship-building strategies to foster respect and trust



## Consistency

Implement consistent routines and procedures.



## Expectations

Explicit, practiced, and reinforced to increase desired behaviors

# Pillar 1: Building Relationships

→ Positive connections support students in developing:

- ◆ Higher levels of motivation, engagement, and academic success.
- ◆ More positive social interactions.
- ◆ Increased ability to take on and persist through challenges.

→ Research suggests that relationship-centered schools:

- ◆ Are rich in factors that help reduce anxiety and stress.
- ◆ Support social/emotional development, which can bolster student engagement and motivation.
- ◆ Pave the way for improvements in student outcomes such as academic achievement and graduation rates.



# Why is it important?

- Healthy communication
- Mutual respect
- Emotional Safety
- Helps promote future relationships
- Improve attendance
- Increase Motivation
- Manageable behaviors
- May improve home relationships

**Building relationships in the classroom community not only improves students' abilities to learn but also improves teachers' abilities to teach soft skills such as compassion and other prosocial behaviors.**

**(College of Education & Human Development, 2022)**



# Relationship Building Techniques

- **Morning check-ins & greetings**
  - First 4
  - Inquire on interests, triggers, favorite things, etc.
- **Build your “relationship house”**
  - Practice daily mantras of optimism and positivity. These practices done every once-in-a-while are not very effective. However, if done daily—they can literally change how the brain thinks.
- **Be Creative when getting to know your students!**
  - Invest time in establishing that rapport

# Pillar 2: Consistency

- Fair

- Does not play favorites or create resentment by singling out students who are subject to the same consequences as everyone else.

- Respectful

- Do what you said you would do. Respect will develop when you follow through instead of compromising.

- Steady

- In the end, students want a system with well-defined boundaries. Having consistency can provide a sense of security.

# Benefits of Consistency

- **Create a system that works for your class**

Implement daily routines to reduce the cognitive load and create security.

- **Improved behaviors**

When students know what to expect, they tend to make more positive choices.



Classroom expectations are essential to academic achievement- consistent learning environments allow students to focus more on the educational material.  
(PowerSchool; 2022)

# Consistency Supports



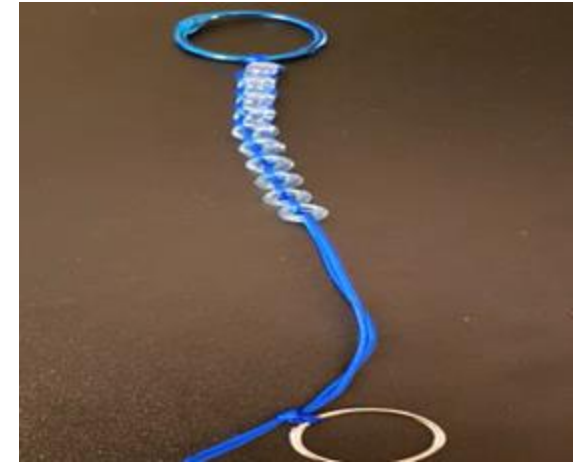
## When/Then Boards

Visual aid used to manage transitions to tasks and motivate completion of undesired tasks.



## Token Board

Visual chart to encourage positive behaviors and allow students to choose rewards for their actions.



## Tagulators

Low cost, efficient, and effective reinforcement tool that can be utilized for reinforcing students for positive behaviors.



# THE COERCION CYCLE

Patterson, 1982

START

1

Parent/Teacher makes a request.

2

Child passively ignores them.

3

Parent/Teacher repeats request.

4

Child delivers a defiant "No!"

8

Parent/Teacher may freak-out.

7

Parent/Teacher may give up.

6

Child explodes in a nuclear rage.

5

Parent/Teacher makes a threat.

9

Child avoids the initial request.

10

Parent/Teacher become reluctant to make requests.

11

Child exposed to less demands.

12

Child behavior requires a request.

REPEAT

# Pillar 3: Clear Expectations



- Expectations can help teach students how to be accountable for their actions.
- Creates a positive and productive learning environment.
- Helps students understand what is expected of them.
- Promotes a sense of safety and security.

# Make It Visual

- ❖ Most students today are visual learners due to social media and television exposure
- ❖ Tools that bring another way to hear/see the information
- ❖ Effective in encouraging students to participate in discussion, not only on a cognitive level, but on an emotional level too.



# Visual Supports



## Visual schedules

Start/End of the day schedule to help students create their daily routine

## Classroom Rules

Display expectations to prompt accountability and create a predictable environment

## Behavior Expectations

Help to increase desired behaviors and decrease negative or undesired behaviors



# How It Affects Behavior

- When made visual, clear expectations can provide predictability when faced with change.
- Visual charts can be utilized to reinforce positive behaviors through reinforcement.
- Can be personalized for younger and older students.
- Another path to preparing students for the future.



**The behavior that gets the most attention  
is the behavior you will see the most of!**



# Emphasizing on Key Points

- **Building Relationships**

- Establish trust with teacher and develop positive relationships with peers. Builds sense of belonging

- **Consistency**

- Leads to reduction in behavioral issues over time. Helps build routine. Reduces stress/anxiety

- **Clear Expectations**

- Essential for learning desired behaviors and establishing structure.

# Respectful, Engaging, and Well- Mannered

- Good relationships developed between students and teachers have a sense of belonging and trust. This serves as a powerful catalyst for encouraging positive behaviors.
- Consistency through the school year creates predictable routines that leads to engagement and understanding of classroom procedures.
- Clear expectations help establish rules, further teach expectations, and develop routines. This can help students learn manners and positive social skills.



# Application: Case Study

## Creating A Positive Classroom Environment: A Case Study of Elementary Teacher's Reflections On the Work Of Building Student Relationships

- **Discussion Points:**

- What are teachers doing right now to construct positive classroom environments and to develop positive relationships with their students?

# Findings

- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are a common among students of all grades.
- Consistency, awareness of student backgrounds, internal locus of control, and empathy as motivation.
- The need for consistency in classroom procedures and teacher reactions are equally as important.





# Making A (Practical) Plan

## First Day of School

- How are you going to start each day?
  - Create daily greetings, establish easy but effective routines, and be creative!
- Consistency rules
  - Help take the guessing out of your students day. Make the expectations fun but fair.
- Rewards & Consequences
  - Get visuals prepared and posted.
  - Structured calm down corner (books, coloring, fidgets)

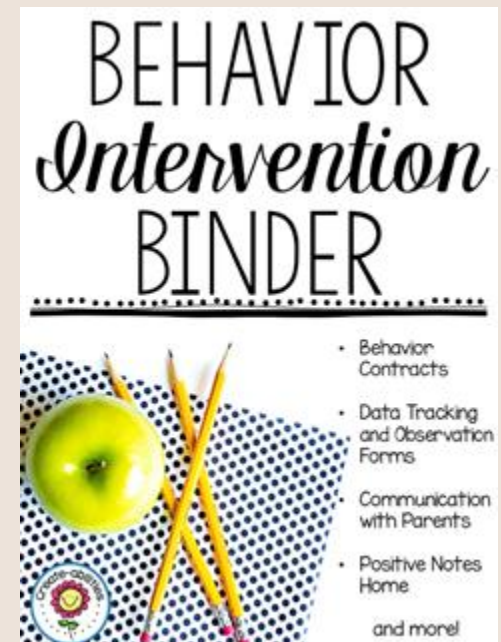
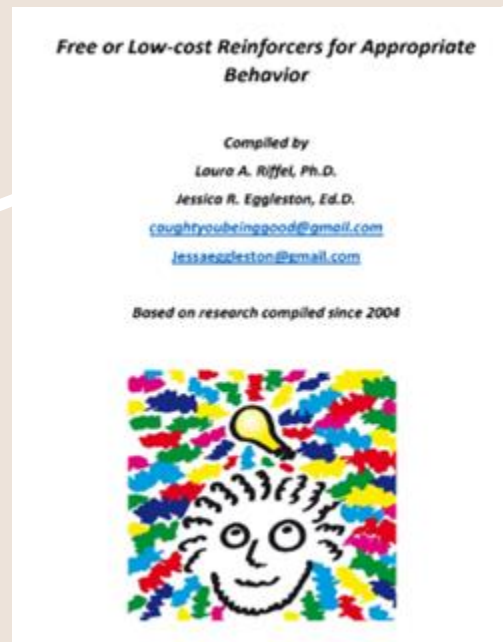


# Tools & Resources

## SCRED Life Skills



## Edtomorrow





# Other Supports

## Drive Folder



# Next Steps & Q&A

- How are you going to prepare your classroom culture?
- What behavior do you see the most of?
- Which resource would most likely benefit you?