

Relationship Building

Building relationships is perhaps the most important strategy any adult working with students can invest time and energy into. Many of the following strategies require very little time or preparation.

1. Greet Students

- Use students' names and learn to pronounce both first and last names correctly.
- Meet students at the door with a handshake or high five.
- Be present (physically and emotionally) in hallways before school or during morning supervision duty.

Be cognizant of, and engage in learning around, varying cultural norms

Student Interests

- Take an interest in the hobbies, pursuits, and talents of your students.
- Give an interest inventory and then use the results to select books, novels, short stories, poems, or articles found in the room.
- Ask questions.
- Use these interests as examples within curriculum (story problems, grammar exercises).

4. Student Interviews

- Within the first few weeks, set aside some time to meet with students individually.
 - This could take place opposite time in the computer lab, while students are working independently, finding books in the Media Center.
 - Create a list of questions that will allow you to get to know students both academically and socially.
 - What is something you are really good at?
 - What is something you struggled with in school last year?
 - What is something that you think I should know about you?
 - What are three characteristics you would use to describe your favorite teacher?

5. 4:1 (ratio of positive to negative interactions with the student)

- Get back to the basics of PBIS. Make sure that for every 1 correction or re-direction, you are positively acknowledging students 4 times.

6. Team building/icebreaker activities

- Include more team building and icebreaker activities at the beginning of the year/semester as well as less frequently but consistently throughout the school year.
- Be a part of these activities.
 - Stand Up if You...
 - Two Truths and a Lie
 - People BINGO
 - Table for...
 - Team Huddle
 - Group Similarities
 - A Cold Wind Blows
 - Group Knot
 - Circle Sit
 - Circle Count

7. Be present

- If building a positive practitioner/pupil relationship with a specific student is proving difficult, it may require more work and persistence.
 - If the students are doing an activity, do it along with them.
 - Attend school dances or events.
 - Attend sporting events in the community.
 - Be available before or after school for assistance.
 - Organize a group game at recess.
 - Volunteer to even out a team in PE class.
 - Play an instrument with the band.
 - Auction off time as an incentive.
 1. Games before school or during recess.
 2. Eat lunch in the classroom together with another student or colleague.
 3. Go for a Walk 'n' Talk around the building.
 4. Sit at a student lunch table in the cafeteria.

8. Make positive contact with home

- Call home to introduce yourself at the beginning of the year to establish a positive line of communication.
- Call home with a positive comment or story about the student to share.
- Call home with a follow up after any calls made to report a behavior infraction.
- Send a positive postcard.
- Send updates about class via a digital or paper newsletter.

9. Positive phrasing of requests

- State what a student is to do, not what they should stop or avoid doing.
 - Let's save the running for the playground.
 - Let's save the running for the big game tonight.
 - Thanks for walking on the right side of the stairs.
 - I bet that hat will keep you warm outside after school.
 - Hats are for outside, at school it is the expectation that it stays in your locker.

10. Provide the 'why' behind expectations or requests

- We walk in the hallways to keep all staff and students safe.
- There is no talking during an assessment because I need to know what each student knows as an individual.
- We pick up our messes so that we are being respectful of the environment and those who will be using the space after we return to class.