

Developing Academic Learning Behaviors

Training Tool

Premises:

- “All the domains of children’s development and learning interrelate. For example, because social factors strongly influence cognitive development and academic competence – and the cognitive domain influences the social domain - teachers must foster learning and development in both, as well as in the emotional and physical domains.” (NAEYC, 2009)
- There are certain learning behaviors that undergird a child’s success. Children need multiple opportunities to develop and practice these behaviors in real situations. (REACH, 2000)

Learning Behaviors in “Adult Language”	Learning Behaviors in “Student-Friendly Language”
Listens attentively during group activities.	Being a good listener.
Respects rights, feelings, and property of others.	Respects rights, feelings and things that belong to other people.
Participates with topic-related comments and questions.	Participates during activities.
Verbalizes complete thoughts and ideas.	Tells the whole story.
Maintains a “quiet body” when appropriate.	Keeps a quiet body.
Works well with other peers.	Works well with other schoolmates.
Demonstrates task persistence.	Works hard and doesn’t give up.
Listens to and follows directions.	Follows directions.
Takes responsibility for personal belongings.	Takes responsibility for belongings. Takes care of one’s ‘things’.
Responds well to guidance and suggestions.	Listens to what others ask you to do.
Makes choices.	Makes decisions about what to do.
Solves problems.	Tries to solve problems.
Exhibits self-control.	Knows when to “stop”.
Speaks in a clear loud voice and looks at audience.	Speaks clearly in front of others.
Approaches activities in an organized manner.	Organizes work.
Listens attentively during group activities.	Is a good listener.
Does one’s ‘personal best’.	Does one’s ‘personal best’.

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Learning Goal for the Week

Process Week 1:

- Describe the whats and hows of the 'Learning Goal for the Week'. Explain to students that there will be one to three learning goals highlighted each week. Explain to students each week each student will individually choose the learning behavior which would help him/her reach his/her personal best in school.
- Ready each learner's name on an oak tag strip (approx. 2 inches by 4 inches). Use a small ball of sticky-tack or magnetic tape on the back to allow students' names to be moved under a goal each week.
- For Week 1, choose only one learning behavior to introduce as the first Learning Goal for the Week. Use the 'student-friendly language' and write it on a sentence strip. Hang the sentence strip on a door/bulletin board accessible to the class meeting location.
- Engage students in chorally reading the Learning Behavior Goal for the Week. Have a class discussion regarding:
 - the **hows** - what that behavior would look and sound like
 - the **whys** - why the behavior is important for success as a learner.
- Place each student's name under the sentence strip.
- At appropriate/contextual times during the week, remind students to practice the week's goal (ie. If keeping a quiet body was the goal, remind students to practice that behavior while walking in the hallway, while reading a story, etc.).
- At points during the week, guide students in thinking/reflecting about their success with the week's goal. (e.g. Teacher might say, "Take a minute and think to yourself about the week's goal. Now ask yourself how you are doing. If you think you are doing a good job, tell yourself what you have been doing that has allowed you to be so successful. If you're thinking you haven't been doing your personal best, then tell yourself what you're going to do differently.") There is no group sharing out as this is a time for students to practice self-reflection.
- On Friday, remove the students' names from under the goal and place their names over to the side.

Process Week 2:

- Week 2 highlights two goals. Determine which goals will be the focus. (Suggestion: Continue to use the goal from Week 1 and add one new goal.) Use the 'student-friendly language' and write the new goal on a sentence strip. Hang the sentence strips on a door/bulletin board accessible to the class meeting location.
- On Monday of week 2, engage students in chorally reading the Learning Behavior Goals for the Week. Have a class discussion regarding:
 - the **hows** - what that behavior would look and sound like
 - the **whys** - why the behavior is important for success as a learner.
- Provide students a minute to think about themselves as individual learners. Engage students in asking themselves, "Which goal would help me be more successful as a learner?" Give students another minute to think/reflect. As each individual student shares his/her weekly choice, place his/her name under that goal.
- At appropriate/contextual times during the week, remind students to practice the week's goal. Remind students even if the goal being mentioned isn't the one they chose, they should still practice it to make sure they're really 'good' at it.
- On Friday, take down the week's goal and students' names.

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Learning Goal for the Week

Process Weeks 3 and 4:

- During Weeks 3 and 4, two goals should be highlighted. Determine which goals will be the focus. (Suggestion: Continue to use one goal previously introduced during Week 1 or Week 2 and one new goal.) Use the 'student-friendly language' and write the goal on a sentence strip. Hang the sentence strips on a door/bulletin board accessible to the class meeting location.
- On Monday of Weeks 3 and 4, engage students in chorally reading the Learning Behavior Goals for the Week. Have a class discussion regarding:
 - the **hows** - what that behavior would look and sound like
 - the **whys** - why the behavior is important for success as a learner.
- Provide students a minute to think about themselves as individual learners. Engage students in asking themselves, "Which goal would help me be more successful as a learner?" Give students another minute to think/reflect. As each individual student shares his/her weekly choice, place his/her name under that goal.
- At appropriate/contextual times during the week, remind students to practice the week's goal. Remind students that even if the goal being mentioned isn't the one they chose, they should still practice it to make sure they're really 'good' at it.
- On Friday, take down the week's goal and students' names.

Process Weeks 5+:

- From Week 5 forward, there are typically 3 goals highlighted per week. Determine which goals will be the focus. Goals should be chosen based upon the social and learning behavior needs of the group. (Suggestion: Continue to use two previously introduced and one new goal.) The same process as described in Weeks 3 and 4 should be followed (goal introduction, student choice, ongoing contextual reminders, and mid-week reflections).