**Communicating Expectations**

Today's students are different from students in the past. More of them are coming from homes where parents are overworked and have much less time to spend with them. As a result, more children come to school less socialized than students of earlier generations. Part of your job, then, becomes helping these children learn appropriate ways of behaving with others. Consider the following ways teachers make their social expectations more explicit.

1. Review the list of rules and expectations you introduced the first day of school and identify which address safety, disruptive behavior, and social issues. Based on the social interaction problems experienced by students as the year progresses, add appropriate social expectations - such as asking for information or to join an activity, apologizing, dealing effectively with conflict - and review them with the class.

2. Begin a "Chart of Cooperation." List a few examples of how some students have helped others or contributed something to the class. Add other examples weekly as you or students notice them occurring.

3. Prepare a "Good Manners" bulletin board with a number of examples. Begin a discussion of additional items.

4. Develop a "Bill of Students' Rights." In conjunction with an early American History unit on the United States Constitution, divide the class into three or four committees. This will help students learn the lesson at hand, and also validate the importance of their own rights with respect to social interaction in the classroom.

5. Prepare a lesson on empathy. Include many examples of treating others as you would like to be treated, caring, respecting others' feelings, and putting yourself in the other person's shoes.

6. Review the following social skill expectations and indicate which you wish to address at different times during the school year. Beginning a conversation Joining in a game Asking a favor Offering help to a classmate Suggesting an activity Sharing Apologizing Responding to teasing Staying out of fights Dealing with an accusation Dealing with boredom Identifying and understanding what caused a problem Making a complaint Answering a complaint Dealing with losing Dealing with being left out Dealing with group pressure

7. Keep parents informed, and get their help. In a newsletter to parents, include a section on what social skill objectives you have emphasized last month and those you plan to emphasize the coming month.

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