

# The Big Picture

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Effective school-wide and classroom management plans prevent misbehavior and are continually refined to help students become increasingly respectful, responsible, motivated and highly engaged in instructional activities.

I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.

Haim Ginott

There are five variables you can experiment with to try to guide students and staff toward these goals:

## 1. **Structure** (organize) your classroom to prevent misbehavior.

The way a setting is structured has a big impact on the behavior and attitude of people in that setting.

An example--A setting that accomplishes an amazing feat

A few school-based examples:

Organization of cafeteria, halls, class break

Teacher clarity

Teacher enthusiasm

Schedule of activities

Quality of curriculum

Classroom climate

- 2. Teach** your expectations regarding how to be successful within the structure that you have created.

Activity Structures

C  
H  
A  
M  
P

Transitions

Common Area Expectations

Policy  
Lesson Plans

- 3. Observe** whether students are meeting expectations (monitor!).

In the short run, this means circulate and visually scan.

In the long run, this means collect and analyze meaningful data on student progress.

- 4. Interact** positively with students.

Provide frequent non-contingent attention to build relationships.

Provide frequent, age-appropriate positive feedback to acknowledge students' effort to be successful.

- 5. Correct** misbehavior fluently (briefly, calmly, consistently, immediately, and (as much as possible) privately).

Brief corrections maintain instructional flow and reduce the degree of disruption the misbehavior causes.

Calm corrections model responsible ways to deal with conflict, avoid escalating emotional intensity, and keeps your blood pressure at reasonable levels.

Consistent corrections allow you to be on “automatic pilot” and demonstrate to students you are fair and equitable.

Immediate corrections prevent minor misbehavior from becoming major misbehavior.

Reasonably private corrections model respect and help maintain the student’s dignity—while still addressing the problem.

**STOIC** is an adjective meaning “tending to remain unemotional, especially showing admirable patience and endurance in the face of adversity.”

## **Barriers to Implementation with Fidelity:**

1. Two types of school personnel:

Type 1. Problem Solvers  
Empathetic  
Optimistic

Type 2. Problem Admirers  
Apathetic  
Pessimistic

*“Optimists are wrong just as often as pessimists, but the big difference is they have a lot more fun.”*

Solution?

Staff must take conscious control of shaping the school climate (policies, procedures and daily interactions), while also helping individual students who need something more. The goal is to create school settings that enhance success ( and joy and dignity ) for ALL

2. “Let me just go in my room and TEACH!”

Solution?

Make teaching more public—and less anonymous.  
Co-teaching, Coaching , Walk-through visits, Visitors

3. A “This stuff won’t work with THESE kids mentality.

Solution?

Ensure that NO one gives staff permission to engage in abusive behavior  
The only absolute about behavior management

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#### 4. “Poor, Poor Pitiful Us Syndrome”

##### Solution?

Use “positive identity labels” when referring to staff, for example “problem solvers, empathetic, optimistic, positive , compassionate, altruistic, student centered”

*Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them become what they are capable of being”---Goethe*