

Reset for Kind and Polite

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Introduction

Establish the culture in the classroom that prioritizes and values being kind and polite. For this culture to be established, it is essential that teachers practice it and model it themselves, point it out when they see it happening, provide recognition for exemplary examples, and build it in as an important element of all classroom learning and social activity. There are a dozen areas of kind and polite behavior in the routine below. Most classrooms will want to incorporate all twelve, but if that seems overwhelming, it's okay to select just the ones that are most important for your classroom and make a routine from those.

Children are not typically taught to exercise and to recognize polite and kind behavior, but it's essential in a successful learning environment, so it is up to the school to teach this. People are more cognitively flexible, more trusting, relaxed and open to learning; and they can think more creatively and better access their executive functioning skills when they are in an environment that explicitly values and promotes kind and polite behavior (and when they are in the presence of people who are kind and polite).

Use this routine spontaneously throughout the day when you find students needing frequent reminders about being polite and kind. This reset routine serves to reactivate a neural network that you established when you originally taught the students this social emotional learning skill. The most effective social emotional learning efforts are the ones that happen in real time in the classroom (more so than the ones that are taught as lessons to the class). Use this routine to help students learn about the importance of being kind and polite in common classroom situations—in real time—where you see too much rude behavior, and when it is best to reset the situation before moving on.

You can also use this routine proactively, before you initiate a learning situation that will depend heavily on students being kind, polite, and cooperative (e.g, whole class discussion, morning meeting, introduction of new or difficult material, group work, etc.).

Kind and Polite Routine

Use polite words like please and thank you, no thank you, excuse me. Use a polite tone of voice and use good manners.



Be giving, and be forgiving, offer to help others who need it, show sensitivity for the feelings of others, apologize if you hurt someone's feelings, or upset someone, or accidentally break something.



Wait your turn, let others go first, hold the door.

Be considerate of the needs of others, give others a chance to do their work, and refrain from disrupting ongoing activities and disturbing others.



Share materials and supplies, take turns, cooperate, compromise, do your part, avoid ordering people around, and refrain from boasting and "showing off".



Take good care of materials loaned to you, take good care of your work environment, and take good care of school property.



Be friendly and welcoming, show others that you care about them, show appreciation for the efforts of others, compliment others, give others credit when they do a good job, encourage others and yourself, smile often, and present a positive and upbeat attitude.



Make polite suggestions (without offending), give constructive feedback, object in a polite way, make comments that are polite and friendly, and respect the ideas of others.

Ask polite permission before you go ahead, before you borrow something, and before you leave the classroom to get a drink, go to the bathroom or go to the office.



Be respectful toward all people, refrain from teasing, derogatory name calling and bullying, respect the opinions of others, appreciate the perspective of others, keep criticism to a minimum, respect privacy and give personal space.

Solve problems in a calm, patient, peaceful and fair manner, suggest solutions instead of protesting or complaining, show good impulse control and stop and think before acting, and consider the feelings of the people involved.



Accept feedback and suggestions from others, accept help when it is offered, respond agreeably following a staff direction or announcement and when corrected by the teacher, accept feedback and try to improve, stay calm when you get it wrong, and maintain a positive attitude when things don't go as planned.

