

# Creative Discipline & Alternatives to Suspension

thinking



## Key Concepts:

- ✓ GOOD discipline takes more time than EASY discipline
- ✓ Involve parents (go beyond just informing, and ask for their ideas)
- ✓ Link your discipline to your school-wide PBIS expectations
- ✓ Interventions should match the student's developmental level and/or disability

## The Three Pillars of Effective Discipline:



**Reflective:** The student should be reflecting & gaining insight into his/her behavior.

**Restorative:** The student should have an opportunity to repair the relationships or items that were damaged.

**Instructional:** The student should gain specific knowledge and be able to practice skills that will help him/her in the future.



## Restorative Approaches

- Conduct a facilitated mediation (between students, or student/staff)
- Do a Restorative Circle (when more than two people are involved)
- Have a class discussion (when large groups are involved)
- Allow the student to “clean up the mess” they made in the classroom & return to right relationships
- Attendance mediation: offer an opportunity for students and parents to come to a workshop to discuss barriers to attendance and develop an attendance plan before a truancy referral is made
- Use Connection Circles & Community Meetings to build relationships and strengthen school climate



## Cool Down / Time Out Ideas

- Utilize time in the office or another location to cool down
- Create a Sensory Room for students with significant emotional/behavioral needs
- Allow student to take a walk with an adult
- Allow art or drawing for a specified time period to calm down
- Create “buddy classrooms” where a student can go do the cool down/think sheet that is a new environment away from the classroom where the problem happened (works best as early intervention, not in a crisis)



## Reflective Tasks

- Use reflective “Think Sheets” for students to consider their actions
- Provide writing prompts for a reflective essay
- Allow the student to create a story (written, visual, drawings, video) about what they learned
- Make a comic strip story
- Write a letter to yourself
- Rewind and Role Play (go back and role play how to do it differently next time)





### **Educational Projects**

- Assign a research project on a specific topic related to the incident (e.g. research the laws around sexual harassment)
- Create a poster board or power point presentation
- Contact community organizations for information
- Develop a video or public service announcement



### **Parent Meetings and Parent Involvement**

- Ask parents for their ideas before determining the consequence
- Ask parents to come sit in class with their student
- Include Parents in a Restorative Circle
- Collaborate to develop consistent home/school interventions



### **Community Service / Restitution**

- Find a work task that is logical for the incident (e.g. shoveling snow for throwing snowballs or cleaning the walls for doing graffiti)
- Provide an opportunity to work off damages
- Allow the student to do volunteer work in the community as an alternative to suspension



### **Behavior Plans and Monitoring**

- Create a check-in system (by hour or by day)
- Assign an adult mentor/monitor
- Utilize home-to-school communication log



### **Withdraw Privileges / Limit Choices**

- Remove rewards or preferred activities for specified time
- Limit freedoms or choices (such as limiting choices on the playground to specific activities/areas)
- Change class schedule or electives (such as removing off campus lunch privileges)



### **Peer Interventions**

- Involve older peers to help model and mentor
- Establish a peer mediator or peer leadership program
- Create a peer committee / peer court / student restorative justice team to address certain incidents (student chooses to allow the peer committee to make recommendations)
- Offer to reduce the consequence if the student participates in a positive school activity/event



### **Detentions / In-school Suspensions**

- Add a purpose to detentions so they aren't just sitting around (discussion topic, assignment, etc.)
- Create an alternative lunch location to take away peer interaction
- After-school group format (facilitated group detention)
- Mini-course format (series of learning sessions over a couple weeks)

